

CHARISMATIC LEADERSHIP IN INDIA:
A STUDY OF JAWAHARLAL NEHRU,
INDIRA GANDHI, AND
RAJIV GANDHI

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The leadership of India has been in the hands of one family since Independence with the exception of only a few years. Essentially, the government has passed from father to daughter and then from daughter to son. The purpose of this study is to contribute to the understanding of leadership within the context of the Indian setting. An attempt will be made to compare and contrast the leadership abilities and characteristics of Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi. Even a very brief glance at the three leaders in their role as Prime Minister brings obvious questions to mind: (1) Why was Nehru so successful? (2) Why was Indira Gandhi sometimes successful and sometimes not? (3) What can Rajiv do to mirror the successes of his mother and grandfather in an India which is beset by an increasing number of stresses?

But before we can begin to look at India specifically, some understanding of the concept of leadership is necessary. It is not enough to study leaders; serious consideration must be given to leadership. James MacGregor Burns in fact complains that scholars have given too much attention to the

former and neglected the latter. He writes:

"Leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth."¹ Burns is one of the most recent leadership scholars, but men have been making observations about leadership for centuries. Early scholars debated whether leaders are shaped by circumstances or whether certain individuals have inherent traits or characteristics that make them leaders. There was a debate between the "Great Man" theories and the environmental theories. The primary question was whether certain men were destined to lead or did a crisis situation make leaders of them. In other words, would the Revolution of 1917 in Russia have happened without Lenin, or would the circumstances have forced another to take his place? The problem is that neither one of these theories adequately explains the phenomena of leadership. The "Great Man" theory often leads to turning leaders into mythical giants² or to an often fruitless search for traits or qualities of the leader that make him different from his followers. The environmentalist theories are believable to a point but as one theorist points out, for all the times that crisis situations produce leaders who deal effectively with the situation, there are also many instances in which crisis situations do not produce such leaders.³ Most modern scholars do not adhere strictly to either school, but instead suggest that any valid theory of

leadership must include a combination of the two theories plus more emphasis on the relationship between leaders and followers.

Much of the difficulty in studying leadership stems from the fact that it is almost impossible to find any two scholars who would agree upon a definition of leadership. A summary of some definitions can be found in the Handbook of Leadership by Ralph M. Stogdill.* He separates the definitions into eleven categories:

- (1) Leadership as a focus of group process: the leader is the focus of all activity.
- (2) Leadership as personality and its effects: the emphasis here is on the traits of the leader which distinguish him from the followers.
- (3) Leadership as the art of inducing compliance: leadership is defined as the instrument for molding the group to the leader's will.
- (4) Leadership as the exercise of influence: Leadership is characterized by a reciprocal relationship between leaders and followers.
- (5) Leadership as an act or behavior: Leadership is studied as a series of acts of the leader or his behavior.
- (6) Leadership as a form of persuasion: the leader is the determining factor in the relationship with his followers, but there is no coercion.
- (7) Leadership as a power relation: leadership is "a particular type of power relation characterized by a group member's perception that another group member has the right to prescribe behavior patterns for the former regarding his activity as a member of a particular group."
- (8) Leadership as an instrument of goal achievement: leadership is seen as having

the crucial function of integrating the various roles of a group and seeing that goals are achieved.

- (9) Leadership as an effect of interaction: leadership exists when acknowledged and conferred by members of the group.
- (10) Leadership as a differentiated role: leadership is seen as a role defined by the expectations of the group which requires greater responsibility and obligations than other roles.
- (11) Leadership as the initiation of structure: leadership is not the passive acceptance of a role, but the process of originating and maintaining role structure.

Even this list of definitions is not complete.

Lewis Edinger prefers to define leadership both positionally and behaviorally. The former is most concerned with the duties of an office or "status in a heirarchical structure." The latter is identified with persons who shape the actions of others. Behavioral leadership is associated with the relationship between leaders and followers. In the same vein, Dankwart Rustow sees leadership as resting "on a latent congruence between the psychic needs of the leader and the social needs of the follower."

Of course, no study of leadership would be complete without reference to James MacGregor Burns' lengthy volume entitled Leadership. Burns defines leadership as that which is "exercised when persons with certain motives and purposes mobilize, in competition or conflict with others, institutional, political, psychological, and other resources so as to arouse,

engage and satisfy the motives of followers."⁷ Burns makes the distinction between true leaders and naked power-wielders. For example, according to Burns, Adolf Hitler would not have been considered a true leader because he ruled by brute force. He did not consider the needs of his followers, only his own. Burns also states that charismatic leaders are not true leaders. he prefers to call charisma heroic leadership and stresses that idolized heroes are not authentic leaders because no true relationship exists between them and the spectators.⁸ Burns divides his "true leaders" into two categories: transforming and transactional. Transforming leadership occurs when leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality. Transactional leadership involves exchanging one thing for another or bargaining.

There is no doubt that Burns has contributed a great deal to the understanding of leadership, although some of his assertions are questionable. For example, how is it possible to say that all those who rule by force are not leaders? Robert C. Tucker points out that it is possible to find examples of many dictators who had large followings during their rule, Hitler included. Tucker would even disagree with Burns' basic assumption that a theory of leadership should be based on the relationship between leaders and followers. He states that it is more useful to look at what leaders do in

their capacities as leaders. he considers a political leader as "one who gives direction, or meaningfully participates in the giving of direction to the activities of a political community."⁴

Finally, any researcher would be remiss if he or she failed to note the contributions made by the discipline of psychology to the study of leadership. These studies are based on Sigmund Freud's model of psychoanalysis. Briefly, Freud's theory involves the idea that every child goes through certain stages. in the early stages of a male child's life he is almost totally involved with the mother. At some point, however, the father must step in and sever that relationship - the law of the father. The father must enforce the societal taboo on incest. This causes the child to be frustrated because he cannot be involved in the intimacy between his father and mother - the Oedipus Complex. Resolving the conflict between loving and hating his parents allows the child to become assimilated into the culture. If the child fails to resolve the conflict, the manifestations of that repression will be directed toward either himself or other members of society.

Harold Lasswell, building on Freud's work, devised a formula which explains his concept of political leadership: $p \} d \} r = P$. According to this equation, the political man (P) develops when private motives (p)

are displaced onto a public object (d) and are rationalized in terms of the public interest (r). According to Lasswell, the critical part of the equation is the rationalization. It is through this that a non-political man is elevated to a political man.¹⁰ These basic works opened an entire realm of possibilities for leadership studies. Psychohistorical analysis has become a new and growing discipline. Erik Erikson's theory of psychosexual states is among the best known in this body of literature.

It is evident, then that there is no shortage of definitions of leadership. After examining these definitions, what do we really know about leadership? It seems that we still know very little. Leadership, in the final analysis, means nothing by itself. The reasons for the success of any given leader will vary from country to country or culture to culture. I believe that leadership in its most basic form can be very simply defined as some kind of relationship between the leader and his followers. Scholars who disregard the leader/follower relationship are making a serious mistake. It is, however, difficult to generalize about the nature of this relationship. To be fully understood, it must be examined in the context of one particular country or culture. Thus, it is impossible to understand leadership in India without first examining some of the basic beliefs and values of the

Indian culture.

The traditional Indian philosophy of leadership holds that the king rules by divine sanction, but his office has clear responsibilities. It is the King's job to see that each of his subjects performs his caste function of dharma. The king himself has caste obligations that he must perform, and in doing so, he sets an example for all others. Even though India today is a secular state, the influence of the caste system is still strong in Indian society. In addition Indians have a distinctly non-western concept of what makes a leader legitimate. If a leader performs the duties of his office efficiently, then he is considered to be legitimate. The Indian people, unlike members of western cultures, are not so much concerned about demanding their individual rights against the government as they are about seeing that the principle of functional efficiency or sarkar is implemented.

One characteristic of the Indian people which must not be forgotten is fatalism. Indians are on the whole very fatalistic in their outlook on life. They accept their place in life without question. This characteristic can be seen in leaders and followers alike. Even Indira Gandhi on the night before her assassination spoke of her death: "I am not interested in a long life. I am not interested in a long life. I am not afraid of these things. I don't mind if my life

goes in the service of this nation."¹¹

Finally, one element of Indian culture that cannot be ignored is the diversity of the Indian people. Regardless of how one looks at the Indian people, homogeneity is not a term that comes to mind. There are four different major subcultures located in Tamil-nadu, Kerela, Mysore, and Andhra. There are at least fifteen separate languages spoken and as many as 1,600 dialects. India is made up of Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians. Furthermore, within the Hindu religious community the Indians are divided into five major categories or Varna based on color. The Varna are then divided into caste or jati of which there are approximately 3,000.

Considering the preceding elements of the Indian culture, dharma, sarkar, fatalism and diversity, one begins to realize that the task which any potential leader of India faces is quite formidable. India needs a leader that is capable of motivating the masses to overcome their fatalistic outlook and their differences; a leader who can elevate the expectations of the people. The history of India and its struggle for Independence illustrates this point perfectly. The demand for Independence or swaraj did not at the outset involve the masses. In 1912, when Jawaharlal Nehru was just returning from his years of education in England, independence from Great Britain was a thought in the

minds of only a few extremists within the Congress party. Among those outside the Congress party only the intelligentsia in the cities and some of the lower middle classes (due primarily to the encouragement of Lokmanya Tilak, a Congress Extremist) had any kind of political consciousness at all. But one man changed the political environment radically. Mohandus K. Gandhi was responsible for turning the demand for Independence into a mass movement. Gandhi reached the peasants and motivated them in a way that no one had done before. Gandhi used traditional Indian symbols, such as swaraj and satyagraha or nonviolent non-cooperation to gain the support of the masses. he spoke in terms that they could understand. But Gandhi was no ordinary leader. He was "... not a mere politician in the eyes of the masses," and was said "... to have all the sanctity of a holy man attached to him."¹² Not only did Gandhi exert his influence on the peasants, but he also won over all classes to his way of thinking: "... Gandhi seemed to cast a spell on all classes and groups of people and drew them into one motley crowd struggling in one direction."¹³

Independence would perhaps have been much slower in coming if it were not for Gandhi's extraordinary leadership; likewise, India faced problems after Independence and faces problems today that require the same type of leadership. I do not believe that India

can be effectively led by an ordinary person. If India's leaders in the past have appeared to be somewhat "larger than life", this is only because the situation in India calls for such a leader. We are talking about heroic leadership or as it is commonly referred to, charismatic leadership.

The concept of charisma, however, has given scholars many problems and has caused a great deal of controversy. Burns does not believe that the charismatic or heroic leader is a true leader. Others have questioned the application of the term to the political leader because of its original religious connotations. Other questions include: Can charisma be handed down from one generation to the next? Can the charismatic leader continue to rely on his or her charisma and govern effectively or must charisma be transformed into something more stable? Because I believe that charisma is central to any discussion of leadership in India, we will make an attempt first to define the term and then understand how it operates. It is charisma that will provide the framework for analyzing the leadership of Nehru, Indira and Rajiv Gandhi.

Charismatic leadership is no different from any other type of leadership in that it consists of a relationship between followers and leaders. In fact this relationship is especially important in studying

the charismatic leader. According to Max Weber, in order for a leader to be charismatic he must be perceived as such by his followers: "It is recognition on the part of those subject to authority which is decisive for the validity of charisma."¹⁴ But what is it that the followers perceive? Again according to Weber, the term charisma may be applied "to a certain quality of an individual personality of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities."¹⁵ Carl Friedrich argues, however, that charisma cannot be transferred from its religious origins to the political arena. He contends that there is a big difference between leaders who receive their inspiration from a religious source - the true charismatic - and those leaders totally preoccupied with power - demagogues, such as Hitler. He writes that Weber's typology is "basically unsound and should be discarded."¹⁶ Even if we reject Friedrich's conclusions and accept the fact that Weber was correct in applying charisma to political life, Weber still leaves some doubt as to how to distinguish between leaders who are charismatic and those who are not. Robert Tucker suggests that to avoid mistaking an ordinary leader for a charismatic leader, it is useful to look at whether or not the leader attracts a charismatic following before he achieves office. He

states that "charisma will begin to manifest itself before he [a leader] becomes politically powerful."¹⁷ Charismatic leadership is most common in times of distress. The leader basically presents himself as a type of savior who can lead a group of people out of an unfavorable situation. The charismatic leader tends to display certain qualities. Tucker suggests that most all charismatic leaders have a strong sense of mission. They not only believe in their movement but they have a great deal of faith in their ability to lead the movement.

Most scholars agree that charisma is difficult to sustain. The masses do not remain dependent upon the personal, charismatic qualities of the leader forever. What happens to charisma? According to Weber, charisma becomes depersonalized or "routinized." It is transformed into a permanent routine structure. Once charisma has become routinized it can be transmitted from leader to leader following established rules of succession. The transference of charisma from one leader to another is often accomplished through the hereditary process or sometimes the original charismatic leader hand picks his successor.¹⁸ Other scholars disagree with Weber. Friedrich takes issue with the term "routinization", stating that the terms charisma and routine are contradictory. Even Tucker who agrees basically with Weber's theory of charismatic leadership

believes that Weber should have spoken, instead of the routinization of charisma, of its "transformation into other forms of authority."¹⁷

One of the best methods for explaining what happens to charisma is described by Jean C. Robinson as the institutionalization of charisma. Robinson contends that through this process, the leaders' visions and beliefs are transferred onto the managing institutions of society. She writes that "the specifically passionate qualities of charisma are grafted onto established structures."¹⁸ According to Robinson, a charismatic leader can take two approaches to institutionalize charisma: (1) institution management, and (2) institutional innovation. The first approach "focuses on ensuring that organizational incumbents have an overriding commitment to the charismatic leader, internalize the values represented by his movement, and place the highest priority on achieving the goals he sets forth."¹⁹ Institutional innovation involves the "creation of social and psychological structures that can enlarge the charismatic leader's following."²⁰ In other words the leader in trying to institutionalize his charisma and create a more stable order must pay close attention to his relationship with his followers. Popular participation is crucial to the success of the government, but the charismatic leader must remain the central figure in all policy matters.

Let us return now to the Indian setting. The purpose of this study is to analyze three different Indian leaders, all of the same family, but with widely varying ruling techniques. To what can we attribute their success or failure? I have already made the case that the Indian people needed a charismatic leader during their struggle for Independence. Gandhi and as we will see, Nehru, filled this need. Yet I maintain that India still needed a charismatic leader after Independence. Furthermore, the people in India today are looking for the charismatic leader. I do not believe that Rajiv Gandhi has been recognized as a charismatic leader in the tradition of his mother and grandfather. Rajiv Gandhi, as a result, faces a serious crisis which could ultimately bring about his downfall. At the same time in Chapter III, I will make a case for identifying Indira Gandhi as a charismatic leader, yet she made no attempt to institutionalize her charisma. Her defeat in the 1977 elections and ultimately even her death I believe can be related to this lack of institutionalization. Nehru on the other hand represented the best of both worlds. Nehru was a charismatic leader by almost any definition of the term. He also went to great lengths to institutionalize his charisma. Thus, I believe that the success or failure of each of the three leaders can be related to charisma and the institutionalization of that charisma.

It is not enough, however, to simply label a leader as a charismatic or non-charismatic leader. Leaders and leadership itself are much more complex. In order to gain an understanding of Nehru, Indira and Rajiv, both as a person and a leader, I intend analyze each in terms of three different categories: (1) the nature of the leader; (2) the nature of the leader-follower relationship; (3) the nature of the environment in which the leader exists.

The first category involves the personal factors or characteristics of the leader. These factors can be separated into those qualities which are looked for in all leaders and those which are specific to charismatic leaders. For example all leaders can be analyzed from the standpoint of the health, intelligence, childhood experience, education, philosophical orientation, etc. These factors will be considered in relation to our three Indian leaders. In addition, though we will be looking for other characteristics found primarily in charismatic leaders: "heroic" status in society, a strong sense of a "mission" that they must carry out, and faith in their ability to lead the mission.

The primary focus of the second category will be on the relationship between the leader and the followers. For the charismatic leader, this relationship is perhaps most important. The crucial question is whether the followers recognize the leader as being charismatic.

Recognition on the part of the followers is, as discussed earlier, an important part of the definition of a charismatic leader. The leader-follower relationship is reciprocal. The leader makes the followers, but the followers also make the leader.

The third category encompasses the environmental factors. Here we will consider specific problems that each leader encountered or is encountering. We will be looking at how each leader dealt with or deals with the constraints placed upon his actions by India's constitutional democracy. Other areas for consideration will be economic policy and communalism. The latter is being considered because it is a problem which has confronted all three leaders and poses a serious threat to the stability of India.

Furthermore, each leader, if it has been determined that he or she is a charismatic leader, confronts the task of making that charisma work for him or her. The successful leader will be able to strike a balance between maintaining his charismatic status and institutionalizing that charisma. By attempting to transfer his visions and beliefs onto the institutions of society and thereby emphasizing the institutions' importance, he will not only strengthen his position but will also contribute to the viability of the institutions.

ENDNOTES

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- ⁴ Stogdill 12.
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- ⁷ Burns 18.
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- ¹⁰ Harold Lasswell, Psychopathology and Politics (New York: The Viking Press, 1960) 76.
- ¹¹ "Death in the Garden," Time 12 November 1984.

¹² Michael Brecher, Nehru: A Political Biography (London: Oxford University Press, 1959) 74.

¹³ Jawaharlal Nehru, Toward Freedom: The Autobiography of Jawaharlal Nehru (New York: The John Day Company, 1942) 73.

¹⁴ Max Weber, quoted in Robert C. Tucker, "The Theory of Charismatic Leadership," in Philosophers and Kings: Studies in Leadership, 75.

¹⁵ Max Weber, The Theory of Social and Economic Organization, trans. A.M. Henderson and Talcot Parsons, ed. Talcot Parsons (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947) 358.

¹⁶ Carl J. Friedrich, "Political Leadership and the Problem of the Charismatic Power," The Journal of Politics February 1961: 16.

¹⁷ Robert C. Tucker, "The Theory of Charismatic Leadership," 78.

¹⁸ Weber, The Theory of Social and Economic Organization 363-373.

¹⁹ Tucker, "The Theory of Charismatic Leadership," 91.

²⁰ Jean C. Robinson, "Institutionalizing Charisma," Polity March 1986: 184.

²¹ Robinson 195.

²² Robinson 198.

CHAPTER II

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

The Institutionalization of Charisma

Jawaharlal Nehru is widely recognized as one of the great statesmen of this century. As is the case with most leaders, it is often difficult to determine their exact nature. Their personalities are often complex, and there is sometimes little information available. Nehru is no different in that his personality is quite complex, but the researcher is not hindered by lack of information. Many excellent biographies of Nehru have been written, and Nehru himself was a very prolific writer. During his years in prison Nehru set down his philosophies of life and views on government in a variety of different works, the most prominent of which are Toward Freedom: The Autobiography of Jawaharlal Nehru, Glimpses of World History, and The Discovery of India. These works are unique because Nehru wrote with a good measure of self examination and introspection. Not only are these books an excellent account of Indian history, but they are also a useful tool to help the reader understand Jawaharlal Nehru.

At the top of any list of personal factors used to

analyze leaders is usually childhood experiences. Looking at the leader's childhood is a logical place to begin a study and often provides insight into the leader's motivation or reasons for future acts. Nehru's life as a child was lonely. He was an only child for eleven years until the birth of the first of his two sisters. His life was filled with Western influence. His father, Motilal Nehru, was a distinguished, wealthy barrister who considered himself highly cultured and thoroughly westernized from the food he ate to the clothes he wore. Nehru's family lived in residential areas dominated by European families. From pre-school age until age fifteen Nehru was trained at home by private tutors, mostly British. It is probably due to his extensive contact with English influences that Nehru never really felt any animosity toward the British, despite the fact that he despised India's status as a colony of Great Britain and disliked the way that Indians were treated by the British. Nehru explicitly stated that he felt no hatred for the British people. "I began to resent the practice and behavior of the alien rulers. I had no feeling whatever, as far as I can remember, against individual Englishmen.... In my heart I rather admired the English. "1 In fact in the transition period from British rule to Indian rule Nehru worked very closely with Lord Louis Mountbatten and developed a strong friendship with Mountbatten's wife,

Edwina.

Nehru loved both of his parents, but fear was probably the predominant emotion in his relationship with his father. Nehru's father had a violent temper, and Nehru was often its victim. Yet he admired his father and worked hard to convince him to break away from the moderates of the Congress party. Nehru seemed to need a father figure throughout much of his life. After his father died, Gandhi assumed this position. Nehru respected and loved his mother also and probably tended to confide in her more so than his father. It was Nehru's mother who gave him most of his Hindu religious instruction, although Nehru repeatedly professed to have no religion. He claimed that his outlook on life was most definitely secular, but Gandhi observed that Nehru was closer to God than many who were openly religious.²² Motilal Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi probably played a larger, more influential role in Jawaharlal's life than either his mother, Swarup Rani Nehru, or his wife, Kamala. Nehru wrote that he always felt that he could dominate his mother, and he did not realize how much he valued Kamala until after her death. Nehru neglected Kamala for the most part early in their marriage, which was arranged by his father. He was busy with the Independence movement and had little time for his family. Yet as Kamala began to become more active in the movement herself, his respect for her grew.

Nehru's education abroad began at Harrow, the English "public" school. Nehru never really considered himself to be completely compatible with the other boys at Harrow. He was always more serious and interested in world events which he considered more important than the results of the latest cricket match. His experience at Harrow was not the only time in Nehru's life that he felt out of place. Nehru often felt that he was a strange mixture of the Indian traditional culture and the modern Western culture. He never felt completely at home in the Indian society, yet the West could not claim him either: "I am a stranger and alien in the West. I cannot be of it. But in my own country also, sometimes, I have an exile's feeling."³

Nehru completed his formal education at Cambridge, studying science. He then went to London to read for the Bar at the Inner Temple. He considered going into the Indian Civil Service, but he would have been required to stay in England longer and work away from his parents' home, which would not have pleased his parents. Nehru passed the bar and practiced law upon his return to India, but the law never really held his attention. About the law Nehru wrote: "My profession did not fill me with a whole-hearted enthusiasm."⁴ His attention turned very quickly to the Independence movement and the politics of non-cooperation.

Up to this point in Nehru's life, the leader had an

outlook that was tainted by upper class, or at least upper middle class, influences. He was the product of a wealthy family and an elite educational experience. In 1920, however, he became involved in a movement which "influenced my mental outlook greatly."⁵ Nehru, for the first time came into close contact with the kisans or peasants. Through this contact Nehru became familiar with the plight of the peasant farmers and was ashamed to think that he had been living a comfortable life while others were starving and oppressed by their landlords. Nehru seemed to gain a new understanding of India; a different India, "naked, starving, crushed and utterly miserable."⁶

This period in Nehru's life was important for another reason as well. Through his association with the kisans Nehru began to lose his fear of speaking in public. He began to develop his distinctive style of oratory. Nehru spoke to the crowds in a conversational tone of voice, never really speaking loudly or authoritatively, but maintaining a personal, one-on-one feeling. "It was as if a very sensitive man was thinking aloud, and to hear him thus... was a genuine pleasure."⁷ Nehru recognized the fact that he had an unusual rapport with large audiences and was amazed: "I took to the crowd and the crowd took to me, and yet I never lost myself in it; always I felt apart from it. From my separate mental perch I looked at it critically,

and I never ceased to wonder how I, who was so different in every way from those thousands who surrounded me, different in habits, in desires, in mental and spiritual outlook, had managed to gain good will and a measure of confidence from these people."⁶

Nehru was, as many leaders are, a physical impressive person, which of course aided him in his relationship with his followers. He was of Kashmiri Brahman descent and therefore, was light skinned with handsome features. In addition, for almost all of Nehru's life his health was excellent. Nehru prided himself in keeping fit and in having a strong constitution. He wrote countless numbers of times of his efforts to stay in shape in prison, even though he was often imprisoned for long periods of time and space for exercise was limited. He was proud of his ability to withstand the heat or extreme cold. Even the blows of the British clubs during non-violent demonstrations did not bother Nehru. Nehru valued his health to the point that he became disgusted with himself when he was not on hundred percent fit. In 1923 after returning from his latest stay in prison Nehru became ill with typhus. He writes: "My illness ... was a new experience for me," and that he was "a little proud" of his health,⁷ which seems to be a significant understatement.

One quality which Nehru had in abundance was self

discipline. Not a minute of Nehru's day was ever wasted. He began early in the morning and kept going until late a night. He maintained this grueling schedule almost up to the time of his death in 1964. It was his belief that time should not be wasted. Thus even in prison his days were spent either spinning cloth as a protest against British rule, reading or writing.

If Nehru was long on discipline in most areas of his life, control of his temper was not one of them. Nehru was quick to anger should even the slightest thing go wrong. But at the same time, he was also quick to forgive. For example, at one point in Nehru's tenure as Prime Minister Nehru was outraged due to a traffic jam following a celebration at an Air Force range ten miles outside of Delhi. He was appalled that the guests were forced to wait for hours before they were able to return to Delhi. But when his Director of Intelligence explained to him that it was mathematically impossible to clear an area accessed by a two-lane road of 5,000 cars in less than six hours, and that traffic jams like these were common in Great Britain, Nehru regained his good humor and reportedly never lost his temper in traffic jams again.

Nehru had a sense of humor that enabled him to make jokes about himself and along with it a sense of daring or disregard for his own safety. His penchant for being part of the crowd caused many worries for his security

police. Nehru "was never happier or in a better mood than when he was in a crowd."¹³ Often if the crowd was getting out of control, he would jump into the middle of it to try to divert the crowd's attention.

One final personal factor that influenced Nehru's actions as Prime Minister was Nehru's commitment to socialism. Nehru had always felt an attraction to socialism beginning with his days at Cambridge, but it was not until much later that Nehru became interested in socialism as more than just an academic subject. Nehru became convinced that socialism was the only practical solution for India's poverty stricken masses. There is some indication that Nehru's attraction to socialism developed because of his sympathies toward communism. Yet evidence suggests that Nehru was also well aware of the pitfalls and shortcomings of communism. He spoke of communism in terms of "its contempt for what might be called the moral and spiritual side of life ... [it] deprives human behavior of standards and values. Its unfortunate association with violence encourages a certain evil tendency in human beings."¹⁴ Nehru was above all concerned with the elimination of poverty. Socialism for him was "not merely an economic doctrine which I favor; it is a vital creed which I hold with all my head and heart."¹⁵ According to Nehru it was not possible, though, to speak simply of redistributing the wealth because "there is no existing wealth for you to

divide."¹³ The task for India and Nehru as Prime Minister was to build wealth and then divide it equitably. Once faced with the realities of governing, Nehru found that his policies could not always live up to his socialist rhetoric, but his deep belief in socialism was as much a part of his personality as his sense of humor. As a leader his concern for the masses helped him to develop the type of relationship with his followers that is characteristic of charismatic leaders.

We have discussed up to this point personality factors that are not particular to the charismatic leader. All leaders can be analyzed by examining the preceding characteristics. But there are special factors to look for in leaders who are being considered as charismatic. In Chapter 1 it was suggested that one should look for "heroic" status in society, larger than life mission, and faith in their ability to lead the mission. Evidence abounds in Nehru's case that these factors are present.

Nehru was definitely a hero in Indian society. "He was the idol of the crowd and wherever he went, at whatever time of the day or night, vast crowds gathered round him."¹⁴ Even Nehru himself recognized the fact that he had become a hero in the eyes of the masses: "It was true that I had achieved ... an unusual degree of popularity with the masses; ... to young men and women I was a bit of a hero, and a halo of romance

seemed to surround me in their eyes."¹⁵ There were many reasons for Nehru's popularity. First, the Indian people viewed Mahatma Gandhi as a hero, and since Nehru had Gandhi's blessing, the feelings of the masses toward Gandhi were transferred to Nehru. Also Nehru had the ability to inspire the masses to do what they would not even consider doing for an ordinary leader. One Nehru follower said, "I was won over by Pandit Nehru's personality, charm, courtesy, learning and humanity. I came back with the conviction that I had met the man whom I would serve without the slightest strain on my loyalty and whose word would be enough for me to undertake the most serious responsibilities and hazardous tasks which might confront me."¹⁶ Even toward the end of Nehru's reign as Prime Minister tens of thousands of Indians turned out to see him when he made any kind of public appearance.

The "mission" in Nehru's life which aided him in gaining the adoration of the masses was first the struggle for Independence, and then the constant challenge of holding the new democracy together. Nehru was considered the "symbol of India's struggle for freedom."¹⁷ Nehru had "the reputation of an indomitable fighter for freedom."¹⁸ Nehru also had a strong sense of this mission. Upon returning from England after college, Nehru could have continued to pursue the more profitable legal career, but instead, he chose to work

full time for the independence movement. He renounced all Western ways, even adopting the traditional homespun dress instead of Western suits. He felt so strongly about the right of the Indian people to be free that he sacrificed his own freedom many times for the cause. For many years prior to Independence, Nehru was in prison almost as much as he was out of prison - over nine years. Once Independence was won, Nehru then faced the challenge of ensuring the success of a new democracy which faced many problems that threatened the stability of the government.

Was Nehru convinced, however, that he was the right person to lead this mission? At times it appears that Nehru had great faith in his ability to lead. He recognized the influence that he had over the masses and even admitted to needing this type of relationship: "... the crowd had filled some inner need of mine. The notion that I could influence them and move them to action gave me a sense of authority over their minds and hearts; this satisfied to some extent, my will to power."¹⁷ But at the same time Nehru questioned his suitability as a leader of a democracy. He wrote in an article, published anonymously, in 1937 that "Men like Jawaharlal ... are unsafe in a democracy. He calls himself a democrat and a socialist and no doubt he does so in all earnestness. ... but a little twist and he might become a dictator."¹⁸ Despite the fact that Nehru

might have questioned at times whether or not he should lead, there was almost no question in the minds of his followers as to his fitness for leadership.

The faith of Nehru's followers in his ability to lead more than made up for the occasional doubts that Nehru entertained. The Indian people are continually looking for a hero to worship, a charismatic leader. One Indian has said, "We are a country of hero-worshippers." About Nehru the same person said, "If Panditji asked me to drown myself in that well tomorrow morning, I would do it."²¹ Thus, for Nehru, there is no doubt that his followers recognized his charismatic nature. The loyalty of Nehru's followers extended beyond mere words. Twice, when Nehru attempted to resign from office, in 1954 and 1958, the Indian people, more specifically the members of Congress, persuaded him to withdraw his resignation. His followers simply could not contemplate the thought of an India without Nehru.

The leader-follower relationship in India is influenced to a great extent by India's political culture. Indians on the whole do not have high expectations from society or government.²² The emphasis is on the duty of the individual, not the rights of the individual. Thus, it becomes extremely important for a leader to demonstrate that he or she can fulfill the duties of the office efficiently. Once a leader has shown that he or she is functionally efficient, a

significant threshold has been crossed. Nehru was fortunate in that he was able to prove himself in this regard at an early age. At the age of forty, in 1929 Nehru was elected president of the Indian National Congress. He was elected president again in 1936 and 1946. When the time came to choose a Prime Minister in 1947, Nehru had had ample opportunity to convince the Indian people that he was capable of holding such a position. Nehru was also aided by the fact that he was perceived by his followers to be a man of high moral standards. Indians may not expect their leaders to provide large amounts of material benefits. In fact many times there is not much concern as to the specific programs of the leaders. More important is the fact that the leader is "a moral man."²³ Leaders tend to "stress the sacrifices they have made, their exemplary character, and their previous service to the nation...."²⁴ There could be no doubt about Nehru's qualifications in each of the preceding areas. He had sacrificed wealth and a life of leisure as well as his freedom for the nine years spent in prison. His character was above reproach, and none could dispute his record of service for India.

The picture we have of Nehru, the leader, is of a well-educated attractive individual from a stable family background with a deep concern for the welfare of the masses. We have also established the fact that Nehru

was no ordinary leader, but can be considered a charismatic leader. The next step in our analysis is to determine how Nehru used his charisma. Was Nehru able to institutionalize his charisma? I believe that the answer is yes. Part of the reason that Nehru was so successful in doing so is that he was able to build viable organizations and institutions that reflected his beliefs and visions.

To illustrate this point let us first turn to an examination of the Indian constitution. We will look at Nehru's involvement with the drafting of the document and how as Prime Minister he worked within the boundaries of the Constitution. Nehru believed in democracy. Given his immense popularity with the Indian people at the time of Independence, Nehru could have easily established a dictatorship. But Nehru firmly believed in government with the consent of the people. Nehru believed that the "fullest democracy" should be given to the people, with "universal adult suffrage, to be followed by education and a good standard of living." Nehru did not hold center stage in drafting the constitution, but he was most definitely an important behind the scenes influence on its outcome. Most scholars believe that the stability of the institutions in India is due to a large part to Nehru's insistence on the democratic ideal as the cornerstone of the constitution. The foundation for the constitution

was laid by Nehru in the Objectives Resolution presented to the Constituent Assembly in August 1947. The provisions of the Objectives Resolution came as no great surprise to the Constituent Assembly. Nehru had made his philosophies known almost twenty years before in the Karachi Resolution which was inspired and probably drafted by Nehru.²⁷ This resolution was basically an outline of what would be contained in the Indian Constitution. The Objectives Resolution provided for an Independent Sovereign India, a federal form of government and safeguards for minorities. It also called for the guarantee of social, economic and political justice, equality of status and opportunity, freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship, vocation, association and action.²⁸

In addition to drafting the Objectives Resolution, Nehru also chaired three important committees: States, Union Powers and Union Constitution. Nehru was a believer in a strong central government, and the Indian Constitution conforms to this belief. Even though it sets up a federal form of government it is heavily biased toward the central government or the Center as it is referred to in Indian government. Nehru did not believe that the government governs best that governs least. He realized that centralization of government would infringe upon the rights of the individual but at the same time he acknowledged the "impossibility of

escaping centralization in modern society." Nehru insisted upon having the State governors chosen by the central government. He also recommended that if there were any implied powers resulting from the powers expressly granted to the Center, such as defense, foreign affairs and communication, those implied powers should be reserved for the Center. To safeguard the rights of the individual Nehru believed that every person should have a voice in the government; therefore, he proposed granting universal suffrage. There was however some concern about which language this "voice" would use. During the years of British rule English had been the language most frequently used in the government. But as the masses from the smaller villages became more involved in government, other languages began to be heard. At the time the Constitution was drafted it was agreed that English would continue to be the official language until 1965 when a change to Hindi would be made. Hindi was spoken primarily in the North; therefore, those in the South were understandably unhappy at the thought of Hindi becoming the national language. Not long after the adoption of the Constitution the language debate came to a head. Nehru, whose hero status among the Indian people was firmly established, was able to bring about a compromise. He convinced the Hindi advocates that the transition to Hindi should be gradual and that English should remain

an "official language" even after 1965.

The drafting of the Indian Constitution was an exercise in the building of institutions. Nehru considered it his duty to maintain and strengthen those institutions. The Constitution called for the establishment of a parliamentary government with a President aided by the Prime Minister. The President appoints a Council of Ministers headed by the Prime Minister who serves at the pleasure of the lower house or Lok Sabha. In reality though it is the Prime Minister who performs the executive functions of state. The President acts as a matter of practice only on the advice of the Prime Minister for the most part.

Nehru believed that a democracy must contain a truly representative parliamentary body based on majority rule but also with the opportunity for the opposition to make its views known. Nehru attempted to make the Parliament an essential part of the fabric of Indian society. He was present in Parliament on a daily basis and even participated frequently in the debates. He encouraged the ventilation of grievances by the opposition and was proud of the fact that there were many opportunities within the parliament to do so, for example Question Periods, adjournment motions and half-an-hour discussions. Nehru tried "to create an attachment to the parliamentary institution among his people."³⁹ During Nehru's terms as Prime Minister

Parliament was to a great extent the Congress party. The Congress party, the party of Independence, was still unified and was always in the majority.³¹

As hard as Nehru worked to see that Parliament became institutionalized he worked doubly hard to keep the Congress party together, for as he stated in a speech to Congress members: "it is the Congress which is responsible for keeping India together."³² Nehru might not have been able to convince the people of India that the Congress was indispensable, but they were definitely convinced that Nehru was indispensable; thus, they allowed him to control the Congress party to a great extent. For example, in 1951, Nehru resigned from the Working Committee of the Congress because he felt that the members were too conservative. He did not agree to return until a new committee with members chosen by him was selected. From this point on Nehru was the undisputed leader of Congress. He was president until 1954 and then chose his own successor. There is however a certain amount of irony present in this situation. It is entirely possible that Nehru, who was so concerned with the unity of the Congress party, might have actually contributed to its disintegration. His dominance of the party was so complete that the party was unable to become institutionalized in and of itself.

India's Constitution also has the machinery to allow the creation of a dictatorship - the emergency

clause.³³ If the Prime Minister believes that a threatening situation exists, either caused by war or internal disturbance, failure of constitutional machinery in a state or for financial reasons, he may advise the President to declare an emergency. The declaration of an emergency means that the center can intervene in the governments of the States. The Center can exercise the legislative powers of the States and direct the States in the exercise of their executive powers. Nehru, however, as we have seen was ever conscious of how easy it would be to become a dictator; therefore, he used the emergency powers sparingly. For example, Nehru did order the Center to intervene in the government of Kerala when it became apparent that the Communist Party was gaining a strong foothold and the possibility of civil war was imminent. It should be noted though that Nehru had tolerated the Communist government in Kerala for twenty-eight months, even though "that Government had created many constitutional difficulties and had ... let loose a reign of terror in the State."³⁴ Nehru had also called for the imposition of an emergency in 1962 when India was attacked by China. But Nehru had given a great deal of thought to the conflict between the freedom of the individual and the security of the state:

For my part I cherish the freedom of the individual. I do not want even in the name of the State the freedom of the individual to be crushed. But undoubtedly the freedom of

certain individuals has to be curbed for the safety of the State, if the occasion arises.

Nehru was aware that maintaining order and stability in the Nation was essential to the existence of democracy. At the same time, though, his strong commitment to the freedom of the individual and his sensitivity to anything which smacked of dictatorship kept him from abusing those powers in the constitution.

It is obvious that Nehru's status as a charismatic leader helped to ensure the acceptance of the Indian Constitution. Nehru was able to transfer his visions and beliefs onto the provisions of the document as well as the institutions themselves. Now let us turn to a second area for analysis: the economy. Here too, Nehru's charisma, his immense popularity with the Indian people, helped him become the center of the planning process in India following Independence. Nehru was in such a strong position that he became "the central focus of attention for all pressure groups. ... He is the pivot around which discussion and decision revolve."

The motivating factor behind Nehru's actions as Prime Minister in the economic sector was his deep belief in socialism. As we have seen this belief is an essential part of Nehru's character; therefore, Nehru worked hard to sell his economic plans to the country as a whole. He wanted to convince the people that planning was necessary to bring about economic and political development. To Nehru, political democracy meant

nothing except as a means to obtain "a gradually increasing measure of economic democracy" Nehru also believed that the concept of equality included economic equality. The right to vote meant little to a starving man. It was this vision of a socialist India that Nehru wished to have implemented.

As early as 1937 Nehru had established a Planning Committee in the Congress party. In 1950 Nehru urged the establishment of a permanent Planning Commission. Nehru was the chairman of the Commission and devoted much of his time to planning problems. The Commission members, who were responsible to the Cabinet, worked in terms of long-range goals or Five Year Plans. The First Five Year Plan (1951-56) emphasized agriculture on the assumption that if India's food problems could be solved, then large-scale industrialization could be dealt with later. The First Plan was successful, but Nehru wanted something more ambitious. He wanted a change in emphasis from agriculture to industry. Thus, the Second Five Year Plan called for an expansion in publicly controlled industry. Even with this expansion, however, private enterprise still controlled most of Indian industry. Part of the explanation lay in the fact that Nehru, while he believed that socialism was the solution to India's problems, was in favor of a gradual transition. He wanted to cooperate with the private sector; not destroy it. He stated: "I do not

want State socialism of that extreme kind in which the State is all powerful and governs practically all activities."³³ Congress had in 1955 accepted socialism in the Avadi Resolution which called for planning to take place "with a view to the establishment of a socialistic pattern of society, where the principal means of production are under social ownership or control, production is progressively speeded up and there is equitable distribution of the wealth."³⁴ Nehru claimed to have little to do with the Avadi Resolution, but most scholars believe that Nehru was in fact the driving force behind it. Although Nehru denied it, some speculated that he was influenced by what he saw on a recent trip to China.

The Third Five Year Plan expressed the hope that the national income would triple by 1976; that per capita income would rise by 90 percent; that national income saved and invested would rise to about 19 percent; and that the proportion of the labor force engaged in agricultural pursuits would decline to about 60 percent.³⁵ The Third Plan also called for an increase in spending and investment in the public sector to be concentrated in the expansion of government owned industry.

By the time of Nehru's death in 1964 it had become clear that Nehru's policies did not live up to his pre-Independence socialist rhetoric; however, India made

great strides in economic development from 1947 to 1964, and they were primarily due to the leadership of Nehru. He was not as successful in the area of land reform as he might have wished. The Zamindari system was strongly entrenched in India at this time. In this system, the Zamindars or landlords reaped the benefits of being the intermediary between the State, the ultimate owner of the land, and the tenant, the actual tiller of the soil. This system was gradually abolished under Nehru, but obstacles to true reform still existed. Tenants were still unable to own land because the cost, now paid directly to the state, was usually much too high. Nehru was committed to the idea of "land to the tiller" and was against appeasing the big landlords. When several court decisions were made in favor of the latter, Nehru introduced an amendment to the Constitution which defined more precisely the State's power to acquire property. Nehru also maintained that one solution would be cooperative farming in which the state would provide centralized management of the land which would be jointly farmed by the peasants. At his urging, the 1959 Congress at Nagpur formally adopted a resolution favoring "cooperative joint farming." Yet there has been little popular response to this program. Thus, even though Nehru made several attempts at land reform, the outcome was less successful than many had hoped.

Nehru was particularly proud of his involvement

with the Community Development Program, India's "quiet rural revolution." This program was designed to help India's village population learn about sanitation, better housing, and better farming techniques. It was intended to improve the quality of life for India's overwhelmingly rural population. In addition the program was aimed at increasing agricultural production, income and employment. The key to the success of the program was self help. The Center officials provided certain material benefits such as new farming techniques or a health clinic, but decisions rested primarily with the village. The program had its drawbacks, but on the whole it was successful especially in convincing the normally fatalistic peasants that change was indeed possible and even beneficial.

A third and final area that merits our attention is Nehru's ability to deal with the communal strife that plagued India at the time of Independence and afterward. Communalism has been defined as "a catchall term widely used in India to denote any sectarian appeal or allegiance based on caste or religion."⁴¹ Nehru called communalism "a narrow group mentally basing itself on a religious community but in reality concerned with political power and patronage for the group concerned."⁴² Nehru was strongly opposed to any form of communalism. In this area Nehru faced both failure and success. The failure was manifested in the partition of

India. Nehru never subscribed to the theory that India consisted of two nations - Hindu and Muslim. He reasoned that if nationality were based on religion, India would consist of more than two nations. The idea seemed absurd to him. He wrote:

Of two brothers one may be a Hindu, another a Muslim; they would belong to two different nations. These two nations existed in varying proportions in most of the villages of India. They were nations which had no boundaries; they overlapped. A Bengali Muslim and a Bengali Hindu, living together, speaking the same language and having much the same traditions and customs, belonging to different nations. All this was very difficult to grasp.*

Nehru was unable to prevent the division of India into two nations. The achievement of Independence was for Nehru tinged with sorrow because he could not prevent the formation of Pakistan, a Muslim nation.

Nehru was determined, however, that India would be a secular state. Nehru did not want the differences in religious sects to be carried over into the government. In this area Nehru achieved perhaps his greatest success. Nehru spoke many times of the importance of the secular state. "The Government of a country like India," he wrote, "with many religions that have secured great and devoted followings for generations, can never function satisfactorily in the modern age except on a secular basis."*** A quick glance at the Indian Constitution shows the strong foundation for the secular state. The Constitution abolished the system of

separate communal electorates in which certain seats were reserved for Muslims in the electorate. The Constitution includes the right of the individual to equal treatment by the State irrespective of religion and the right to freedom of religion. Furthermore, the Constitution states that State funds may not be used to promote religion.⁴⁵

Following Independence Hindu communalist tendencies were very strong in India. Nehru wanted to assure the Muslims and other religious minorities that their rights would be protected. He integrated members of minority religious groups into his government by appointing them as cabinet ministers, judges and ambassadors. Nehru persisted in his efforts to prevent India from becoming a Hindu nation. In Congress he fought against a federal law which would prohibit the slaughter of cattle. Nehru declared that he would resign from the Prime Ministership if the law were passed. The law did not pass. Nehru was also instrumental in revising the Hindu Code. He succeeded in persuading Congress to enact the Hindu Code Bill which Nehru considered essential to establishing a uniform code of civil law. Civil law in India at that time was anything but uniform. Hindus, Muslims and other religious groups were governed by different laws concerning marriage, divorce and inheritance of property. Nehru wanted at least to bring Hindu law into conformity with a uniform civil code.

Laws were passed that allowed daughters to inherit their father's estates; permitting divorce and intercaste marriage; and marriage between members of different religious groups without requiring the marriage partners to give up their religion first. Nehru also believed that a truly secular society could not exist unless the cast system was abolished. A society in which certain members were discriminated against in accordance with religious beliefs could not be properly secular. Thus, the Indian Constitution abolishes untouchability and states that no person should be denied access to shops or restaurants on the basis of religion, race, sex or caste.

Throughout Nehru's tenure as Prime Minister he "maintained a continuous onslaught on the ideas of communalism." Nehru succeeded in weakening the forces of communalism. But while Nehru might have forced communalism into retreat, communal strife certainly did not disappear in India. As with his leadership in relation to the Constitution and economic policy, Nehru was able to implement his ideas and visions because of his popularity. He was able to institutionalize his charisma. He was not always successful, forexample in implementing his socialist visions, but, Nehru the charismatic leader was far more successful than he would have been without his charismatic status. Time after time Nehru's policies were accepted because disagreement

was equated with disrespect and simply because he was Jawaharlal Nehru, the freedom fighter and hero of the masses.

ENDNOTES

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³ Nehru, Autobiography 353.

⁴ Nehru, Autobiography 41.

⁵ Nehru, Autobiography 56.

⁶ Nehru, Autobiography 57.

⁷ Hiren Mukerji, "Nehru and Parliament," in The Nehru Legacy: A Symposium (New Dehli: National Book Club, 1966) 32.

⁸ Nehru, Autobiography 76.

⁹ Nehru, Autobiography 112.

¹⁰ B.N. Mullik, My Years with Nehru: 1948-1964 (Bombay: Allied Publishers, 1972) 51.

¹¹ Michael Brecher, Nehru: A Political Biography (London: Oxford University Press, 1959) 605.

¹² Nehru, Autobiography 401.

¹³ Das 145.

¹⁴ Mullik 52.

¹⁵ Nehru, Autobiography 152.

¹⁶ Mullik 24.

¹⁷ Brecher 390.

18 Brecher 597.

19 Nehru, Autobiography 154.

20 Nehru, Autobiography 436.

21 Brecher 597.

22 Rajni Kothari, Politics in India (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1970) 28.

23 Robert N. Kearney, ed., Politics and Modernization in South and Southeast Asia (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1975) 56.

24 Kearney 56.

25 For a discussion of the importance of institutions and building organizations in political development, see Samuel Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968)

26 Das 110.

27 There is some doubt as to the true author of the Karachi Resolution, but it is believed that Nehru played a large role in writing the document.

28 Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, India's Constitution (New Delhi: Publications Division, 1969) 8-9.

29 Das 169.

30 Brecher 470.

31 The Congress controlled over 70 percent of the seats in Parliament.

32 Brecher 435.

93 Part XVIII of the Indian Constitution deals with the Emergency provisions.

94 Mullik 359.

95 Das 187.

96 Brecher 523.

97 Das 117.

98 Brecher 532.

99 Brecher 528.

*0 George Rosen, Democracy and Economic Change in India (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1976) 127.

*1 Welles Hagen, After Nehru, Who? (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1963) 13.

*2 Jawarhal Nehru, The Discovery of India (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1959) 303.

*3 Nehru, Discovery 315.

*4 Donald E. Smith, Nehru and Democracy: The Political Thought of an Asian Democrat (Bombay: Orient Longmans Private Ltd., 1958) 154.

*5 The articles of the Constitution dealing with religion can be found in Part III of the Indian Constitution under Fundamental Rights.

*6 Brecher 626.

CHAPTER III

INDIRA GANDHI

Charisma without Institutionalization

Indira Gandhi became Prime Minister for the first time in 1967. Indira was similar to her father, Jawaharlal Nehru, in some ways, yet in many ways her leadership as Prime Minister presents a striking contrast to Nehru's philosophies and methods. It is somewhat difficult for the researcher to access the true nature of Indira Gandhi's personality and motivation for power. Unlike her father Indira was not in the habit of continuously questioning her motives and examining her innermost feelings. In addition, in many of the interviews granted by Indira, especially during the Emergency, she was always on the defensive, thus, we are not really sure if the "true" Indira is speaking or not. She also had few close friends or confidants. Nevertheless, we can still obtain a reasonably accurate picture of Indira Gandhi, the leader, from biographies, speeches and articles of which there are many.

The impression that comes across most clearly of Indira is that of a very lonely person. She was the only daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru and Kamala Nehru. Her

childhood life was far from normal. First, her father was involved in the Independence movement and by his own admission felt that he neglected his wife and child. For many years Indira was without a father because he was in prison. Her mother was ill much of the time, but she was very devoted to Indira. As a result, Indira became quite attached to her mother. Kamala Nehru was not well liked by the women in the Nehru family and was looked down on for her nonwestern ways and less than impeccable table manners. Indira could sense her mother's unhappiness and felt deep sympathy for her mother's situation. At a later age, Indira remembered, "We were very close to each other. ... I loved her deeply and when I thought she was being wronged I fought for her and quarrelled with other people."¹ Of all the Nehrus though, Motilal was most fond of Kamala. He had, of course, chosen Kamala as Jawaharlal's bride and despite the presence of his two daughters, Kamala quickly became Motilal's favorite. It was only logical, then, that when Indira was born she too became a favorite of Motilal. Indira's Grandmother, Swarup Rani, lamented the fact that Jawaharlal had not had a son but was admonished by Motilal who said, "Have we made any distinction between our son and daughters in their upbringing? Do you not love them equally? This daughter of Jawahar, for all you know, may prove better than a thousand sons."² Whether Motilal, too, would

have preferred a boy is debated but is irrelevant. Indira's status as the favorite grandchild was firmly entrenched. She was probably one of the rare persons who never was the victim of Motilal's temper. In addition to being aware of the cold treatment of her mother, Indira was also conscious of the rocky relationship between her parents. As a result Indira was an insecure child. Her insecurity was only intensified after her father began making his frequent trips to jail.

Indira, like her father, was taught to appreciate Hinduism by her mother, but also like her father, she did not consider herself to be particularly religious. Both her parents believed in religious tolerance although Kamala emphasized the Hindu traditions and Nehru tried to instill healthy skepticism toward organized religion. It is not surprising then that Indira's religious beliefs have been questioned from time to time by her followers. She has been accused of being an atheist and at the same time of being extremely religious. She stated her religious belief in this way: "I don't believe in God in that particular way as a person. I do believe or feel that each person has something within him which for want of a better word one would call 'divine' but I certainly don't believe in a bearded gentleman sitting up above."³

Indira's childhood was steeped in the Independence

movement, and she became involved at a very early age. It was not long before the Western dresses vanished and even her favorite doll abandoned. One episode frequently mentioned by biographers and Indira herself describes the young Indira's dilemma when a visitor pointed out the fact that even though Indira wore homespun or Khadi she carried a foreign doll. Faced with a choice between her favorite doll and the movement, Indira chose the latter: "Quivering with tension, she carried the doll to the roof terrace and set fire to it."* She was said to be ill with a temperature for the next three days and from that episode forward she hated striking matches.

The Independence movement had a disruptive effect on Indira's schooling as well as her home life. Since Jawaharlal was in prison much of the time, Indira's schooling was often left to Motilal to decide. But Motilal and Jawaharlal had different ideas about the type of education that Indira should have. Their debate over the proper private school - British Government-run schools were definitely out of the question - resulted in Indira being tutored at home. Indira did profit from the fact that Jawaharlal Nehru had a vast store of knowledge and was only too willing to impart it to her. Indira's informal education began in 1926 when the Nehru family traveled to Europe for medical treatment for Kamala. Nehru served as Indira's tour guide and

lecturer, taking her to museums and historic places. She was also able to spend some time as a student in two schools in Switzerland which gave her the opportunity to study with students from other countries and with some very fine teachers. Upon returning to India, Nehru was soon thrown in jail again, during which time he decided that he could help with Indira's education by writing her letters. The lectures covered broad areas, from the origins of life to a history of India. They were later published as Glimpses of World History and Letters from a Father to His Daughter.

Next, Indira was sent to a boarding school in Poona, where she was not particularly happy. Motilal had just died. Her father was in prison and her mother was far away in a sanitorium. She then at age seventeen finally arrived at the school which pleased her immensely and contributed a great deal to her way of thinking. The school was actually a university led by the famous and respected Indian poet/philosopher Rabindranath Tagore. Indira was there for only nine months yet in that short time she developed "a passion for life in all its multiplicity." She summed up the profound effect of the experience this way: "I think it was a sort of unfolding of my personality, and I was deeply influenced by Gurudev [Tagore]. In fact, I would say he completely changed my life."³

After passing the entrance examinations, Indira

spent four years at Somerville College, Oxford, where she studied History, Economics and Political Science. Up to this time, Indira was thought to be a shy and reserved person. No one would have suspected that she would be a future Prime Minister. There were two incidents however that shed some light on her true personality. First this shy, reserved individual, as a child liked to pretend that she was Joan of Arc - hardly a fitting role model for a person with no ambition. Second during her years in England, Indira decided that she wanted to marry Feroze Gandhi, a Parsi. This decision caused some discussion within the Nehru family who would have preferred to see Indira marry a Kashmiri Brahman, but Indira would listen to no objections and eventually won their approval. This certainly is not the action of a shy, demure, easily intimidated person. The qualities in her personality that would become more pronounced during her tenure as Prime Minister were beginning to emerge; indeed they were probably always present since her childhood. Yet Indira at the time of her marriage showed no indication of acquiring the charismatic status which would enable her to be a successful Prime Minister.

Following her return to India, Indira threw herself into the Independence movement full time with Feroze. In keeping with family tradition she spent thirteen months in prison for her activities. During the years

following Independence, Indira devoted much of her time to two things: raising her sons, Rajiv and Sanjay, and being the official hostess for her Father who was Prime Minister at the time. Indira was conscious of her own lonely childhood and was "determined to devote full time to my children." However circumstances were such that she was not able to give them her undivided attention. Her father being without a wife needed a hostess. Indira devoted a great deal of her time to filling this position. For Indira, the thought of Nehru "on his own in Delhi, dependent simply on civil servants and domestic servants, without any love or family life was unbearable...." Because of her duties as hostess, Indira was finding less and less time for Feroze. The status of their relationship was a constant source of Indian gossip. There is no doubt about the fact that a certain amount of tension existed between Feroze and Indira. Feroze understood Indira's obligation to her father, yet resented being known as the nation's son-in-law. Despite their disagreements, there was never any actual legal separation. Indira was only 43 when Feroze died, and his death affected her deeply. It is thought that she planned to devote more time to Feroze after Nehru no longer needed her as hostess. Following Feroze's death, Indira spent the next four years taking care of her Father who was ill much of the time following his stroke in January 1964.

Indira's preoccupation with her Father and family did not prevent her from entering political life. During the time she served as her father's hostess she became increasingly involved in public affairs of her own interests. but yet she still denied that she had any political ambitions. Welles Hangen, author of After Nehru, Who? , wrote that "no public figure in India disclaims political ambition so insistently and none is more disbelieved."⁹ Indira held her first political position in 1956 when she was named a member of the Congress Party's Working Committee. In 1957 she managed her father's election campaign since Nehru had little time to visit his constituency. Finally in 1959, she was asked to become President of the Indian National Congress, a position which was hard to refuse given the fact that both her father and grandfather had held the same position numerous times. Following Nehru's death, Indira was not ready to step into his shoes. In fact it was reported that she would burst into tears when condolences were offered. But three years later, after the death of Lal Bahadur Shastri, Indira launched her career as Prime Minister.

Indira Gandhi was not a physically imposing leader, only five feet, two inches, and was said to be "much more attractive than her sinister looking newspaper pictures."⁹ She was soft-spoken and dressed simply, but she knew how to choose the proper attire for the

occasion. She would typically dress according to the custom of the province or area of the country she was touring. When in Western countries a mink coat would be added to the traditional Indian sari. Her health was always a concern for her family. She was a frail child, frequently sick, and was advised in later years not to have children. But despite her ill health, she seemed to have a great deal of physical stamina and ability to withstand discomfort. When campaigning for her father in 1957, she suffered from a painful kidney ailment, but still managed to keep a rigorous schedule, speaking to thousands each day. Some even speculated that Indira used her health to work in her favor: "My own impression is that her frail appearance and well-publicized infirmities are deceptive. They win her sympathy at home and abroad but never seem to prevent her from taking on any job, no matter how arduous, that interests her."¹⁰ Her health certainly did not hinder her performance as Prime Minister. She exhibited "a kind of steely energy with which it was difficult for those accompanying her to keep pace."¹¹ In 1967 she even campaigned with a broken nose, the result of a stone thrown by an angry member of the crowd.

Like Nehru, Indira was a highly disciplined person. Discipline was important she said: "For every country or anything to function you must have discipline. If a person is undisciplined, that person cannot function. I

could not be a Prime Minister if I were an undisciplined person."¹² Her belief in self-discipline was manifested in her strict schedule and in her personal habits. Not only did she believe in discipline for herself but also in discipline for all Indians. I believe that this fact could partially explain the enactment of the Emergency in 1975. Indira said not long after the Emergency was imposed, "Either you have that self-discipline or guidance has to be give."¹³ In her mind, the opposition did not have the discipline to stay with the right course for India, so she had to impose her guidance more forcefully.

The Indira Gandhi who imposed the Emergency was however not the same Indira Gandhi who was hostess to Nehru. Meek and mild mannered Indira had been transformed into a charismatic politician. When and how did this transformation take place and how can we be sure that Indira actually qualified as a charismatic leader? Let us once again examine the three criteria for a charismatic leader: "heroic" status in society, larger than life mission and faith in their ability to lead the mission. How does Indira measure up to these criteria?

Just as Nehru benefited from Gandhi's popularity, Indira benefited from Nehru's charismatic status. There is no doubt that charisma can be transferred from one leader to another, from one generation to the next. But

Indira had to work harder to capitalize on and develop her charisma because unlike Nehru, who was given Gandhi's "blessing", Indira was not named as Nehru's heir apparent. Nehru never openly indicated that he wanted Indira to take over on his death. Not that he was displeased with Indira's involvement in politics, but Nehru valued democracy too much to approve of a monarchical succession. He would not have wanted the Indian democracy that he worked so hard to achieve, to be brought down by a family dynasty. Thus, instead of acquiring almost instant charisma, Indira was forced to cultivate a following; to develop the charisma that was hers by birth. Indira worked hard at this task, and her efforts were not in vain. Her charisma surpassed possibly even that of her father. In 1967 it was written that "as a charismatic politician, Indira Gandhi has no peer in India today. Her popularity, especially among women is immense."¹⁴ Large crowds turned out at political meetings. It was said that even Nehru did not draw such crowds. It was perhaps not so much that, like Nehru, she was the hero of the masses, but that she "inspired awe from them."¹⁵ A true "hero" like Nehru comes along only rarely, but this fact should not diminish the importance or status of Indira's relationship with her followers. Indira commanded a kind of loyalty toward her that could only be given to an extremely popular leader. An unpopular leader could

never have imposed emergency rule for nineteen months, survive biting criticism of her regime culminating in an election loss, only to be reelected two years later. During the Emergency, she took advantage of her charismatic status by "building herself a personality cult: billboards and buses everywhere were covered with signs and posters displaying her picture and quoting her sayings."¹⁶ She hoped that her popularity would ensure the acceptance of her extraordinary actions. In the beginning of the Emergency evidence suggested that her plan was working. Rule by the Center was not objected to and was even popular with the masses.¹⁷ She managed to sustain that support for over one and one-half years. A slogan that was made popular during Indira's tenure as Prime Minister seems to sum up her status within the Indian society: India is Indira; Indira is India.

Indira had a remarkably acute sense of her "mission" and spent her life working to fulfill it. Indira's life was politics, from the time when she was twelve years old and organized the Monkey Brigade to aid the Independence movement, to her elevation to the office of Prime Minister. It was only logical that this third generation Nehru should take up where her father left off. It has been suggested that Indira left her husband to be Nehru's hostess not only out of devotion to her father, but also out of a sense of duty to the Prime Minister, the nation's most powerful official. It

is also true that living with the Prime Minister provided a wealth of experience and served as an excellent training ground for her own future as Prime Minister. Her duties as hostess extended far beyond planning dinner parties and seating arrangements. Especially as Nehru grew older, many of the affairs of state were brought before Indira and she would submit the important items to her father. Nehru himself sometimes directed problems to Indira. Indira's "mission" however was not simply to become a politician. Indira wanted to become a powerful politician. This is not to say that she wanted to become an Indian dictator, but she unquestionably wanted to be in a position of power. Even though she repeatedly denied that she had any political ambition, all her actions were calculated to enhance her position. During her term as Congress President in 1959-60 she used her influence to unseat the Communist government in Kerala and successfully allied Congress with the Muslim League, a group intensely disliked by the leaders of Congress. Yet she stepped down after only eleven months, she said, to take care of her ailing father although it was suspected that "she realized that she was not yet senior enough to run the party as she wanted."¹²⁹ The realization that she lacked a sufficient power base also probably played a role in her decision not to push for the office of Prime Minister following her father's death.

When the right time came, Indira was prepared to take up the reins. Unlike Nehru, Indira Gandhi seemed to have no doubts about her ability to lead the nation. In 1966 one of her friends speaking about Indira said, "As a Nehru, she felt it was her destiny. She feels her background gives her a mission she must carry out."¹³

The Syndicate, a group of powerful, prominent members of Congress, did not believe in 1966 that Indira was capable of leading India. Shortly after she assumed office, Indira proved to them that she was not simply a lump of soft clay waiting for the hands of more experienced politicians to mold her. The incident that effectively put the Syndicate out of power and helped Indira consolidate her own power was the Presidential election in 1969. The Syndicate had planned to nominate their candidate - Sanjivva Reddy - who, once in power, would try to oust Indira. When Indira heard of the plan, she switched her support to another candidate and told members of Congress to "vote their conscience." Her candidate, V.V. Giri, was elected President at which point the Conservative faction of the Congress Party expelled Indira. The Congress party was split, but Indira was admired for the way she had outwitted the Syndicate. Her position in power became firmly entrenched.

Indira was recognized as a charismatic leader by her followers for many of the same reasons that Nehru

was recognized as such by his followers. She, like Nehru, had the opportunity to demonstrate that she could function efficiently in a political office, first as Congress President and then as Minister of Information and Broadcasting in Prime Minister Shastri's Cabinet. By most standards she was more successful and effective as Congress president than as a Cabinet Minister, but she performed her job competently, probably knowing that a more important job lay ahead. Also like Nehru, she had high moral standards which satisfied her followers for a "moral man". She also had no trouble convincing the people that she had made considerable sacrifices for her nation and had served it well for numerous years.

Indira Gandhi, like her father, was no ordinary leader. By the time she assumed the office of Prime Minister, she had developed a large following. She had learned to capitalize on her charisma. But we must not forget that Indira was a power seeker. It was said that she possessed "an uncanny sense of timing and remarkable public relations instincts," but at the same time was "autocratic by temperament, and somewhat arrogant too." Her utilization of her charisma enabled her to attain a powerful position and sustain it for several years. Thus it was not a lack of charisma which brought about Indira's downfall in 1977, but rather the lack of institutionalization of that charisma. The latter, as we have seen, involves the transfer of one's visions and

beliefs onto the managing institutions of society. Indira's problem stemmed from the fact that she had no use for many of the institutions of Indian society. In fact in many cases she seemed determined to destroy them. She would do whatever it took to consolidate her power.

With regard to the Indian Constitution which under Nehru had served as the basis for democracy, Indira not only failed to work within its boundaries, but she also tried to create new boundaries for the Constitution some of which were the direct opposite of what Nehru had attempted to achieve. Instead of the basis for democracy the Constitution became the basis for a dictatorship. While Nehru worked to build institutions that would be responsive to the demands and needs of his followers, as well as his own visions and beliefs, Indira instead adhered to a more personalistic style of leadership. She needed the unquestioning loyalty of the members of Parliament and the Courts, trusting that they would pass whatever laws were necessary or hand down the court decisions necessary to keep her in power irrespective of the cost to the viability of India's institutions.

The Congress Party had become a highly institutionalized organization in Indian society. By the time Nehru died, the party was beginning to show signs of cracking, but Nehru did his best to keep

Congress united. Unity, however, was not so important to Indira. As we have seen, Indira herself dealt the final blow to the Congress party in her show of strength to the Syndicate in 1969, causing the party to split into its various factions. Most of the members of the Congress party stayed with Indira, and over the years their loyalty was held firmly in her grip. Within the Congress Party she discouraged internal factional competition because factions "were considered as a challenge to the supreme leader."²¹ By demanding strict personal loyalty Indira did not allow the Congress party to function normally and thus did not encourage its institutionalization.

Indira believed in maintaining a strong central government, even if it meant infringing on the rights of individuals. Her policies represented a significant departure from those of her father. Nehru was always conscious of striking a balance between governmental control and individual liberty. Indira on the other hand was not. One has the distinct impression that even though she claimed that she was "totally committed to democracy,"²² the rights of individuals meant little to her if they stood in the way of the achievement of a goal. One such goal was controlling the exploding population of India. Although Indira Gandhi denied repeatedly that extraordinary measures were being used to "persuade" Indians to be sterilized, the fact remains

that between April and September of 1976, two million people were sterilized. It is widely recognized that Sanjay had more to do with the forced sterilization efforts than Indira did, yet according to one source Sanjay's actions were not prohibited because he was "the apple of her eye and could do no wrong." Among those hardest hit by the sterilization program were the slum dwellers in the large cities who were often victims of sidewalk sterilization clinics and forced round-ups. Government employees were also easy targets since the government could simply threaten to withhold their paycheck until they were sterilized.

To maintain a strong, stable central government, Indira did not hesitate to make use of the Presidential Ordinance or impose President's rule. The Presidential Ordinance allowed her to enact business outside the Parliamentary process. For example, in 1970 she used a Presidential Ordinance to derecognize the Princes when the government Bill to abolish privy purses and privileges failed by one vote to get a two-thirds majority in the Rajya Sabha, though the Lok Sabha adopted it. She also used the Ordinance to renationalize the banks when the Supreme Court in 1970 struck down the Act of 1969 nationalizing fourteen banks. Under Indira Presidential rule was imposed on various states frequently when drastic political situations in the state required the intervention of the

central government. Indira began to orchestrate state elections very early in her years at the helm. State Congress parties in theory were to name and elect their own office bearers. Nominations and elections had been the responsibility of a Returning Officer chosen by the State Congress. Under Indira, Returning Officers were selected or approved by her and lists decided by her. "Elections were a foregone conclusion. Office bearers thus 'elected' could be as easily unseated without reference to the state units they represented." Chief Ministers of the States held their jobs only as long as they supported Indira. Her leadership "depended entirely on personal loyalty," and "the damage to the federal structure soon showed."

When Indira Gandhi felt that she absolutely could not work within the Indian Constitution, she proceeded to try to change the constitution. For example, with the Twenty-fourth Amendment, Indira effectively secured for Parliament the power to amend any provision of the Constitution including the parts dealing with Fundamental Rights, which in the original document could not be amended. The Twenty-fifth Amendment removed the Courts' power of judicial review over property compensation, replacing the word "compensation" in the Constitution with "amount" and providing that the "amount" be fixed by Parliament. But Indira's most controversial act as Prime Minister came on June 26,

1975 when she made the decision to suspend the Constitution. With the proclamation of a national emergency all power was concentrated in the hands of the central government; that is Indira's hands. During the Emergency Indira continued to propose amendments to the Constitution formalizing emergency rule and making it appear legitimate. The first amendment barred judicial challenges to the government's rationale for proclaiming an emergency. There would be no judicial review of the results of any election involving the Prime Minister and the Prime Minister was granted immunity from criminal and civil proceedings for offenses committed before he or she assumed office and while he or she held office.

The final attempt to cement herself in power came in 1976 with Indira's proposal of the Forty-fourth Amendment, which was later combined with two preceding amendments and consolidated into the Forty-second Amendment. This Amendment essentially amounted to the legalization of a dictatorship. It stated that only the Supreme Court would have the authority to review the constitutionality of any law, and even they needed a two-thirds vote to strike down a law. There would be no judicial review of any Constitutional Amendment. Finally, the President, on the advice of the Prime Minister only, with no consultation with the Cabinet, could place any state under emergency rule at any time. The Amendment was passed by both houses and ratified by

the States. This success was not surprising since she controlled a majority in Parliament and had taken over the government in all the States.

But just when it seemed that Indira Gandhi the dictator was there to stay, Indira Gandhi the self-proclaimed democrat reemerged. She had decided to call elections in 1977, and when defeated she quietly stepped down saying, "I am not at all interested in coming back to power. ... I would like to live a quiet life. For how long, I don't know. I might get bored."²⁷ Boredom apparently set in rapidly. By 1979 Indira was again making her presence known on the political scene. Her opponents during the Emergency led by Morarji Desai who had taken over in 1977 had failed in their attempt to solve India's many problems. Desai resigned in July, 1979, and it was only a matter of months before Indira was reelected and appointed Prime Minister. Indira may have lost the election in 1977, but she had not lost her charismatic status. In fact, by 1980 Indira was perhaps more popular than ever. Time magazine reported that she "had become a national heroine."²⁸ A survey showed her to be the single most popular political figure in the cities. She was also perceived as a person who could restore the efficiency in government that had been lacking in her successor's government.

Efficiency was one of Indira's strong points. She surprised many of her critics when in 1967 she took

control of the sagging economy and succeeded in turning it around. Her ten point program then included nationalizing the commercial banks and cutting off annual government subsidies to the princes, something which Nehru had declined to do. But then following the Indian victory in Bangladesh, the economy took a turn for the worse. In 1972 the monsoon failed. Prices rose by 14 percent and food supplies were once again a serious problem. Inadequate food supplies and a suspected hoarding of resources prompted the government to take over the wheat trade. The government would be the sole buyer of the wheat crop. The takeover was a failure. On August 31, 1973 after a year under this program it was reported that the government had bought less wheat (600-700,000 tons) than it did in a free market the previous year.²⁷ From 1973 to 1975 the economic picture did not improve. Prices rose by 80 percent; availability of food was at an all-time low; and production of cotton textiles had fallen.²⁸ It was also estimated that about one-third of India's population lived below the poverty line. The average Indian consumed only 1,730 calories per day; malnutrition was said to have caused an estimated 3 to 4 million deaths.³¹

The fact that the poor in India seemed to be growing poorer was particularly ironic given that Indira, like Nehru professed to be deeply concerned

about poverty. Early in her political career, Indira gained the reputation for being a leftist and a socialist who disagreed with her father "over the pace at which things were being done."²² She adhered to "a simple definition of socialism": "Poverty should be reduced; the backward people, be they Harijans or the hill people, should have equal distribution of natural resources."²³ While her father was still alive, Indira's name even became associated with the "ginger group". The latter was a left-wing group of the Congress interested in urging the Congress to fulfill its stated socialist goals more rapidly. Indira denied rumors that she was actually a part of the group, but her followers were already in the process of becoming convinced that Indira was truly working for the masses. Furthermore, in 1971, Indira campaigned on the promise of eliminating poverty - Garibi Hatao - an ambitious promise, if not impossible. Unfortunately for Indira the weather did not cooperate with her plan to eliminate poverty. By 1975, realizing that her political survival depended upon economic performance perhaps more than anything else, Indira decided that the situation called for a new discipline. Under the Emergency Indira proposed a twenty-point program which called for radical agrarian reforms and curbs on private enterprise. The only agrarian reform actually implemented was an increase in credit for land-owning peasants. Indira's

formula for success was simple: "hard work, clear vision, iron will, strictest discipline."³⁴ In the beginning it was obvious that her new program was a success. The 30 percent inflation of the year prior to the emergency was brought down to near zero.³⁵ Government food supplies were up, and there was no hoarding of reserves. Industrial production was also up, thanks in part to the prohibition of worker strikes, lockouts and go-slow actions. Buses ran on time, thus Government workers were able to get to work on time. Study at universities could carry on without being disrupted by political disturbances. Even the monsoon cooperated with Indira's new discipline. With sufficient rain, grain production rose, and the additional electrical power enabled factories to operate at normal capacity.

But at what price was Indira's economic success achieved? Indira's discipline it seemed depended on unqualified support from her followers; therefore, any opposition to her program was promptly thrown in jail. The press was heavily censored in an attempt to silence any written criticism of her plan. One is constantly aware of the fact that Nehru, had he been faced with the same problems, would not have chosen to solve them in the same manner. Nehru had his priorities, and at the top of the list was the preservation of democracy. In contrast, Indira's top priority was the preservation of

power - her power. Whether it was even necessary to declare a national emergency to bring about an economic success was widely debated outside India. It is possible that reform could have been achieved without resorting to draconian measures. It is also possible that the good weather had more to do with Indira's economic success than her twenty-point program. Evidence suggests that Indira suspected the latter, because in 1977 when she decided to allow elections to be held, a bad monsoon was predicted for the next year. And what about the fact that Indira still had done very little to "eliminate poverty" and fulfill her 1971 campaign promise? Indira did not seem troubled. After all, she rationalized, "Our poor people are much happier than people I have seen anywhere."³⁶

Indira Gandhi was not nearly as effective in dealing with communalism as her father had been. indeed, Indira's policies ultimately resulted in her demise. Indira, like Nehru, took a strong stand against communalism. In a speech before Parliament in 1967 she stated, "Communalism is an evil which divides man and fragments society; it goes against our very genius and cultural heritage. It holds a threat to the unity and integrity of our country...."³⁷ But just as Indira dealt with economic problems in her own way, different from that of Nehru, such was the case with communal problems. As we have seen, Nehru was always concerned

with the rights of the minorities. Indira on the other hand was perceived by the minorities as being suspicious of their actions and hostile towards them. One Indian Muslim wrote, "Mrs. Gandhi often displayed an anti-minority stance. The Sikhs, and particularly the Akalis,²² were painted in the speeches made by her and her son, Rajiv Gandhi, as potential secessionists. And the Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir also had to face blatant accusations of treachery."²³

Indira's attitude toward minorities, especially the Sikhs, only served to exacerbate communal strife. Hindu extremist organizations took their cue from her and set out to punish the Sikhs for their "sins". When Indira took office again in 1980, it was apparent that one of the most serious problems confronting her would be the Sikh demand for their independent state of Khalistan. The leader of this movement was Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. Bhindranwale did not speak for the majority of the Sikhs, many of which were in favor of reaching a compromise with the Congress. Instead Bhindranwale commanded the loyalty of a group of ultraradicals who chose terrorism as the way to force New Dehli to surrender most of its authority in the Punjab. Headquarters for Bhindranwale were set up inside the Golden Temple at Amritsar, the Sikh's holiest shrine. By May of 1984, Indira became convinced that the only way to deal with the problem was to send the

military into the Temple and defeat Bhindranwale and his forces. On June 6, 1984, the battle was fought, resulting in the death of Bhindranwale plus 800 to 1,000 of his supporters and 200 to 300 soldiers of the Indian Army.⁴⁰ As with Emergency rule, the necessity of such a drastic measure has been questioned. Evidence suggested that the members of the Akali party were about to break with Bhindranwale because of the fact that most Sikhs did not respond to his anti-Hindu communalism and terrorist methods. It was apparent however that after the invasion, the Sikh terrorist activities declined. But just when the situation appeared to be under control, the ultimate backlash occurred. On October 31, 1984, Indira Gandhi was shot by two of her Sikh body guards.

Indira Gandhi was essentially a dictator in a democrat's clothing. Her charismatic status carried her through many difficult periods which would have defeated most ordinary leaders. Her defeat in 1977 and ultimately her death were a result of her inability to institutionalize her charisma. Indira did not work within the institutions of Indian society and try to strengthen them. Thus it was impossible for her to transfer her visions and beliefs onto those institutions. As popular a leader as Indira was, there is no doubt that she could have been successful in building organization instead of personality cults.

Because of Indira's style of leadership, she left many unresolved problems for her hand-picked successor, her son, Rajiv Gandhi. But more importantly, she also left him with a weakened set of institutions to deal with those problems.

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CHAPTER IV

RAJIV GANDHI

The Non-Charismatic Leader

If Indira Gandhi's husband, Feroze, had been known as the nation's son-in-law, then it was only logical that her sons would likewise be referred to as the nation's grandchildren. Only one of the two grandchildren, Rajiv Gandhi, remains today to carry on the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty. Rajiv assumed the leadership of a country in November, 1984 that was torn apart by communal violence as a result of the murder of his mother by her Sikh guards. Since he has only been in office for two and one-half years, it is perhaps presumptuous to speculate about the nature of his leadership thus far, and we can only make an educated guess about what the future holds for him. The task is made even more difficult because of the lack of information on such a new leader. But despite these problems, a brief analysis of Rajiv's leadership to date is necessary, because with Rajiv Gandhi, I believe that India ushers in a new era of leadership - leadership by an individual without the charismatic status of a Jawaharlal Nehru or an Indira Gandhi. This is not to

say that Rajiv cannot or will not develop charismatic status, but only that he has not developed it yet.

Once again, our analysis begins with the leader's childhood. Rajiv's childhood was entirely different from either that of his mother or grandfather. He grew up for the most part in Teen Murti House, Nehru's residence as Prime Minister. Thus he grew up in a somewhat unrealistic atmosphere in which he was constantly exposed to power politics. Prominent leaders and dignitaries flowed in and out of Teen Murti on a never-ending basis. Rajiv's father, Feroze disliked all the trappings that went with the office of Prime Minister and often openly disagreed with Nehru's policies. It has been speculated that Rajiv's life and his perception of reality might have been quite different if he had lived with his father in his modest MP's bungalow.¹ But Indira had taken the children to live with her in Teen Murti at a very early age. Rajiv was said to be a shy and soft-spoken child, yet even though Indira was often busy with politics and Feroze was absent much of the time one does not get the impression that Rajiv was a lonely child. Because of his status as one of the nation's grandchildren, much attention was lavished upon him. As a child he had the companionship of his brother, although the closeness of their relationship later in life is questionable, and an entourage of pets, which was made up of both the usual

and the unusual, including a red Himalayan panda and three tiger cubs.

When Rajiv was twelve and Sanjay nine, Indira Gandhi decided that it was time to give serious thought to their proper schooling. It was decided that they would attend the Doon school in Dehra Dun. Founded in 1935, the Doon School along with the Military Academy also located in Dehra dun provided India with its military high-command and its elite civil servants. Like any prestigious school a certain comradery existed among the Doon alumni. A number of Rajiv's classmates eventually found their way into Rajiv's government in later years.

In 1960 Feroze died of a heart attack, and shortly afterward, Indira made the decision to send Rajiv to Cambridge to study as his grandfather had done. But Rajiv had no interest in academics. he studied mechanical engineering but left Trinity College without a degree. In England he met and fell in love with Sonia Maino from Italy. Rajiv was determined to marry her. At first they encountered some resistance from Indira, but finally she relented, perhaps remembering her own insistence upon marrying a Parsi. Sonia adapted very quickly to Indian ways and she and Indira became close friends. Rajiv was most definitely a family man. Unlike his grandfather, who admitted to putting the Independence movement first, and hs mother, who also

lacked time for her family, Rajiv was devoted to his wife and two children. Even as Prime Minister his family is still very important to him.

When Rajiv returned to India, he entered the career which presumably he intended to follow for the rest of his life - flying airplanes. He became a commercial pilot for Indian Airlines. The only known ambition of "Captain Rajiv," as he was known to the passengers, was "to fly more sophisticated jet planes."² But it was not to be. In 1980, Sanjay Gandhi, the son with the political ambitions; the favorite of Indira Gandhi who expected Sanjay to become the next Prime Minister, died in a plane crash. From that point on Rajiv's life was never the same. For almost a year Rajiv resisted entering political life, but finally at his mother's urging, Rajiv decided to run for Sanjay's seat in Parliament in Amethi. This must have been a difficult decision for a man to make who was content with his life style and faced the reluctance of his wife as well. Although Sonia would have preferred to remain out of the public eye, she eventually reconciled herself to the new plan, gave up her Italian nationality and settled into life as the wife of an Indian politician.

Upon the death of Indira Gandhi, Rajiv's elevation to power happened rapidly. Scarcely twelve hours after her death the Congress party elders chose Rajiv as their new leader which automatically made him India's Prime

Minister. The question remained: Could he govern India? Rajiv had billed himself as a reformer. Coming on the heels of a leader who had done much to destroy India's institutions and threaten the very existence of democracy, this platform was a welcome change. One observer of the Indian political scene wrote that "Indians wanted to believe in a possibility, any possibility, for reform." He even wondered "whether Indians would take this dignified, self-contained figure in a Gandhi cap and homespun pajamas to be a pudgier version of the young Nehru."³ but it is apparent that Rajiv Gandhi is no Jawaharlal Nehru because Rajiv lacks the charismatic status which, as we have seen, was characteristic of both Nehru and Indira Gandhi. As I have stressed in previous chapters, the qualities that a charismatic leader should possess are "heroic" status in society, a sense of mission and faith in their ability to lead the mission.

Initially, it seemed that Rajiv would follow in his mother's footsteps and develop a charismatic status. Since Mrs. Gandhi possessed charisma, it followed that her son should benefit. Also she had openly expressed the hope, indeed the expectation, that Rajiv would take over at some point in the future. In the national elections of December, 1984, the first since Indira's assassination, Rajiv achieved huge success. The Congress party garnered an unprecedented 400 seats in

the Lok Sabha, more than ever attained by his mother or grandfather.⁴ Scholars, journalists and policy makers alike assumed that Rajiv was going to carry on in the Nehru-Gandhi tradition. One person observed: "Like fairy dust, charisma has graced Rajiv's head."⁵ Yet the situation today in India indicates that the latter determination may have been slightly premature. By most accounts, Rajiv is having a great deal of trouble sustaining the December 1984 level of popularity. Journalists are now more likely to make observations such as the one in a recent editorial that Rajiv Gandhi "has all the charisma of Calvin Coolidge."⁶ Domestic violence is on the increase in India. Efforts to bolster the economy are proving ineffective. The inexperience that at the beginning worked for Rajiv is now starting to work against him. It is true, as many Indians rationalized, that Indira Gandhi had little experience when she came to power, but the crucial difference is that Indira had been working to develop her charismatic status for many years before she assumed office. She did not enter the office of Prime Minister without a relatively large following already established.

At this point in Rajiv's tenure as Prime Minister it is simply impossible to label him as a charismatic leader. First, there is no evidence that Rajiv is considered a hero by the masses. In 1984, he may have

had the voters' sympathies but he did not have their unconditional allegiance. Rajiv did not attempt to cultivate a following before he came to power, and it seems still makes no attempt to do so today. It is widely known that Rajiv detests the sycophants who constantly surround politicians, thus he professes to have nothing to do with them. The problem with this stance is that he is denying himself a segment of the population that could serve as the basis for charismatic leadership. As unattractive as such "sycophants" may appear, it is evident that their support matters. Indira Gandhi was almost totally surrounded by this type of follower.

In addition, a sense of mission is almost entirely lacking in Rajiv. He had no interest in politics during his adolescent years or for most of his adulthood. He was no organizer of a Monkey Brigade or early leader of the Congress party. His sense of mission was essentially thrust upon him by his mother. Rajiv seems to act more out of a sense of duty than a sense of mission. Rajiv's sense of duty toward his mother has been evident throughout his life. For example, even though he had no real academic inclinations, he agreed to study at Cambridge. Upon returning home he and Sonia lived with his mother, a practice often expected of Indian sons. And finally he entered political life when it became apparent that his mother needed him if her

vision of a Nehru-Gandhi dynasty was to be realized. Rajiv did not see himself as a Prime minister of India. He fully expected his mother to carry on for years while he occupied a low-key behind-the-scenes position in her shadow.

Rajiv's seemingly immense popularity manifested in the December 1984 elections can be explained in three ways. First, it was only a short time before Indira Gandhi passed from being remembered as an autocratic, sometimes hated, but still popular leader into the realm of a legend. With her death she became even more popular and Rajiv was the beneficiary. The masses had a great deal of sympathy for the son of their former great leader. This sympathy was expressed in votes.

The other explanations can be found in Rajiv's campaign platform. Indians, as we have discussed, are looking for not only heroes, but also efficient leaders and what we have referred to as "the moral man." Rajiv promised to be both. He pledged that he would run an efficient government; that he would rebuild much of that which had been destroyed. He also emphasized that he was going to rid the government of corruption, which had become a way of life in India. But after two and one-half years nine major cabinet shuffles have taken place.⁷ In one of those shuffles Rajiv moved the Finance Minister, Mr. Vishwanath Pratap Singh (V.P. Singh) to the position of Defense Minister when it

became apparent that V.P. Singh was doing his job too well. In forcing rich people to pay their taxes and exposing corruption in various areas of the government, Singh was becoming very popular with the masses, but not with the top level politicians who were exerting pressure on Rajiv to call a halt to Singh's activities. When Rajiv assumed office he had acquired the designation of "Mr. Clean" by the Western press. But after the removal of V.P. Singh his "clean" reputation was somewhat tarnished: "Mr. Gandhi has had to descend from the lofty position above politics he had made for himself and has been forced to court the party men. He is being seen as just another politician."¹⁰

Just another politician. perhaps that is the most appropriate discription of Rajiv Gandhi. He is not a charismatic leader. he simply does not have the elements which are necessary to qualify a leader for that status. However, this should come as no surprise. The vast majority of today's leaders are not charismatic. Furthermore, the charismatic leader is also a rare phenomenon in history. The fact that India has experienced three charismatic leaders (Mahatma Gandhi, Nehru and Indira Gandhi) in its past is extraordinary when one considers the rarity of charismatic leaders on the hole. Therefore, one must, I believe, question the effectiveness of a leader who does not possess this charismatic status. The question is

not a matter of being able to hold the country together. India has had "infinite practice at not disintegrating. India's diversity is so extreme that, like rubber-jointedness, it is a means of staying in one piece."²⁸ The question is rather one of maintaining a semblance of a stable government while accommodating the ever increasing demands of the masses, majority and minority groups alike. The task of managing India is difficult enough for a charismatic leader who is idolized by the masses, but it will be even more difficult for Rajiv who does not have this advantage. Rajiv must work on improving the economy. Violence in the Punjab must be stopped and a peaceful settlement reached. But most importantly Rajiv must rebuild India's institutions. Ultimately, his success in all other policy areas depends upon building effective organizations which are capable of reflecting the public interest. If Rajiv chooses to take a forceful stand in each of these areas, I believe that he will not only contribute to India's stability, but also to the development of his charismatic status. Rajiv, like his mother, acquired charismatic potential as a result of his heritage, but unlike his mother Rajiv has yet to develop that potential. The remainder of this chapter, then deals with Rajiv's attempt to rebuild India's institutions, boost the economy and reach a settlement in the Punjab, all without the benefit of charismatic status.

Rajiv Gandhi has made a visible attempt to re-institutionalize. First his Law Minister announced that judges producing unfavorable rulings would no longer be punished by transfer to an undesirable district. This action was taken in the hope that talented individuals would once again be attracted to the bench. Rajiv has also tried to reinstate the importance of Parliament by bringing accountability of public officials back in style. He put several of his key aides in official positions so they are formally answerable to Parliament, unlike Indira who kept her closest advisors inaccessible and protected. Rajiv hired professional managers as his aides, as opposed to the often unqualified but loyal aides to his mother. He has sought to decentralize power by strengthening the hand of some of his subordinates. In fact he insisted that junior and middle-level civil servants be made responsible for their actions and that they be allowed to make some important decisions. Indira discouraged the latter from making even minor decisions which slowed the governmental processes considerably.

One institution which is of critical importance to the stability of India is the political party. Rajiv has been attempting to re-institutionalize the Congress party which was seriously damaged by Indira Gandhi. Indira was responsible for the party's split and then she proceeded to turn it into her own personalized

support group. Samuel Huntington writes that the political party is one of the most important institutions in a society in terms of facilitating political development and organizing participation. India had in the Congress party an organization that was capable of accommodating many different segments of the population. Its strong point was its ability to strike bargains and deals to meet the demands of the large number of castes, religious minorities and linguistic groups. Indira Gandhi did not attempt to accommodate these groups through the Congress. Instead, she only meant to assert her authority over them. Rajiv has been trying to establish a new pattern as is manifested by his conciliatory moves toward religious and ethnic minorities in Assam and the Punjab, but restoring the Congress party to its former stature will be an uphill battle if it is at all possible.

Accommodation is a key word for Rajiv. In the Punjab, an area which has presented Rajiv with a great deal of difficulty, he had the opportunity to put his theory into practice. If communal strife was a problem for Indira Gandhi, it presents even more of a problem for her son. Neither Indira nor Rajiv has had the success in dealing with religious minorities that Nehru had. Under Nehru efforts were made to accommodate the religious minorities. Indira saw their demands as a threat to her authority and attempted to deal with them

through the use of force. This method resulted in her death and only created more problems for Rajiv. There is even evidence to suggest that the Sikh massacres which took place after her death were instigated by the Congress party. Rajiv has been criticized for failing to mount an official investigation into the massacres.¹⁰² When Rajiv was campaigning for election in 1984, he merely took his cue from the angry Hindu voters who wanted to see the Sikhs punished for Indira's assassination. He, therefore, took a hard line against religious minorities, especially the Sikhs and showed little tolerance toward them. After the election with violence in the Punjab escalating on a daily basis, Rajiv made some attempt to bring about a reconciliation between the Akali Dal and the Center. However by all accounts his efforts have ended in failure.

In August, 1985, it was reported that an accord was reached between Rajiv Gandhi and the Akali Dal president Sant Harchand Singh Longowal. This accord was intended to mark "a welcome end to the prolonged crisis in the border state that has bedevilled the nation."¹¹ Unfortunately the provisions of the accord were never implemented. Terrorist activities in the Punjab continued to increase and the area grew more and more unstable. By January 1987 the leaders of the Akali Dal issued an ultimatum to the Center stating that if the Rajiv-Longowal agreement was not implemented the Akali

Dal would be forced to "launch an agitation."¹² Finally on May 11, 1987, in a move that can only be seen as reminiscent of Indira Gandhi's tactics, Rajiv recommended that the Punjab be placed under President's rule. The Center claimed that "the state government was incapable of maintaining law and order and combatting fundamentalist forces and terrorist activities."¹³ Whether or not Rajiv can restore stability to the Punjab remains to be seen.

But a resolution of the Punjab problem is not the only threat to the success of Rajiv's leadership. Evidence suggests that Rajiv has come up short in his attempt to reform India's economy. All of the blame however cannot be placed on Rajiv. India today is a country that economically is between two systems. There is still a heavy bent towards socialism and the planning process initiated by Nehru, but yet the most recent trend has been a liberalization of the economy. Rajiv campaigned on the promise of further liberalizing the economy. He wanted to put an end to the many bureaucratic controls, encourage private investment and introduce tax reforms to minimize cheating. Early in his term as Prime Minister, Rajiv was having some measure of success; however, much of this success can be attributed to the efforts of V.P. Singh, Gandhi's former finance minister. Singh, as discussed earlier, was removed by Rajiv when Singh tramped on the toes of

some of India's influential businessmen and politicians. The dismissal of Singh merely confirmed suspicions that Rajiv was moving away from his initial plan of liberalization. As early as October, 1986 it was reported that "there are signs that it [Rajiv's government] is rethinking its liberalization programs. It has been reluctant to dismantle monopolies with low productivity and high production costs, or close down inefficient plants, because of the potential political impact."¹⁴ India's balance of payments deficit has also been rising, prompting the government to re-impose duties on some imports with the explanation that the local industries need protection from foreign manufacturers.

Rajiv Gandhi's lack of success with the economy cannot be seen as an isolated problem. Failure to provide a better standard of living, at least above the poverty line, for India's masses could prove to be as destabilizing as a failure to resolve the conflict in the Punjab. One Indian observed:

In almost every State violence is erupting because when the employment and output cake is not growing fast enough, people have no option left but to turn on each other and try to grab a larger slice of the existing cake. ... the poor have had their expectations inflamed to a point where containment is no longer possible.¹⁵

Thus after scarcely two and one-half years in office, Rajiv Gandhi faces a leadership crisis. I believe that this crisis could have been averted if

Rajiv could have developed his charisma and used it to help ensure the acceptance of his visions and beliefs. In many areas, especially with regard to Rajiv's attempts to re-institutionalize, it is evident that Rajiv is trying to rebuild much of what Indira Gandhi destroyed. Also in other areas, Rajiv often had the right ideas. His plans to liberalize the economy and reach an agreement in the Punjab were highly praised by Indians and Westerners alike. But Rajiv lacks the charisma to actually transfer his visions onto the institutions of society that he is trying to rebuild. The picture of Rajiv Gandhi, the leader, that comes across is that of an adult who has not lost his childhood shyness and has neither the courage nor has cultivated a following to allow him to stand up to the influential politicians of India. It is my belief that unless Rajiv develops his charisma, he will be forever in the grasp of those who seek to use him as a puppet. Indira Gandhi faced this problem at an early point in her tenure as Prime Minister, but she overcame it through a show of strength to the Syndicate. Yet if Rajiv fails to act likewise, he faces the prospect of losing the somewhat tenuous support that he now possesses. His life has already been threatened once and given the growing unrest in India chances are good that it will happen again if Rajiv does not put an end to this crisis of his leadership.

It is not too late for Rajiv Gandhi to wake up and realize the power that he holds simply because of his Nehru-Gandhi heritage. If he does, I believe that the prospects for an India under Rajiv are promising indeed. For Rajiv seems to have much more respect for democracy than Indira and is surprisingly like his grandfather in his demeanor. If he can only combine this quiet modesty with the strength that can be found by developing a charismatic status, then Rajiv can become a successful leader. Once he is recognized as a charismatic leader by his followers he will be able to transfer his visions and beliefs onto the institutions of society. Furthermore, India, with a charismatic leader at the helm who places great importance on institution building stands a much better chance of sustaining the democratic system that Jawaharlal Nehru envisioned and worked so diligently to achieve.

ENDNOTES

¹ Tariq Ali, An Indian Dynasty: The Story of the Nehru Gandhi Family (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1985) 266.

² Jerry Adler, Ray Wilkinson, and Patricia J. Sethi, "The Son Stands Alone," Newsweek 12 November 1984: 46.

³ Joseph Lelyveld, New York Times Magazine 2 December 1984: 40.

⁴ John Hatch, "Rajiv's New India," Contemporary Review April 1985: 181.

⁵ Paul H. Kreisberg, "India after Indira," Foreign Affairs Spring 1985: 875.

⁶ Smith Hempstone, "Gandhi Grounded in India," The Sunday Oklahoman & Times 16 May 1987: 12.

⁷ Vyvyan Tenorio, "India's Leadership Crisis: Gandhi under Fire for Political Failures, Impetuous Style," The Christian Science Monitor 26 February 1987: 11.

⁸ "Et tu, Gandhi?" The Economist 18 April 1987: 35-36.

⁹ "Big India," The Economist 31 January 1987: 11.

¹⁰ As of 1987, the ring leaders of the Sikh massacres still had not been brought to trial.

1.1 "Punjab Accord: Dawn of a New Era," The Overseas Hindustan Times 3 August 1985: 1.

1.2 "Akali Ultimatum to Centre," The Overseas Hindustan Times 3 January 1987: 1.

1.3 "Punjab Placed under President's Rule," India News 18 May 1987: 1.

1.4 Vyvyan Tenorio, "Some Disillusionment Sets in as India's Gandhi Reaches 2-year Mark," The Christian Science Monitor 31 October 1986: 14

1.5 Prem Shankar Jha, "Running out of Soft Options," The Overseas Hindustan Times 10 January 1987: 9.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, an attempt has been made to establish a link between the charismatic status of a leader and the ultimate success of that leader. A charismatic leader who institutionalizes his or her charisma will be most successful. Also however, as has been pointed out, the leader's chances for achieving this charismatic or heroic status are greatly enhanced if he or she is perceived as an efficient, moral leader. Let me state clearly at the outset however that this hypothesis is not intended to be applied to all countries or political settings. As was stated in Chapter I, India, for a variety of reasons seems to need a charismatic leader. It is not believed that it is merely a chance happening that India has had three leaders whom one would consider charismatic. The political culture in India is such that the masses are searching for heroic leadership. Not all countries require this type of leadership. In fact most countries lacking the vast diversity of India do not require that their leaders be heroes.

In addition, it is also necessary to point out some of the limitations of this study. The findings were

obtained through the use of biographical, auto-biographical and for the most part secondary source material. The study could be enhanced if surveys of the Indian people had been available or access to Parliamentary debates had been possible. Even more useful would have been face to face contact with the Indian people and the members of the Indian Government responsible for implementing the leaders' policies.

An analysis of Indian leadership leads one to conclude that there are basically three types of leaders in the Indian setting. One type is the charismatic leader who succeeds in institutionalizing charisma. The second type is the charismatic leader who fails to institutionalize charisma, and the third is the non-charismatic leader. Since institutionalizing charisma in my opinion determines the success of the leader, it might be useful to review the definition that has been used for the institutionalization of charisma. A leader who has succeeded in institutionalizing charisma is one who has been able to transfer his visions and beliefs onto the institutions of society. One should not confuse this term with Max Weber's routinization of charisma, because through the routinization of charisma, the charismatic leader is transformed into an ordinary leader. It is not believed that in the process of institutionalizing charisma, the leader gives up his charismatic status. In fact one can argue that the

leader, in transferring his visions and beliefs to the institutions of society strengthens those institutions and likewise his or her charismatic status. The importance of building institutions cannot be emphasized enough. A stable government cannot exist without well developed institutions and a leader who cannot bring about stability in his government will not be able to sustain his popular support for long. It is not sufficient to try to force visions and beliefs on a society without working within that society's institutions.

Jawaharlal Nehru was an excellent example of the first type of leader. He was not successful in every instance in institutionalizing his charisma. For example in forcing the Congress party to accept his selection of members for the Working Committee, he altered the normal course of operations for that body, making it bend to his will rather than develop institutionalized processes of its own. But on the whole, Nehru fought to strengthen the institutions of India. Since he was India's first leader of a new democracy, it was fortunate that Nehru had such concern for building institutions. Even though his daughter did much to tear down what he had built, he had laid such a strong foundation that even the autocratic Indira Gandhi could not completely destroy Indian democracy.

Indira Gandhi represents the second type of leader.

She definitely possessed charismatic status, but she failed in her attempt to institutionalize her charisma. She did not transfer her beliefs or visions onto India's institutions because she seemed bent on destroying them. The courts, Parliament, even the Constitution were valued only as a means to enhance her power. She required the loyalty of all those surrounding her and refused to allow any challenges to her authority. In 1977 this personalistic style of leadership brought about her downfall. But her charismatic status brought her back into power in 1980. Her use of brute force rather than working within India's institutions was a major reason for the dissatisfaction among the Sikhs. It was the Sikhs' act of revenge for the invasion of their Holy Temple which resulted in her death. Indira Gandhi had the potential to be as successful as Nehru; however, she was not because she failed to transfer her beliefs and visions onto India's institutions.

Happily for India, in one respect, Indira's son seems to place a high value on rebuilding India's institutions. But yet, Rajiv Gandhi, the third type of leader, lacks the charismatic status that would make his visions and beliefs become part of India's institutions. At this point it appears that Rajiv lacks the will to develop his charismatic status, but if he is to be successful, he will have to do so. With Rajiv Gandhi it is likely that the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty has come to an

end, unless, of course, Rajiv's or Sanjay's children eventually take over. What does the future of India hold without a member of the Nehru-Gandhi family at the helm? If the hypothesis of this thesis is correct, when Rajiv passes from the political scene, (and if he fails to develop his charisma his political demise will come quickly) India will not be in a hopeless situation. Any future leader who can develop a charismatic status and institutionalize that charisma can be successful in governing India. Without the Nehru-Gandhi name, developing that charisma will be more difficult to be sure, but still not impossible.

In sum, this thesis, at its most basic level, is simply an attempt to gain further insight into the neglected area of leadership. Through the analysis of the leadership of Nehru, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv, this goal has been accomplished. Leadership is still an area that requires much additional scholarly attention, but perhaps studying just this one aspect -charismatic leadership in India - will contribute to a better understanding of leadership that is so desperately needed in today's world.

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VITA

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