

Gandhi

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To what extent has the importance of Gandhi been exaggerated in persuading the British government to give India independence in 1947?

Gandhi wasn't as significant as people think he was during the struggle for Indian independence. Some believe that Gandhi was the reason why Britain gave independence to India, people exaggerated over his abilities and his actions during the struggle for Indian Independence, and so he then became "the Father of India" this again really exaggerated his importance.

But then again, after the Second World War, Britain would have given India independence anyway due to Britain becoming bankrupt which would have meant that Britain would have to give India independence because they couldn't afford to keep control and order in such a big country like India. Therefore, Gandhi didn't actually need to go on big campaigns, because most of them would result in a huge number of people being killed or die of starvation.

These are the key parts that people miss out and over exaggerate about Gandhi's importance. Just like the Amritsar massacre and the Bengali Famine, India was punished for the trouble they have caused for Britain, which resulted in lots of Indians being killed. In a way, Gandhi knew that his campaigns would be result in some people being killed and he could have done it differently, in a more peaceful way, because Britain would have given India independence eventually.

Gandhi set himself a goal, to unite the whole of India so that Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs could live together without the British Raj, but he failed to do that and because he failed we now have a separated India, which resulted in millions of people losing their lives due to Gandhi's decisions and actions .

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Overall, Gandhi really annoyed the British, which caused them to act in a way they wouldn't necessarily act, like shooting in a crowd of Indians.

Also, like the "Quit India Campaign", which Gandhi introduced and said to his fellow Indians to Cause trouble on the streets of India, Gandhi thought that this will eventually lead to Britain getting fed up of the constant trouble and then grant them the Independence, which they have so badly been fighting for, but this only led to more Indians being killed. This proved to be a disaster for Gandhi and due to some decisions he made, India split into three, India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. Also resulting acts threats of terrorism to each on of the three countries.

This again shows what an impact Gandhi still has today due to his work and the methods he picked to free India. This may have had an influence on some famous figures in History such as Martin Luther King, but then again, it resulted in Millions of people losing their lives due to Gandhi not being successful in one of his main goals, such as uniting India. When the Rowlatt Act came into law, Gandhi proposed that the entire country observe a hartal, a day of fasting, prayer, and abstention from physical labor, in protest against the injustice of the repressive new law.

Millions of Indians followed Gandhi's words and started to fight back against the British, they simply didn't go to work; almost the whole of India came to a halt for the whole day. Following the words of Gandhi, some Indians came together in groups, which was against the Rowlatt act law. A General in the British army in India named General Dyer became furious and decided to "teach the Indians a lesson" and so he went to the meeting in Amritsar and massacred nearly all the Indians that simply came together to listen to each

other. All eyes were on Gandhi, because it was his words that led to this massacre.

Even though Gandhi knew that his instructions to Indians would cause agony for the British, but also for India, but he took the risk anyway. Again this shows that Gandhi's words proved to be futile, because the British would always respond back to the actions made by Gandhi and the Indian people. Even though Gandhi knew that, he would still continue his campaign, which would later cause chaos on the streets of India. But his actions were seen as successful because no one had actually stepped up to the British, this again exaggerates his importance

Furthermore, Gandhi's campaigns may have been effective against the British, but it also came with a huge sacrifice. Gandhi's campaigns really annoyed The British, especially Winston Churchill. Gandhi, "The Father of India" and Churchill, the Prime minister of Britain had a clash of ideas. Because Gandhi won, people see him as defeating one of the most powerful men in the world. But it came at a huge cost; this really exaggerates his importance because people don't really see the other side. His campaigns eventually led to the Bengal famine, which resulted in millions of people starving to death.

Gandhi's campaigns are thought to of led to the Bengal famine, and the amount of money Britain had to pay for the damage, and so they tried to put an end to it by setting an example. In a way, Churchill really badly wanted to punish the Indians for all the trouble they caused. Churchill did this by stopping shipments of supplies to Bengal and instead he sent them to soldiers in Africa, which they didn't really need. The famine lasted between

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one to two years. Churchill himself said, " I hate Indians", " The famine was their own fault. " Some may argue that, he is referring to just Gandhi and the problems he has made for Britain to clean up.

Overall, Gandhi's actions and the decisions he made had a huge effect on India and Britain, which then, led to the Bengal famine and as a result Millions of woman and children died. Churchill only tried to show Gandhi he too can cause trouble for India, he also tried to warn Gandhi and the rest of India that this would be the result of the actions and the amount trouble they cause. But Gandhi didn't stop and continued with his campaigns to free India. On the other hand, Gandhi didn't always cause trouble but sometimes he forced the British to just give up. Gandhi devised a great march to the coast; this would become famous as the salt march.

Gandhi realized that the British tax on salt would become an advantage. Gandhi soon started to walk with his members of the Indian congress party and other followers to the Indian coast. Soon after, many people joined him. Afterwards he had whole villages behind him; he then arrived at the coast and encouraged people to take as much salt as they possibly can because the British couldn't do anything about it. But, soon afterwards, as he arrived back, the British authorities had arrested him and thrown him in jail. This had caused mass rioting, some people were killed and so the British had no other option, but to release him.

The British government had to pay a lot of money for all the damage and mess that the rioters had made. Gandhi proved himself to the Indian people as a leader. The period of " non-cooperation" that began in 1920 saw Gandhi moving all across India, encouraging people to give up their Western clothing

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and British jobs. Soon afterwards Gandhi's Congress party would become an organization filled with people working for it, this then proved to be an organization fit to become a professional party ready to lead their fellow Indians to Independence.

Gandhi's work despite the interference of the British authorities was a great success. Gandhi then would introduce a civil disobedience campaign, which would prove to be a mistake that shook the world. During one of the protests that night a group of Indians broke into one of the colonial outposts and killed many of the people working there. Horrified by the actions of his fellow Indians, Gandhi abandoned his plan for civil disobedience and retired into a period of fasting and prayer.

Even as the Viceroy of India and the Prime minister of Britain wanted Gandhi out of the way, they couldn't due to the political system Britain had in effect for since the early stages of the British Empire. The media were always there, and the class system in Britain was very important during that time, and so if the British authorities in India or Britain were to throw Gandhi in a jail for life or even execute him which they could of done very easily, but it would harm their reputation as the most advanced nation in the world.

People would see the British as savages; this system came to Gandhi's advantage during the salt march. From 1934 until the outbreak of war in 1939, Gandhi left the struggle for independence to Nehru. He began traveling through India again, working with women and children, helping the poor, and promoting use of the old fashioned Indian spinning wheel. He went from village to village, teaching others of the way of true India, barefoot and on the road for months at a time.

Gandhi wanted to prove to all Indians that they didn't need to wear western clothing or use western methods of making clothes, and that the Indian way was better, he did this to try and get everyone to do the same and then it would have been much easier to unite India. But people often get mistaken and believe that this method of uniting India wasn't as effective, sure people do get together, but teaching the true Indian ways of doing things showed that Gandhi tried to get people together. But just when people were getting along, he introduced the "Quit India Campaign" people would riot on the streets killing many people.

Again people don't see the other side of Gandhi and over exaggerate his importance by pointing out that he taught many Indians the true Indian way in the hope that they would get along and unite to overcome oppression from the British. Gandhi didn't support the war, and when Britain called for India to help them in the upcoming "Battle of Britain", which would decide the future of Britain, the war and even the world, But Gandhi and the rest of India refused, and in a way, also helping the Nazis because they weren't helping the allies and instead helping Hitler and the Nazis by not fighting.

But they only fought to protect their own country from invasion. Japan, a growing empire decided to start the invasion of India and wanted to overthrow the British Raj and have India for themselves, but they lost to the Indian sepoys supported by Gandhi. So, in a way they could have helped Britain, but they also had the Japanese looking to extend their border. This then resulted in many deaths over in Britain, which were lucky enough to snatch a victory at the battle of Britain.

Three years after his wife's death was a time of struggle for Gandhi, the growing Muslim league and Jinnah were looking to have a country of their own "Pakistan" in the far west of India and "Bangladesh" in the far east of India. Gandhi's dreams of a united India were beginning to shatter. This shows that his main dream of uniting India was beginning to end this shows that Gandhi wasn't very successful and failed to reach his goal, therefore Gandhi was only useful in gaining independence so that others can have theirs within the country.

Elections were beginning to be held in India, they were between the Congress party and the Muslim league. India was becoming a piece of land which was going to be torn apart between two different faiths. The political Parties of India were beginning to look like true professionals. MPs were elected in heavy Hindu and Muslim parts of India. The fate of India was to be decided. After the war, Britain was absolutely spent the whole treasury. It was now empty and people were so hungry they had to eat catfood.

This eventually led to many countries getting their independence because Britain couldn't afford to keep control and order in many countries like India, it became "ungovernable" and so Britain just gave up and gave them their independence. India received independence not from Gandhi's methods of Satyagraha, but through total anarchy and outbreaks of violence across the country. This shows that everyone forgot about Gandhi because he wasn't important to them and believed that the methods he used were wrong because people were dying for nothing, and so Gandhi's methods were fading away.

Overall, Gandhi claimed to represent all of India during the Round-Table conferences, but as he later learned to know that there were some who didn't agree with him, such as Jinnah, the Muslim league and all other Muslims living in India, even though Gandhi's and Nehru's Congress party had the most seats in the Indian parliament, Gandhi still thought he represented the whole of India which means that he forgot all about the Muslims and Sikhs that wanted to remain separate.

So in a way, he failed to reach his main goal which many people failed to notice during the later stages of India receiving independence. Disaster followed, violence swept the country as Hindus and Muslims killed one another. Nearly all fled the newly created borders, seeking safety in India or Pakistan, depending upon their religion. Millions had died while many other Millions were forced to flee their homes; it proved to be a disaster for Gandhi and his dreams of united India.

Gandhi felt betrayed by his fellow Indians he felt that that no one had listened to him, that the people of India hadn't learned a thing during the times of his campaigns and great marches which taught Indians to stay together, he believed that India would become independent only if they unite. But sadly, his dreams would only become a vision he once had. Later on Gandhi would give some speeches and show up in some important events, but then something, which shook the entire world, had occurred, Gandhi was assassinated. But even after his death he then somehow still influences people from around the world.

Overall, Gandhi didn't reach his main goal to unite India, but it is thought that Gandhi was the reason why India got their independence. This is usually

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exaggerated as a strong sense of sympathy for Gandhi after his death. Eventually India would of gotten their independence due Britain, which couldn't afford to keep control of India and so they would of gotten their independence even without Gandhi. But then again, Gandhi's campaign inspired many other famous people, such as, Martin Luther King, who then used Gandhi's methods of non-violent protest, which would eventually then lead to black-Americans gaining their Civil Rights.

Gandhi explained in one of his speeches that it is important not to fight against the British, but simply just not follow the orders and laws passed, such as don't meet up in large groups. Gandhi told people not to follow that order and do the complete opposite, which then lead to the Amritsar massacre. Gandhi failed to reach his aims, but became a very famous figure in history due to his campaigns and the first ever use of peaceful protesting, which then after his death, Gandhi was claimed to be a hero and savior of India.

People exaggerate Gandhi's importance because they usually miss out on the specific detail that is very vital to understanding Gandhi. The exaggeration of Gandhi's importance is also due to India having Gandhi as their only leader, this may be important because he was the first to step up to the British, but on the other hand he failed in uniting India against the British. Sure he may have had a role in the struggle for independence, but he caused India to divide, which caused millions of people losing their lives.