

Q Mahatma Gandhi's support to 'Khilafat Movement' diluted his secular character. Critically examine. [250]

Ans. Gandhiji had always advocated for secular politics. "Sarva Dharma Sambhav" was the theme of his idea of secularism. However Gandhi's support to the Khilafat Movement was widely criticized and defamed as a backward step; *why?*

- To the critics, it looked as if he was supporting a communal cause or using religion as an agenda.
- Critics also pointed out that it was an international movement not directly related to India, a religious movement involving only the Muslims. sentiments attached with Turkish Khaira.
- Tilak, Jinnah and other Congress leaders opposed involvement of religion with politics.
- There are very strong arguments that justify his support;
- The Muslim League had started to advocate itself as a Muslim representative organization and branded the Congress as a Hindu body; therefore this support gave it a chance to wash away these blames as a major chunk of Indians were Muslims.
- If it is seen as an indispensable step, he harnessed the support of Muslim elite class as the Khilafat Committee too responded to the call and participated whole heartedly in the Non cooperation movement; Progress of Hindu-Muslim Unity.
- Moreover, *was* even before Gandhi's entry, the communalization of politics had begun through Morley-Minto reforms of separate Muslim electorates, if Gandhi wouldn't have acted, it *looked as* should have further alienated the Muslim section from freedom struggle, due to previous such events.
- Further, he protested against the division of the country on the basis of religion, during the massive riots, he tried his best to stop *anti-Muslims* those through his 'non-violence' policy. *very imp for Hindu-Muslim unity*

Gandhiji on the basis of these arguments cannot be called communal nor an opportunistic leader but a 'Pragmatic Statesman'. His support to Khilafat in fact re-established his credential as a secular leader, as his strategy of alignment worked exceedingly well for the Hindu-Muslim unity & the Indian freedom struggle. *Nice Good*

*was  
Congress  
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anti-Muslims  
Support*

*Nice Good*