

**Transition to Democracy: The First General Elections of
India 1951-1952**

*Dissertation submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University in partial
fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the degree of*

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation entitled, **TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY: THE FIRST GENERAL ELECTIONS OF INDIA c. 1951-1952** submitted by me for the award of the degree of **Master of Philosophy**, is an original work and that it has not been submitted, in part or in full, for any degree to this or any other university.

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CERTIFICATE

We recommend that the dissertation may be placed before the examiners for evaluation.


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Chapter 1

Introduction

The first General election was a watershed moment in India's history. It started the process of transition of a 'colony' into 'a nation in the making', which was led by the leaders of the national movement and its message of secularism and democracy. This election gave institutional shape to the ideas of the leaders of the national movement. Consequently, a representative parliamentary democracy was established in India that took the vow to encompass and give representation to all sections of the society equally as per the provisions of the constitution.

It was the landmark event for a nascent nation state; that conducted the biggest and the longest democratic elections ever held anywhere in the world. About which a contemporary journalist from *The Times* puts in his memoir *The First Draft* that, 'Pride of place must go to the first general election which, with succeeding elections remains one of the great administrative and democratic wonders of the world, encompassing a magnitude and range that is quite unparalleled anywhere.'¹

It did a novel experiment to democracy and universal adult franchise, as it attained success with more than 80 percent of voters illiterate. Maximum number of voters knew very little or were totally unaware about the concept of democracy, socialism, welfare state, secular state, social justice, civil liberties, general election, universal adult franchise, communalism and fascism. Thus, it posed a great challenge for the government and the Election Commission, to educate these people about the notion of democracy and the importance of election in it. This emphatic obstacle is aptly clear in the data from the first census held after the independence,

The thing the census [1951] revealed was the heavy overhang of illiteracy especially among women, tribal isolation, poor connectivity and the burden of caste discrimination, bondage and other depressing caste indices in what was still a traditional and feudal society. It was to reach such an electorate

¹ B. G. Verghese, *First Draft: Witness to the Making of Modern India*, Memoir, New Delhi, 2010, pp. 50-51.

that the first election commissioner, Sukumar Sen, had to plan. Nothing like this had ever been attempted anywhere.²

Arranging for the paraphernalia, of this wide and prolonged election, was a massive challenge in front of the bureaucracy and the government. The conduct of election purely on the basis of adult suffrage was a pure exhibition of Nehru's faith in the large and mostly illiterate people of India. Around a million officials were engaged in carrying out the process of the election. House to house survey were conducted to register over 173 million voters. Diversity of language in India presented the biggest problem of communication in conducting the survey. However, this problem was resolved by taking help of the literate people of that region, who knew at least two languages. Three quarters of the voters were illiterate and to deal with the inability to read and write, appropriate machinery were developed, which could be efficient to make them vote successfully. Symbols related to the daily life chores of the people were given to candidates, which could be easily defaced and marked by the people. Fingers of the voter was marked by the indelible ink after they have cast their vote, to stop double voting by a voter, which could not be rubbed off at least for three days.³

This election was the longest spread election in the history of India. It took 6 months, from October 1951 to March 1952. Candidates of 77 political parties including a number of independent candidates contested in 3,772 constituencies. Election Campaign was enthusiastically conducted, where the campaign by Nehru was the biggest one. Polling was very successful and observers from India and abroad gave positive comments about the conduct of the election.⁴

The working committee of the Congress played a significant role in the management of the election. They were spread in all corners of the country. Thus, through them information could be reached in almost all parts of the country. They were wholeheartedly engaged in the election process and also managed a required number of people to help in the election process. They also significantly encouraged

² Ibid., pp. 51-52.

³ S. Gopal, *Jawaharlal Nehru A Biography, Vol. 2, 1947-1956* (London: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 162.

⁴ Ibid.

people to participate in the election. Thus, the Manchester guardian wrote in their praise:

The Working Committee of the Indian national congress can draw pleasure from the extraordinary demonstration, which India has given. If ever a country took a leap in the dark towards democracy it was India. Contemplating these facts, the Congress Working Committee may purr with satisfaction.⁵

This election, amid the charged atmosphere of communalism, show us a tall figure of Nehru, who vehemently campaigned against communal forces, to teach people a lesson in secularism and the love for humanity. This election uniquely vindicates its democratic credentials, unseen until this, in its most diverse form; by giving voices and representation to all shades of its rich civilization, shaped and formed by centuries of historical and cultural experiences. It also shows with thumping majority, the hegemonic acceptance of the legacy of the Mahatma and the Indian national movement almost in whole of the country barring few pockets. The policies and program of the congress was the replication of the values of the Indian National Movement and the great Indian civilization, which was accepted by the people of India under the leadership of Nehru.

The long drawn process of election, give us an insight, into the dedication of election commission, bureaucracy, the first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, other prominent leaders and the common people, to study their role in the commencement of the election and its successful organization. It also gives us an insight into the maturity with which the voters cooperated and cast their vote that made this election a success. This election would not have been a success without the cooperation of the people.

This election was also celebrated like a festive occasion. The awe of freedom, and its vindication in festive celebrations of the people, while the whole of election process, was the hallmark of penetration of the sense of freedom, even into the

⁵ *Manchester Guardian*, 2 February 1952.

remotest corner of the country. 'At many places there was a carnival atmosphere with women coming out in their jewels and finery.'⁶The realization of right to choose their representatives, in the full democratic process, which was hitherto unknown to the land of Monarchs and subjects, brought overwhelming happiness to the new rulers of the land i.e. its people.

The sole aim of the democratic state was to reach out to each and every people of the country. This was the main purpose of the election to engage all sections of the society directly or indirectly in the decision making process. Elections were conducted in the remotest of the mountainous region in the north and farthest of the water locked islands in the south to give each people their share of freedom and power in deciding the future course of the Indian nation state.

Overall, this election shows complete distaste of people for the communal parties and gives very little room to the left and socialist party's, as their policies, program and the way of functioning could not encompass the aspirations of diverse caste, class, creed, race, religion and region of India. People voted the congress party to majority. Indeed, the splendid success of Congress in elections was the result of people's faith in the Congress party led by Jawaharlal Nehru. People saw a ray of hope in Nehru to build a powerful nation through eradicating poverty, hunger and unemployment, through developing the economy at very high pace. The result of the election going in favor of the congress was truly a verdict for secular, democratic and inclusive India.

Scholars like Bipan Chandra and S. Gopal have looked at the first general elections in their respective works, to analyze the significance of this election for a largest parliamentary democracy. They have also praised its successful completion as the unparalleled in the world, the footprints of which was followed in many newly born democracies in the third-world. They looked at the aura of freedom, which was celebrated like a festival in the first general election. They also put an overview on the process of the election. But it was all to look at the importance of the election in a democracy and its massive success in a diversely populated country.

⁶ Gopal, *Jawaharlal Nehru A Biography*, p. 162.

Ramchandra Guha in his book⁷ talks about the process of the conduct of the election in a chapter. He talks about the aura of the election celebrated by the people and the difficulty encountered by the state in conducting this. He took a note on the geographical and cultural diversity of the electorate and described the people's participation in it, using the newspaper reports available of that period. He only focused on how people celebrated and went to cast their vote in the first general election. Thus, a large chunk of information about the election is missing from it, which is extremely relevant know.

Overall, above studies of the first general election is not enough to understand its significance and process of the election. This set the benchmark that sustained our democratic political system for several decades now. Whatever small narratives of this election I find are very scattered, that I wish to bring together in a more complete form through available sources to stress its significance for our Democracy, historically and politically. It will create a niche in the historiography that will inspire the studies of subsequent elections historically.

In this chapter, I will look into how was the most complex election process in the world thought, managed and conducted by the election commission? What were the challenges faced by the election commission? What were the path breaking ideas of the elections? What were the challenges faced by the government in implementing completely new ideas for the election? What role the first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru played in the successful conduct of the election? Which were the democratic ideas directly borrowed from the foreign countries, which they themselves struggled to achieve for several decades?

For example, voting rights to women have been given in the democracies of Europe after several decades of their women's struggle. This right to vote was given to the adult women of more than 21 years age, in the very first general election of India. This showed the commitment of the Government and the Nation to become a democratic nation state in its full sense and walk in shoulder to shoulder with other

⁷ Ramchandra Guha, *India After Gandhi* (London: Picador India, 2008), p. 133.

democratic Nations of the world. Thus, it can be said that, this election was transition period for the Indian political system, where many things were changing at a time while keeping some continuity with its past experiences of political rule.

Election: Ideas and challenges

In July 1947, the Constituent Assembly adopted the reports of the Provincial and the Union Constitution Committees, which outlined the principles of a model Constitution for India. The reports envisaged a Legislature for every State, consisting of the Governor and the Legislative Assembly, except for certain States, which were to have Legislative Council in addition. The Parliament was to consist of the President and two Houses—the Council of States and the House of the People. The representatives in the House of the People and in the Legislative Assembly of each State were to be chosen on the basis of adult suffrage—an adult being a person of not less than 21 years of age. The Constituent Assembly realized that the mere preparation of the first electoral rolls on the basis of adult suffrage in a vast country like India with a population estimated then at about 348 million would by itself be a major administrative task and would take considerable time and present numerous difficulties. It was therefore decided that the work should be taken in hand immediately. Preliminary steps were taken to implement this decision even though: it was then not at all certain as to what provisions would ultimately be made in the Constitution or the future electoral law with regard to the qualifications for registration of voters.

In November 1947, the secretariat of the Constituent Assembly invited the attention of all the State Governments to the decision of the Constituent Assembly to introduce adult franchise for elections to Legislatures and requested them to examine the administrative problems involved in the preparation of voters' lists on that basis—the draft Constitution was published on the 21 February 1948. In March 1948, the Secretariat of the Constituent Assembly informed the States of the Assembly's desire to complete the elections to the future Central and Provincial Legislatures "as early as possible after the new Constitution came into operation". Elections were also held in the British India. Six General Elections were held prior to independence, which was conducted with giving very limited voting rights to only selected people. Thus,

these elections were important, but not democratic in nature. These elections provided a learning experience to the Indian leaders of the freedom movement and the limited segment of the people of India, who were involved in it. Idea of the election took root through these elections but it took its full democratic form only in 1951-52 General Election, when it was conducted with Universal adult franchise giving voting rights to all adult males and females more than 21 years of age.

The First General Election was a grand event, which was so unprecedented that the world was awestruck looking at its success transforming India into the largest democracy of the world. This election was a well thought out process, which included significant prerequisite developments such as legal framework, idea of Universal adult suffrage, composition of the legislative bodies, and so on. These ideas were unique of its kind, because of the diversity prevailing in India.

The legal framework of the election deals with the Form of Government, Safeguards for elections, the Election Commission, Provisions made by the Constitution, Legislation made by the State Legislatures, Legislation by Parliament, Amendments, The framework, and Comprehensive election code.⁸

India has a democratic republican form of government based on the principles of its written constitution. Its salient provisions are hugely influenced by constitutions of other democratic countries like Canada, the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Australia. India learnt from their successes and failures, and made subsequent provisions in its constitution to ensure free and fair play in electing its people's representative. Its constitution treats all its citizens equally, as a result of which elections were conducted with the non-partisan spirit, even debarring ruling party with its legal measures in having any advantage. Thus, providing equal opportunity to all parties fraying in the election was a rich indicator of India transforming into a true democracy.⁹

⁸ From here on I will draw significant amount of information from *Election Commission Report of First General Election in India, 1951-52, V2*.

⁹ Election Commission, *Election Commission Report of first General Election in India, 1951-52, Vol. 2* (New Delhi: The Government of India Press, 1955), p. 3.

The provisions were made by the constitution to cover various areas of elections, through the Constitution (Determination of Population) Order, 1950. Specific provisions were made to cover the following matters:

The election of the President, the election of the Vice-President, the Union Parliament and the composition of the two houses thereof, qualifications and disqualifications of members of Parliament, composition of the state legislatures, qualifications and disqualifications of the members of the state legislatures, duration of the house of Parliament and of the State Legislatures, elections, reservation of seats in the house of the people and State Legislative Assemblies for the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes and determination of population for the purposes of elections.¹⁰

Laws of elections were not given in detail in our Constitution, and were left for Parliament and the State Legislatures to bring in legislations, in accordance with constitutional values, as per their needs and circumstances. Apart from removing certain disqualifications of State Legislatures through enacting laws, no State took any initiative in making specific legislation for them. The Parliament passed two major acts under which elections were held.¹¹

The first one was the Representation of the People Act 1950, which dealt with the qualification of voters and the preparation and publication of the election rolls. Procedure to delimit constituencies of the House of the People and the State Legislatures was laid down by this act. The number of seats in the House of the People was allocated by this Act. The act also fixed the number of seats in each State Legislatures.¹² The second one was the Representation of the People Act 1951. This dealt with qualifications and disqualifications for membership of Legislatures, notification for election to the Legislatures, administrative machinery for conducting the elections, conduct of elections and various stages thereof, election agents, procedure for elections in constituencies where seats are reserved for the Scheduled

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 4.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid., p. 5.

Castes or the Scheduled Tribes, the poll, the counting of votes, publication of electoral results, election expenses, disputes regarding elections-election petition and election tribunals, corrupt and illegal practices, electoral offences, incurring of disqualifications and their removal, and bye-elections.¹³

Statutory Rules were made under these two acts by the Central Government, which were respectively called the Representation of the People (Preparation of Electoral Rolls) Rules, 1950, and the Representation of the People (Conduct of Elections and Election Petition) Rules, 1951.¹⁴

These acts were also amended as and when necessary. But, elections were conducted within the above framework of law. These Laws were not the complete guidelines for the election and it kept on adding and changing with the emerging needs. Preliminary election processes were started before the full codification of the election law because a sense of urgency prevailed within the bureaucracy and the country to held elections as soon as possible, to have a full-fledged democratic government to realize the aspirations of free India as soon as possible.¹⁵

These laws were not clearly legislated and existed in dispersed form, which may not be followed by the common people. Legislators were quite hopeful to replace these complex laws with Comprehensive Election Code after the first General Election. It was pledged that this codification must be completed at least one year prior to the second General election, so that all the political parties, the election machinery, the candidates and the individual voters know the proper law code to have their rights and discharge their duties.¹⁶

Thus, these laws were incomplete but comprehensive in its content that gave a legal framework to, I say, the most successful elections in India till date. I say so, because I believe that legislating for the unknown events and problems successfully is the biggest achievement of the newly born constituent assembly, which had no experience of doing so earlier.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 6.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

Adult suffrage, an important feature of the democratic elections, was the most significant move by the newly free country India in its first general elections, even the same type of voting rights to all their adult citizens were give through a long process of democratic struggles in other democratic countries. It was a unique experiment per se, because on this basis the composition of the electorate was very huge and the world had never seen before such a huge number of people voting in a democratic republic. Though the adult suffrage was used for the first time to form a modern democratic state in India, but it was not completely a new exercise. Indian history is replete with different experiments of suffrage in various kinds of state formations since antiquity.

Many republican types of government existed in ancient India, references of which are found in the Buddhist literature. A republican federation offered strong resistance to the Alexander the Great in the 4th century B.C. Information about many other republican states in India is found from the sources left by the Greeks. From those sources we get information about some pure democracies and rest as aristocratic republic.

Though full details about the republican forms of government in ancient India is not available, but it is known that in some of the republican states all adults were allowed to vote and be present in the assemblies to decide the matters of the public interest. With increase in population, it became increasingly difficult for all to be present in the assemblies to decide the matters of state affairs. This complexity of social structures and state affairs gave birth to the representative government in ancient India. The nature of suffrage for this kind of state formation is not fully known. In aristocratic republic family was the basic unit and a family has one vote. Whereas in some other representative governments all adults were allowed to vote, barring they were not disqualified for their misconduct. Even foreigners became citizens through naturalization and acquired voting rights. Through voting members expressed their free will and choice, which was denoted by the term 'Chhanda', that literally means 'wish'. Votes of citizens who were not present in the assembly were collected through different methods. Both secret and open forms of voting were

prevalent. Thus, almost all the traits of republican government such as: referendum, voting, election and ballot papers were found in ancient India.¹⁷

Village communities formed the basis of the Indian society, which developed itself autonomously on truly democratic lines alongside republican governments. In the course of time it developed itself as Village *Panchayats* and remained significant in the social life of villagers. With the progress of time, these republican states were absorbed into empires, even then popular assemblies were fundamental in deciding the matters of local corporate life. Almost all the imperial states followed the policy of non-interference in the social and administrative life of the local populace. Even during the medieval period, which was dominated by the Muslim rulers, known for their absolute despotic traits, trade corporations and villages decided their issues through popular assemblies.¹⁸

A fundamental change occurred in the social fabric of India during the colonial period, with the centralization of revenue, judicial and legal affairs away from villages. This process of change was fastened by the deindustrialization of the agricultural economy, which led to the breakdown of the corporate life of village communities. As a result, the popular will was colonized by the will of the state.¹⁹ Thus, the establishment of democratic and parliamentary form of government on the basis of universal adult franchise by the constitution of India was not a completely new venture, but the joining of the historic link that had been broken by the colonial state. Franchise was common in various regions of ancient India, however, by implementing the universal adult franchise, India achieved the electoral aspirations harbored by Indian communities since time immemorial.²⁰

Indian states had past experiences of elections. All the nine Part A states (then known as provinces) had experience of election to the central (later dominion) and provincial legislatures, before the general election of 1951-52, on a restricted franchise, given through the Government of India Act, 1935. Electors had different qualifications for central and provincial legislatures and these qualifications again

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 7.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 8.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

varied from province to province. These limitations on franchise were imposed on the basis like property, community, taxation, literacy and so on. Thus, franchise was limited to only 14 percent of the population in these provinces. The Part B and some of the part C states, then ruled by the Indian princes had widely varying political system prevailing in their territories. Most among them had elected or partially elected Legislatures. There were many restrictions imposed on the people to attain the voting rights in these states. These restrictions naturally varied from state to state. Only Travancore practiced adult suffrage since 1948.

India made real progress towards modern democratic type of adult suffrage, only in response to the extremely limited franchise given to the Indians by the colonial government. Restrictions imposed on the right to franchise in elections held in this period, on the basis of payment of taxes, property etc., were seen as unnatural, arbitrary and retrograde by the Indian people. These aroused the aspirations of Indians to attain universal adult suffrage. These aspirations took birth as far back as in the Nehru committee (which was appointed by the conference of all parties) report of 1928, which was formed to determine the principles of a Constitution for India. After a heated and careful discussion for and against the motion, this committee recommended the adoption of adult suffrage for all elections, to form the democratic government of independent India.²¹

The franchise Sub-committee of the first round table conference was of the opinion that adult suffrage should be implemented in India. The Indian Franchise committee, which submitted its report in 1932, admitted that there was popular support for adult suffrage in India. However, this committee came to conclusion that, for the time being some other arrangements must be made because adult suffrage is not manageable, due to illiteracy and the limited resources at the disposal of the government to conduct elections at that huge level. Thus, it must be left to the legislators themselves to determine at what time and pace the electorate should be expanded.

In the Constituent assembly, the Minorities Sub-committee and the Fundamental Rights Sub-committee recommended that adult suffrage should be

²¹ Ibid., p. 9.

incorporated as a fundamental right under the Constitution. The Advisory Committee on Minorities and Fundamental Rights did not agree to put it as a fundamental rights, instead gave suggestion to put in some other part of the Constitution. Thus, provisions were accordingly made in article 326 of the Constitution to hold elections to the House of the People and the Legislative Assembly of every state on the basis of adult suffrage.²²

There were many arguments put against adult suffrage in the past and in the Constituent assembly debates. The main argument put against adult suffrage was the magnitude of the task involved. It was common understanding that the number of voters under adult suffrage would cross all reasonable limits, which would require a huge amount of material and human resources. And people arguing against it believed that, at this juncture the Indian state is not capable of managing this stupendous task. The illiteracy of the voters was the second argument against adult suffrage, which would not let the election be a success, unless some arrangements be made, in which even an illiterate voter could cast his vote successfully.

The adoption of adult suffrage for the very first general election was an act of faith. In the true spirit of democracy, the Constituent Assembly while drafting the Constitution, unhesitatingly adopted the principle of adult suffrage with full knowledge of the difficulties involved. This was indeed an act of faith—faith in the common man of India and in his practical common sense. This was a great and fateful experiment with democracy that gave it a new form and strength to be implemented in other parts of the world.

Foreign countries showed a lot of interest in watching and studying the most important experiment with democracy till date. ‘This unprecedented experiment attracted world-wide attention and journalists, politicians and other observers came from numerous foreign countries to study its working at first hand. The governments of Nepal and Indonesia sent official teams for intensive study of the elections from the administrative and legal angles as these countries are also committed to setting up

²² Ibid., p. 10.

a democratic form of government on adult franchise and have problems similar to those of India.²³

Many countries, who wanted to adopt parliamentary democracy through conducting elections based on adult suffrage, but they have similar problems like India of ignorance, illiteracy and the under development of transport and communication showed a lot of interest in studying these elections. Thus, many countries of Middle East, Africa and South America took detailed information regarding these elections, the main features of which were adopted in future years by many among them.

For example, a similar experiment is made successful in Sudan following the Indian experiences. 'A general election on adult franchise was held in the Sudan in November-December, 1953, under the control and supervision of an international commission of which the Chairman was the Chief Election Commissioner of India, Sukumar Sen. The Indian law and procedure of elections were largely adopted in this election and proved very suitable. Literacy is only 2 per cent in the country, which is nearly as large as India in area but has far poorer communications and much less developed administrative machinery. In spite of this, adult suffrage was a remarkable success and proved a potent factor in itself for advancing the political education of an illiterate mass, which had little or no background of political experience.'²⁴ Thus, this was the significance and impact of the democratic elections in India, examples of which have inspired numerous countries of the world to take the democratic path, ignoring multiple difficulties coming in their way.

This election showed to the world that literary education, however desirable, is not an essential condition for an election, to be successful adopting adult suffrage. The common man, however illiterate, ignorant and backward they are in an "undeveloped" country, they possesses enough common sense in their own way, to know what is good or bad for him. They can be trusted to cast their vote intelligently for the candidate of their choice, given they understand the system of voting.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 11.

Thus, this universal adult suffrage gave this election the full democratic character, as all adults 21 or more than 21 years of age were given the right to vote. One person got one vote, which he/she can cast to his/her favorite candidate, without any external pressure. Voters were given full security to exercise their franchise independently and secretly. The working of adult suffrage was fair and smooth, as elections were conducted under neutral and non-partisan control of the executive government. This was all made possible by the devoted campaign of Election Commission, the ruling party Congress and the Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru to have free and fair elections to establish democracy in its full meaning and practice.

Deciding **the composition of the Legislative Bodies** was another important aspect of the election process, which formed the great Parliament at the Center and the State Assembly at the state level. These Legislative Bodies were formed through various processes, which comprised of direct election, proportional representation, Electoral College, selection by the President and selection by the Governor of the State. These processes are elaborated subsequently to understand its function.

The Union Parliament had two houses the Upper House (the Council of States) and the Lower House (the House of the People), which are still in Practice. ‘**The Council of States** as first constituted in 1952 consisted of 216 members. Of these, twelve members were nominated by the President, as required by the Constitution, being persons having special knowledge or practical experience in respect of such matters as literature, science, art and social service. The remaining 204 members were elected to represent the States. The Fourth Schedule of the Constitution distributed these seats amongst the various States.’²⁵

The First Schedule of the Constitution divides Indian states into three categories Part A, Part B, and Part C states. Part A and Part B States, excepting the State of Jammu and Kashmir, got elected their representatives by the elected members of the Legislative Assembly of the State, through the system of proportional representation. In this process each member of the Legislative assembly had one transferable vote. ‘The representatives of the Jammu and Kashmir State were chosen

²⁵ Ibid., p. 12.

by the President in consultation with the Government of the State, as required by the Constitution (Application to Jammu & Kashmir) Order, 1950, (CO. 10). The State Government, in actual practice, acted upon a unanimous resolution of the Constituent Assembly in recommending the names of the persons to be chosen by the President.²⁶

For filling the seats in the Council of States allotted to the Part C States, electoral colleges were constituted, under the provisions of section 27A of the Representation of the People Act, 1950.²⁷ The members of the Legislative Assemblies of the States, of Ajmer, Bhopal, Coorg, Delhi and Vindhya Pradesh form respectively the Electoral Colleges for those States, which elected the members of the Council of States representing these States. The Electoral College consisting the members of the Himachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly and the member representing Bilaspur in the House of the People elects the representative from these two States to fill the seats allotted to them in the Council of states. ‘Members of the electoral colleges of the remaining three Part C States, namely, Kutch, Manipur and Tripura, are elected by adult franchise from the territorial constituencies provided by an order made under section 27C of the Representation of the People Act, 1950. Electoral Colleges in these three States have to be constituted afresh for each general election.’²⁸

A person is elected from the state of Ajmer or Coorg, in rotation by the respective Electoral College of the particular state whose term is to send its representative to the Council of States. The seat allotted to the States of Manipur and Tripura is filled in the same manner. ‘Any casual vacancy in the seat allotted to Ajmer and Coorg, or to Manipur and Tripura, is filled by election in the State in which the election to fill the seat was held at the last preceding general or biennial election, as the case may be.’²⁹

Thus, above description explains the complex process of the Electoral College and the members elected through this to fill the seats allotted to the Part C states. In few cases a single seat was allotted to the group of states making the process of

²⁶ Ibid., pp. 13-14.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 14.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 18.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 19.

election further complex, as the states were given their due share through rotation. It was done so because the states were very small in population count. These electoral colleges for Part C States functioned in accordance with the system of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote.

Each member (elected or nominated) of the Council of States gets 6 years in the office, which begins on the due date of notification of his/her names in the Gazette of India by the Government of India. It is not subject to dissolution, but as per the provisions of section 154 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, as nearly as possible, one-third of its members retire on the expiration of every second year.

There were 497 members in the **House of the People**. These seats were distributed among the various states by the Representation of the People Act, 1950. Two more members were nominated by the President to represent the Anglo- Indian community in the House, under article 331 of the Constitution. This raised the strength of the House to 499.

The 8 seats allotted to the State of Jammu & Kashmir, the Andaman & Nicobar Islands and the Part B Tribal Areas of Assam, were nominated by the President. The representatives of the State of Jammu and Kashmir were nominated in the same manner as in the Council of States. The State Government, in actual practice, acted upon a unanimous resolution of the Constituent Assembly in recommending the names of the persons to be chosen by the President. The remaining 489 seats were filled through election in the territorial constituencies. The election of candidates was based on Adult Suffrage.³⁰

Legislative Council was there only in the Legislatures of seven States: Bihar, Bombay, Madras, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and Mysore. Only these States had Upper and Lower House both, in their Legislature, while others had only Lower House. The Legislative Council is known as the upper House. The Legislative Councils are composed according to the provisions of article 171 of the Constitution. The allocation of seats in the Legislative Councils was made under section 10 of the

³⁰ Ibid., p. 15.

Representation of the People Act, 1950. These seats are filled through election held according to the system of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote. Similar to the Council of States, 'the Legislative Councils are not subject to dissolution but as nearly as possible one-third of the members retire on the expiration of every second year, in accordance with the provisions of section 156 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951.'³¹

All the States specified in Part A or Part B, with the exception of Jammu & Kashmir, had a **Legislative Assembly**. 'The Jammu and Kashmir Constituent Assembly which functions as that State's Legislative Assembly was not constituted under the Constitution of India and elections thereto was held under a proclamation of the then Maharaja of Kashmir'³². Among the States specified in Part C States Ajmer, Bhopal, Coorg, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh and Vindhya Pradesh have Legislative Assemblies. All the members of the Legislative Assemblies were chosen from territorial constituencies through direct election based on adult franchise, barring few nominated by the Governors and the *Rajapramukhas* of the States. The Governors of States and the *Rajapramukhas* of Mysore and Travancore- Cochin nominated the representatives of the Anglo- Indian communities for the Legislative Assemblies of the respective States. This was done under Article 333 of the Constitution.³³

Presidential and Vice-Presidential Elections

Election to the offices of the President and the Vice-President of India was held under The Presidential and Vice-Presidential Elections Act, 1952. Detailed Rules were made under the Act. An Order called The Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) (Amendment) Order, 1952 was made by the President on 20 March, 1952, providing that the representatives of Jammu and Kashmir State in either House of Parliament and the members of the Constituent Assembly of the Jammu and Kashmir State shall be deemed to be elected members of the respective Houses of Legislature so far as articles 54 and 55 of the Constitution relating to the election of the President

³¹ Ibid., p. 16.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid., p. 18.

are concerned. These members could thus vote in the election.’³⁴ Thus, this was the legislative framework for the elections to the offices of the President and the vice-President of India.

The election of the President of India is done by an Electoral College, which consists of the members of both houses of the Parliament and the elected members of the Legislative Assemblies of the States. The voting is by secret ballot. ‘The Election Commission prepared the list of the members of the Electoral College during March and April 1952. This list was published by the Election Commission on 22 April 1952, and contained the names of 4,056 electors.’³⁵

Shri M. N. Kaul, Secretary to Parliament, was appointed as the Returning Officer and the Secretaries of the various Legislative Assemblies were appointed as Assistant Returning Officers in their respective States. The program was notified in the Gazette of India and in the State Gazettes on 4 April 1952. At the same time, public notice of the intended election was also given. The last date for making nominations was 12 April. Similarly other dates were fixed for the scrutiny of nominations, the last date for the withdrawal of candidatures and the Poll was conducted on 2 May 1952. In the process of the scrutiny of nominations by the Returning Officer, out of 16 nomination papers of 14 candidates, 10 nomination papers of 9 candidates were rejected. As no candidate withdrew his candidature, 5 candidates were validly left to contest the election. The places of polling were the Parliament House in New Delhi and the premises in each State where the Legislative Assembly of the State held its sittings. The polling was to be done on a single day from 10 A.M. to 5 P.M.³⁶

Article 55 of the Constitution requires that there shall be uniformity in the scale of representation of the different States at the election of the President. The article also makes detailed provisions for calculating the

³⁴ Ibid., p. 161.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid., pp. 161-162.

number of votes, which each elected member of the Parliament and of the Legislative Assembly of each State is entitled to cast at the election.³⁷

These yielded the interesting results. Each member of the Parliament had 497 votes in their hands to cast and the members of the Legislative Assemblies of different states had varying number of votes in their hands to give each state uniform share in the Electoral College. For example: each legislature from Bihar had 119 votes. Similarly, Assam had 79 votes, Orissa 103 votes and the rest followed in the proportional fashion. The numbers varied because different states had varying numbers of legislatures in their assemblies.³⁸

The Election Commission arranged to have ballot boxes of a special design manufactured for use at the Presidential election and these were supplied to the Returning Officer and the Assistant Returning Officers. Every ballot box was to be locked and sealed after polling in the presence of the candidates or their representatives. Ballot papers were printed pink for the members of Parliament and green for the members of the State Legislative Assemblies.

Polling booths were made in each Legislative Assembly for that particular state. Eligible voters were required to vote on the polling booth in their own state Legislative Assembly of the State. A member of the Parliament was required to vote in the Parliament House in New Delhi or in the State from which he had been elected. In order to enable a member of the Parliament to vote in any other State, in case he happened to be there on the date of the poll, the Election Commission issued special permits. Total 23 voters, all members of the parliament used this facility. Two electors were given the facility of Postal ballot, who were in preventive detention on the date of the poll. One of them was a member of the Council of States from Hyderabad, and the other a member of the Saurashtra Legislative Assembly.

Both of them cast their votes. After polling had been duly completed in a State, the sealed ballot boxes, separate sealed covers containing the keys, and packets

³⁷ Ibid., p. 162.

³⁸ Ibid.

of all other papers used at the poll, were sent to the Returning Officer at New Delhi by the Assistant Returning Officer. The Returning Officer counted the votes in the Parliament House, New Delhi, on 6 May, 1952. Counting was completed on the same day. The maximum number of votes was polled by Dr. Rajendra Prasad (5,07,400) and was followed by Shri K. T. Shah (92,827), Shri Thatte Laxman Ganesh (2, 672), Shri Hari Ram (1,954), and Shri Krishna Kumar Chatterjee (533). Dr. Rajendra Prasad was declared elected to the office of the President of India and the notification announcing this under section 12 of the Presidential and Vice-Presidential Elections Act, 1952, was published on the same day.

The Vice-President is elected by members of both Houses of Parliament assembled at a joint meeting through the system of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote, under article 66 of the Constitution. The voting is by secret ballot. The list of electors for the Vice-Presidential election was prepared by the Commission and was published on 18 April 1952. It contained the names of 715 electors. Shri M. N. Kaul, Secretary to Parliament, was appointed Returning Officer for the election and a few Assistant Returning Officers were appointed to assist him.

The total election process took two months from 12 April 1952 to 12 May 1952. On 12 April 1952, dates for all the following programs of the election were set and published by the Election Commission. Nominations started on 21 April, scrutiny of the nominations papers were held on the following day, 25th April was the last date for the withdrawal of candidates and 12 May was decided as the day of the poll.³⁹

Three nomination papers of two candidates were filed. After the scrutiny, nomination papers, both of Shri S. Radhakrishnan were declared correct as per the eligibility criteria. The nomination paper of the other candidate, Janab Shaik Khadir Hussain of Chowk Mahal, Nandyal, Kurnool District, was rejected under rule 4 (2) of the Presidential and Vice- Presidential Elections Rules, 1952. As a result, Shri S. Radhakrishnan was the only validly nominated candidate, the Returning Officer declared him to be duly elected to the office of the Vice-President on 25 April, 1952.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 163.

Election: Machinery and challenges

The Election Commission was brought into force on 26 November 1949, under the article 324 of the Constitution. Along with this also came the provisions of the Constitution relating to citizenship under articles 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, while the rest of the Constitution came into force on 26 January 1950. The Office of the Election Commission was set up on 25 January 1950 and the Chief Election Commissioner assumed charge on 21 March 1950. The Constitution provides for the appointment of other members of the Election Commission as and when necessary, however, in the first general election it was not found necessary to appoint any other member of the Commission.⁴⁰

The Election Commission was formed as a permanent and an independent constitutional body over which the ruling government had no say. Its main functions were to look after the full process of preparations and conduct of elections to all legislatures and the office of President and the vice-president. All legal matters arising out of elections were dealt by the election commission through appointing election tribunals, which was made its exclusive right to do so. But, it has to function considering the provisions of the constitution and the statute law made for elections. But again, it was given the full sway, over the matters not covered by these laws, to decide and give its own directions in all necessary circumstances and conditions.

The Election Commission analyzed the progress made hitherto, with particular reference to the motion moved by the Prime Minister and adopted by the Constituent Assembly on 8 January 1949, that issued instructions for the preparation of the electoral rolls and for taking of all necessary steps to conduct the elections as early as possible under the new Constitution. By taking stock of the situation, it made clear that the elections could not possibly be held during the year 1950 due to following reasons:

- (1) The electoral law was yet to be passed by Parliament.
- (2) The Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes had not till then been specified by an Order of the President as required by articles 341 and 342

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 22.

of the Constitution. The population strength of these Castes and Tribes could not, therefore, be determined. As the extent of reservation of seats in the legislatures for the Scheduled Castes and Tribes depends strictly on the exact proportion that their numbers bear to the total population in any State or in the country as a whole, no decision could be taken at that stage regarding the number of seats to be reserved for them in the various Legislatures. (3) The electoral rolls so far prepared were only in- formal drafts without any legal sanction, the basis for their preparation having been what the electoral law was expected to provide for eventually. Accordingly, the electoral law had to be passed first to make specific provisions on many important points before the rolls could be made ready even for preliminary publication under legal authority. (4) The work of delimiting the constituencies could not be taken up in the absence of an Order under article 387 of the Constitution for the determination of the population of the States and the different areas in each State. In the absence of delimited constituencies, electoral rolls could not be published even when they were ready in any area. (5) The state of preparedness for elections varied considerably in the different States. While it might conceivably have been possible to hold the elections during the winter of 1950-51 in a few, States, it was impossible to do so in others.⁴¹

The Election Commission brought these facts to the notice of the Government and it was agreed that the elections could not be held in 1950. The Prime Minister made a statement in Parliament on 19 April 1950, expressing his hope that elections would be held in the spring of 1951.

The conduct of the first general election was a massive challenge in front of the Election Commission. The Election Commission faced a hell lot of political, economic, socio-cultural and geographical problems in its organization. Election was to be conducted in a very vast territory, geographically diverse and very different from each other in challenges. In some remote hill villages bridges were made to

⁴¹ Ibid., pp. P22-23.

cross over rivers, than in small islands of the Indian Ocean naval vassals were used to take the rolls to the polling booths. A big social problem was faced in registering women's name in northern India, as they were totally reluctant in giving their own names for the rolls, instead they named themselves as A's mother or B's wife, which emerged as a big problem and names of nearly 2.8 million women voters were scrapped from the list, so as to teach them a lesson for the future elections to come.⁴² It was totally different from the experiences of Democracy in the western countries. Thus, Ramchandra Guha writes in his book:

India's first general election was an act of faith. A newly independent country chose to move straight into universal adult suffrage, rather than as had been the case in the west- at first reserve the right to vote to men of property, with the working class and women excluded from the franchise until much later.⁴³

The whole process of its commencement was very complex and tedious. The biggest challenge was to teach the people about the importance of a vote in a Democratic set up of the government, as it was a totally unknown experiment with the Indian people. The making of the voter identification card for all voters was a very complex process. Moreover, the arrangement for Election Rolls, Ballot papers, Ballot Boxes, Polling Booths, Election Officers, Polling Agents and other such necessities needed a vast bureaucratic and administrative setup. . More than a million officials were needed to register over 173 million voters, three quarters of whom were illiterate. 224,000 polling booths were constructed, and equipped with 2 million steel ballot boxes; 16,500 clerks were appointed on six-month contracts to type and collate the electoral rolls by constituency; about 380,000 reams of paper were used for printing the rolls.⁴⁴

The estimated cost for these elections, both incurred by state and central governments, was approximately 100 million of rupees. Thus, the Times of India reports that, almost half the total sum will be incurred on the preparation of electoral

⁴² First few paragraphs of this theme is based on my analysis and fact finding from 'India after Gandhi' of Ram Chandra Guha and All India Radio Broadcast of 22 November 1951 on General Elections by Jawaharlal Nehru.

⁴³ Ramchandra Guha, *India After Gandhi* (London: Picador India, 2008), p. 133.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p.134.

rolls, on which will be registered the names of the one twelfth of the humanity. One eighth will be used to prepare required paraphernalia and in its transport to required spots. And rest amount will be shared between center and states on the priority basis. All election expenditure of the part C states will be borne by the center and for part A and B states sum exceeding the budget of states will be borne half by the center and half by the state. It further reports that, ‘...the actual conduct of the elections too is not likely to figure less conspicuous, although a precise estimate of it at present is impossible’.⁴⁵

State and center, election committees of both formed by the election commission, together have the responsibility to find and train officials required for various degrees of work and its management. Each polling booth was to be manned by a Presiding Officer, five clerks and four policemen. As elections were taken place all over India simultaneously, part of the staff required did duty in more than one place. Estimated the specialized staffs involved in the Election were 56,000 Presiding Officers, 280,000 Clerks, and 224,000 Policemen. Moreover, vast numbers of other government servants and voluntary workers coordinated with them. In addition, there was an election agent for every candidate as well as other agents and assistants. Whatever government may do, but people’s cooperation was a vital element in making the election a grand success. Thus, Nehru addressed people:

No amount of governmental organization can make these elections a success unless the people themselves cooperate. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance for our people that they understand all the processes, which lead us to their vote and give us their intelligent cooperation.⁴⁶

Pictorial symbols were given to the parties, as illiterate voters could not recognize parties by their names. These symbols were drawn from daily life such as: a pair of bullocks, a hut, an elephant, an earthenware lamp etc. to help voters to recognize it easily. Multiple ballot boxes were used for the first time in elections to make

⁴⁵ “Educating voters for general election”, *The Times of India*, (1861-current); 5 November 1951; Pro quest Historical Newspaper: *The Times of India*, p. 5, Available at Jawaharlal Nehru University Library.

⁴⁶ Speech broadcast from All India Radio, the General Election, 22 November 1951, Collected Speeches of Jawaharlal Nehru (1949-1953), Vol. 3, p.13.

organization work easy for the mostly illiterate Indian electors. So, the each party and independent candidate had a ballot box in each polling stations with their symbol marked on it. Thus, voters had to just stamp and drop their papers in the particular box allotted to their favorite candidate. Indian scientists have developed a variety of indelible ink, which were used to give a mark on the finger of voters, to avoid impersonation.

In response to the suggestion given by the Election Commission of India to educate voters of their rights and responsibilities along with the election procedure and the like, all available media were pressed into action by the state. Films, All India Radio and Postal Services were its popular means.

The Film division of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting produced a film entitled “Rights and Responsibilities” dealing mainly with the franchise and the functions and the duties of the electorate. This was exhibited in the circuit of the Film Division covering over 3000 cinema houses. Copies of the documentary film were supplied to state governments to exhibit it through mobile vans. Another film entitled “Democracy in Action” was produced in English and eight Indian languages, which dealt with the mechanics of general election. In its entire circuit it educated more than 70 million people.⁴⁷

The central department of Posts and Telegraph had taken a number of steps to provide additional Postal, Telegraph and Telephone facilities to candidates, political parties and press. Postal units were attached with the polling parties to seek votes of distant voters for them. Members of the armed forces and official serving abroad in overseas posts or detained persons were entitled to vote by post. A service stamp was affixed on the ballot paper sent to them to meet the postal charges by the government.⁴⁸

Adequate arrangements were made for handling election traffic of both kinds postal and telegraph. All election literature posted by parties and candidates were

⁴⁷ “All available media pressed into action”, *The Times of India*, (1861-current); 5 November 1951; Pro quest Historical Newspaper: *The Times of India*, p. 5, Available at Jawaharlal Nehru University Library.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 5 November 1951, p. 5.

delivered expeditiously on time. Candidates were also permitted to display one poster each at all post offices in the constituency for a period of two months terminating on the polling day on payment of Rupees 200 for a parliamentary constituency and Rupees 50 for a single member and Rupees 100 for a double member assembly constituency.⁴⁹

Political Parties, Newspapers and Press were given temporary telephone connections on high priority for a period of 6 months. Candidates got this facility for a period of 3 months on a scale of two for each in large cities and one in other places.⁵⁰

All India Radio with its 22 broadcasting stations educated its listeners on several aspects of the election. A series of broadcasts on the constitution of India, adult franchise, preparation of electoral rolls etc. was aired from stations of AIR. A number of short and simple talks on these subjects in various Indian languages and dialects were also put on the air for the benefit of rural listeners. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and the central department of posts and telegraph walked hand in hand with the election commission of India to attest the dream of millions of this nation to become a grand success.⁵¹

Election officials were given strict guidelines for penalties or punishments if they involved in malpractices such as: tempering with electoral roles or help some favorite candidate in fetching votes or any other mischief.

Role of Jawaharlal Nehru

Nehru played a crucial role in educating the public about the election process and fair conduct of election as he massively campaigned for it through All India Radio, travelling and mass meetings, and letters written to the Election Commission and the Chief Ministers of the states. Taking count of his role as being the Prime Minister and the president of the ruling party becomes extremely important to understand the dynamics of the election.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

Nehru on Gandhi's line: 'means justifies the end', gave utmost importance to fair means and discarded wrong practices that were frequent in elections. He at several occasions addressed the gathering that:

The manner of winning or losing is even more important than the result. It is better to lose in the right way than to win in the wrong way. Indeed, if success comes through misconceived effort or wrong means, then the value of that success itself is lost.⁵²

Nehru was very much concerned to give fair and equal chance to all candidates contesting these elections across party lines, including independent candidates. Candidates were advised to have proper understanding of the complicated rules and regulations of the election. Any errors and lapse could disqualify them. He made it clear that the ruling party must not have any privilege of government resources. Ministers and officers of the central and state governments were given strict instructions to carry out their duties with the utmost neutrality.

Nehru too played a major role in fair conduct of the elections by taking several decisions to maintain level playing field for all parties and independent candidates as well. On the question of the use of All India Radio for election broadcasts, Nehru was not very clear to take a decision, whether to ban it for all the parties or give each party an equal share of time, as there were many parties. Thus, he wrote a response to the letter of Diwakar (Minister for information and broadcasting at that time), who consulted him regarding facilitating All India Radio to all parties for election broadcasts, where he expressed his difficulties:

I am almost inclined to think that it is better to ban all election broadcasts, including those from the congress, as there were far too many parties and it is difficult to draw the line.⁵³

⁵² Ibid., 5 November 1951, p.15.

⁵³ Letter to R. R. Diwakar, 4 August 1951, *SWJN*, Series 2, Vol. 16, Part 2, p. 123.

He also wrote to C. Rajagopalachari, the same day on 4 August 1951 and expressed his desire to hold a meeting and discuss the issue:

When consulted previously, I had suggested that it might be proper, to some extent, to follow the British example and give some time to recognize parties for one election broadcast each. The more I think of it, the more difficult it seems, because there are far too many parties and one does not know where to draw the line. I am almost inclined to think that no party, including the congress, should broadcast specifically for election purposes.⁵⁴

The All India Radio was banned for all political parties including Congress. It was only used by the Government to educate the electorate about the process and procedures of the election. Congress remained stick to democratic principles even if the left parties were using Russian Radio frequencies for their campaign purposes. However, the congress was indirectly a bit privileged party, as it was the ruling party and their lead campaigner Jawaharlal Nehru was also the Prime Minister of India. Nehru had the privilege of addressing the people through all India Radio on election matters in general. Though not related to the campaign of the congress, but in some way or the other that and the use airplane and government resources, not intentionally but by default, gave upper hand to the Congress in the election.

However, in letters, Congress ministers were strictly warned against the use of government facilities and resources for their election campaign. To make it follow in practice, Nehru wrote in a note to Home Secretary that, ministers either central or state should not use government resources for their election meetings or other activity. They must consider their meetings as general as of other candidates fraying in the election and expenses of which must be paid either by the party or the individual candidate. ‘Nor should Ministers charge their travelling expenses or daily allowances for journeys which have, for their main purpose, the election campaign.’⁵⁵ Concessions were granted only when the meeting was entirely governmental.

⁵⁴ Letter to C. Rajagopalachari, 4 August 1951, *SWJN*, Series 2, Vol. 16, Part 2, p. 123.

⁵⁵ Note to Home Secretary, 29 August 1951, *Ibid.*, p. 125.

Corruption was another big problem to be checked by the Congress party and Nehru. Allegations lodged against the party had full potential to destroy its image in the public. Nehru on several occasions said that, the government will make all possible inquiries, if the charges leveled against the candidates seemed valid and logical. Thus, he was very cautious about tackling all kinds of corruption cases. He clarified an allegation leveled on C. B. Gupta (the Minister of supplies in U.P Government) in Parliament. In this case Gupta was alleged of promising a congress seat to a Sugar Industrialist, in return for helping in the fund collection for the election. Here he clarified the confusion by saying that, 'Sugar Industrialists expressed their desire to help congress financially in the elections. Mr. Gupta told him that they were perfectly welcome to do so and their help would in fact be welcome if they thought it proper to do so.'⁵⁶As regards to the question asked by Dr. Kunzru, he read a passage from his correspondence with C. B. Gupta:

During the course of these talks, Sri Hari Raj Swarap asked me whether there was any chance for non-congressmen to seek election on the support of the congress. I told him about the practice that the congress had been following in the past the principles that govern the decision of this question. I gave him to understand on the basis of my experience of the congressmen that cases of those Congressmen might also be considered who were men of integrity and character and public service and were prepared to abide by the congress ideals and discipline and were also popular otherwise in the constituencies from where they proposed to seek election. I gave the instances of Hriday Nath Kunzru and Mukhtiar Singh. I, however, made it clear that it was for the central parliamentary board to lay down the guiding principles for inviting applications to the seats.⁵⁷

Nehru also wrote a letter to G. B. Pant, the Chief Minister of U.P. at that time to enquire in the matter as he got alarmed by the information given by his sister Vijayalakshmi that, Gupta is issuing further threats to Industrialists for giving money

⁵⁶ Collection of Funds from Industrialists, 14 August 1951. Ibid., p. 124.

⁵⁷ Ibid., pp.124-125.

and managing jeeps for the election campaign.⁵⁸ Thus, it shows his concern for checking the cases of corruption in the party.

He was also facing a great amount of difficulties in collecting fund for the Congress in particular and for the elections in general. He had to shoulder both the responsibilities as the president of Congress and the Prime Minister of the country simultaneously. He clarifies his stand in a statement to the press:

As Prime Minister, I have refrained from making appeals for funds except for the Prime Minister's Fund or some relief or memorial fund. I have avoided making requests to individuals for donations, and such appeals as I have made have been general appeals to the public. It is clear that nothing should be done by a Minister which might cast a reflection on his work or which might create any misunderstanding in the minds of the public.⁵⁹

Overall, he was totally determined to set an equal platform for all parties in the first general elections. He showed full conviction in incorporating democratic ideals and principles for his party, election and the country alike. However, he was very tired and exhausted by the tedious election process. Thus, he expresses his experiences as:

I sometimes wonder why and how human ingenuity has evolved this extraordinary futile way of choosing our legislators. My dominant urge and desire today is somehow to reach the middle of February. Of course, I shall do so, because the middle of February is bound to come. Meanwhile, the intervening months are a nightmare.⁶⁰

The Congress at that time was the rightful heir of the national movement, which had won India its freedom, and a potential contender of the seat of power of the upcoming democratic secular republic of India. The ideological set up of it was most inclusive and democratic in nature, which was most suitable for the diverse socio-cultural and

⁵⁸ Letter to G. B. Pant, 29 September 1951, *Ibid.*, p. 127.

⁵⁹ Appeal for Subscriptions, 27 September 1951, *Ibid.*, p. 126

⁶⁰ Letter to Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, 7 November 1951, *SWJN*, Series 2, Vol. 17, p. 9.

political structure of the country. Jawaharlal Nehru played a leading role in preparation of manifesto of the Congress party, for the general election campaign keeping in view what India should be in its new life as a democracy, which encompassed all day-to-day life problems and their solutions. The premises of this manifesto were laid down as per the ideals of freedom struggle and the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi, which was a prelude to the most stable phase in Indian democracy. First paragraph of the manifesto reads:

The father of the nation told us to value the moral and ethical basis of national life and made this the condition for political action. He emphasized that means were as important as ends and the means we adopt ultimately shape the end. In accordance with India's immemorial teaching and heritage, the performance of duty was given first place, and rights and privileges naturally flowed from them. The congress and the people could only imperfectly follow this teaching, but the inspiration they drew from it, benefited them and led them towards their goal. It is necessary for all of us to keep this in mind when conflict darkens the world, and dissensions and a lowering of standards threaten 'our public life. It is only by adhering to these principles that real success can be achieved, and India can prosper and rise to her destined heights.⁶¹

It focused on food, clothing and shelter as the first priority for the people. Elimination of poverty and generation of employment was kept on high agenda. Special focus was given to Technological, Agricultural and Industrial development to have faster economic growth. Top priority was given to River valley projects for speedy growth of agricultural sector. Heavy Industries mainly of steel, heavy chemicals, fertilizers, and Machine tools were given prime focus, for having all round infrastructural development of the country.

Apart from all these developmental schemes, a strong emphasis was laid down to bring about economic equality, social justice and political stability in the country. Communal parties and their ideas were strongly discarded, as it was the biggest

⁶¹ The Congress Election Manifesto, 13 July 1951, *SWJN*, Series 2, Vol. 16, Part 2, p. 3.

divisive element prevailing in the society. Rehabilitation of refugees was sought on a bigger scale. Secularism as a principle was the buzzword of the campaign to make people aware about its true meaning and value in keeping the vast swathe of this diverse country united. Manifesto reads:

As India is a secular state, every citizen has the same duties, rights, privileges and obligations as any other. He has full freedom to profess and practice his religion. It is the particular duty of the state to protect these rights of all minority communities in the country and to give them full opportunities for development, so that they might play their part in the economy and public life of the country. The congress will make every effort to ensure proper representation for them in the legislatures and other public bodies.⁶²

Thus, the Manifesto shows the utmost resolve of Nehru for secularism as an ideal that must be learnt by the people and followed in practice. It has the potential to reach to solutions of every problem facing the people. This was the most inclusive kind of Manifesto presented at the time of election by any party fraying for the election, which believed in giving all people equal opportunity and resource to develop through hard work and competitive attitude that could alone preserve social peace and democracy.⁶³ Hence, it shows the resolve of congress to realize the true essence of freedom for all. Which Nehru aptly puts in his speeches that political freedom is only the first step, we have to go long way in gaining freedom from social and economic backwardness, through following righteous path.

The true spirit of a Nation-builder, with whom India took a long leap out of the darkness, resembles in following lines broadcast by All India Radio:

For some reason, elections cause a great deal of excitement and sometimes even passion. Unfortunately, this excitement may also lead to improper behavior and to a lowering of normal standards of democracy. We have to be on our guards against this. It is of the utmost importance

⁶² Ibid., p. 10.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 11.

that all of us, whatever the party to which we belong, to maintain a high level of propriety and decorous behavior. Our propaganda by speech or in writing should not be personal but should deal with policies and programs. It should on no account be allowed to degenerate into personal criticism and abuse. The standard we set up now will act as precedent and govern future elections.⁶⁴

Nehru gave a message to the people of India to cooperate and be a partner in building a democratic and secular nation, through successful organization of the elections and subsequent making of the governments by diversely elected candidates for the parliament and the state legislatures. Thus, he took a vow with his people espousing harmony:

Let us face this great adventure of our general election with good heart and spirit and try to avoid ill will even in regard to those who oppose us. Thus, we should lay the firm foundation of the democratic structure of this great republic.⁶⁵

Indeed, the first general election was an act of faith in the people of India. Nehru had firm belief in our people that if they can act purposively in the freedom movement, then they are politically mature enough to choose their representatives in a democratic process. Other leaders like Dr. Rajendra Prasad believed that, 'it's a leap into the darkness', but his pessimism was proved wrong and the first general election was a grand success with very little bad happenings and no or sporadically small instances of violence and corruption. This election remained an example for other democratic elections to be conducted in India and abroad. Even our Chief Election Commissioner was called in Sudan, an African country, to guide their first democratic general elections as their chief election commissioner. This stupendous process of the biggest democratic elections ever held was a learning experience for many newly freed countries of Asia and Africa.

⁶⁴ Selected Speeches of Jawaharlal Nehru (1949-53), Vol. 3, p. 14.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 16.

Chapter 2

Election campaign: Strategies, Methods and People's Response

Election campaign is one of the most important components of the election process in a democracy. It is through election campaign that different parties and candidates reach out to electors with their ideologies, agendas and promises for the future. This also helps people in understanding differences and similarities among various parties and candidates. It educates people about the importance of elections in a democracy and the full process of the election.

These campaigns have been taking place in different democracies of the world in various forms and through innumerable methods. But it assumes a considerable significance in a country, which has the maximum number of voters as well as maximum number of illiterate voters going to polls. This illiteracy of the people becomes the biggest obstacle in road to election campaign by different parties. They had to invent new methods and relate it with day-to-day needs and practices of the common people in order to make these campaigns relevant and graspable to them.

Different political parties followed more or less similar methods and strategies in the election campaign. They all tried to establish direct contact with the electors and took up important domestic, national and international issues affecting them. Public meetings, discussion sessions, canvassing and prominent leaders interacting with the voters directly through various platforms was common across party lines. But their campaigns looked different due to varying amount of resources and strength of party organizations available to them. This brought a variation in which different parties reached out to people.

These parties campaigned as per their party strength in terms of resources and number of people associated with it. Among these, the Indian National Congress was the most resourceful one in terms of both material and party organization. They had their provincial congress and their subsequent wings in all parts of the country. They were equally spread in villages and the cities. The Congress had members in their organization even from the remotest parts of the country. Hence, almost all means,

modes, methods and strategies of campaign were seen in the Congress election campaign. These had profound responses from the people. Consequently, voter turnout for the election was phenomenal. Owing to this context, I will elaborate on the election campaign of Congress to have a comprehensive idea of this election. However, in order to have a fuller understanding of the subject, the challenge of a comparative assessment of election campaign conducted by other parties and Congress will be taken up in subsequent research.

A case study of the Congress Election Campaign¹

Congress was much more established and many times bigger in terms of organization and its outreach to the people than any other party contesting in this election. This was the most respectable party as it had the maximum share in the freedom struggle of India. This party had members and leaders of stature from all parts of the country. This party followed an all-inclusive approach in its organization and reaching out to the people, cutting across cultural diversity of this country. The credit of bridging different cultural nationalities into a unique mosaic culture, that led the process of this great and glorious nation in the making, also goes to the Congress. Thus, this party's campaign was the most significant one, as it had people to people contact with almost all the people of this country, which is the soul of any election campaign conducted anywhere in the world.

Congress campaign was conducted at two levels. One was done at the organizational level and another was through countrywide tour by the party president Jawaharlal Nehru. There was no division as such, but I am writing this way to understand the campaign.

At the organizational level leaders of the All India Congress Committee and the provincial Congress were busy in organization of campaigns throughout the country. They had members in all villages and cities to relay their information to the people. They played significant role as through them messages of the party reached door to door. They became the distributor of information among the masses through

¹ To make this study I will fully base myself on the Roll number: 6 of the Nehru Clippings, available at Nehru Memorial Museum and Library (hereafter NMML), consisting paper cuttings of various newspapers related to Nehru's campaign. This role covers the period from September 1951 to February 1952, which encompasses the whole of the campaign period.

pamphlets and canvassing. Without this the campaign would not have been a grand success. Nevertheless, the success of this campaign fully depended on the whirlwind tour of the country by Jawaharlal Nehru. However, Nehru would not have been so charismatic without the congress and vice-versa.

The Congress would not be in such a formidable state without the charismatic leadership of Nehru. This was also the accepted fact among the party cadre, which is attested by the Purushottam das Tandon and Jawaharlal Nehru controversy for the reconstitution of the Congress Working Committee. When Nehru resigned from the Congress Working Committee protesting the obstinacy and conservatism of Tandon, whole of the Congress supported Nehru barring an insignificant few. Tandon resigned from the post of president of the Congress. The All India Congress Committee meeting amid loud cheers by its members elected Nehru the president. Only four men voted against this election while the rest 296 acclaimed the election with loud cheers.² This shows the prominence of Nehru for the Congress and the faith of the party members in his leadership.

Thus, Nehru was given the baton of the Congress to run its election campaign. His prime focus in the campaign was to teach people the importance of secularism and democracy to counter communal parties from taking ground in our society, as communalism emerged as a major threat to the stability of our nation, after its partition on communal lines. This campaign shows the eloquence of Nehru and his never-ending energy to interact with maximum number of people possible. He exhibited his artistry in interacting with the people and earned a lot of love from them.

The Congress campaign was fully dependent on Nehru for its success, because he was the lead campaigner and the prime ministerial candidate of the party. And he played his role with such beauty and intelligence that Congress could not have aspired for more. Therefore, I will look at the massive campaign by Nehru throughout the country.

² Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Dawn, Karachi, 9 September 1951.

Nehru as the prime ministerial candidate and president of the All India Congress Committee (AICC) had to carry out both the responsibilities simultaneously. He was not only the leading campaigner for the Congress party, but also for this general election. His campaign for general election was very different from today's campaigns in elections. He not only educated people about the selection of the right candidates, but also gave them a proper training in the ideals of democracy and secularism. He taught people about the dangers of communalism in almost all his speeches. He had complete faith in the future of India and that was apparent in his effort to make this election a success.

Nehru, as the prime Ministerial candidate played the lead role. He set the pattern for all future election campaigns by his whirlwind tour of the country from August 1951 to February 1952. The use of an IAF aircraft for electioneering dates back to those days. Rare would be a day on which Nehru didn't fly several hundred miles and motor down a few score more, addressing anything up to 12 meetings. He often said things that went above the heads of his audience. But he never failed to make an enormous impact, presumably because the people listened to him with their eyes rather than with their ears. Nehru's personal dominance of the campaign was overwhelming which left a mark for future leaders to follow.³

This study covers Nehru's campaign throughout the country in chronological order, starting from Himachal Pradesh. It looks at the speeches given by Jawaharlal Nehru in different parts of the country. It focuses on the important agendas addressed in a particular region, which was contextually most dominant. It, most importantly, looks at the responses given by the prominent leaders of other parties. Overall, this analyzes the way in which Nehru carried out the campaign and in the process had put focus on the most relevant agenda for a particular region. It will also help us understand the varying dominant issues in different parts of India.

Election tour of Nehru began on 15 November 1951. The tour was not continuous as he did flying visits to various states for two or three days each from

³Campaign Trail, The Times of India (1861-current); 31 March 1971; Pro quest Historical Newspaper: The Times of India, Jawaharlal Nehru University Library, and p. 17.

Delhi. He had planned to cover entire country in 7 weeks.⁴ He started on a country wide electioneering campaign with a two-day visit to **Himachal Pradesh**. He travelled from Delhi by special IAF aircraft for Pathankot on the morning of November 15.⁵ The Base Commander Col. Bikram Singh and local Congressmen received Nehru at the airstrip. Nehru gave his first speech here in a public meeting of approx. 50,000. He told that every vote for the Congress in the coming general election would be a vote for secularism and a vote against communalism that weakened the country.⁶

From there he motored to Mandi districts on the same day. He addressed 5 meetings in the Kangra valley and Himachal Pradesh on the 120 Mile route. Inhabitants of villages and towns gathered in groups on the road from Pathankot to Mandi to see Nehru. Some of the villagers had trekked for miles from the interior and had crude torches and lamps in their hands.⁷ At several point on the road to Mandi, he stopped his car to greet group of villagers who stood for hours on the road to have his 'Darshan'. In one place the Congress president accepted a garland from an old woman, who was waiting with an attendant to have 'Darshan' of Mr. Nehru. At another place, scouts going home jumped out of a stationary train and surrounded his car, shouting 'Jai Hind'.⁸ Thus, the Congress president occasionally stepped down from his car to receive the greetings of and give a word of cheer to the smiling villagers.

He got rousing reception at Mandi. Raja of Mandi received him at town Octori post. The Congress President was taken through decorated streets adorned with gay arches, congress flags and bunting, in a procession. People gathered on the street lustily cheered Mr. Nehru. Men, women and children showered marigolds from balconies and housetops as the car pass through.⁹

⁴Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML.

⁵ Ibid., Statesman, New Delhi, 11 November 1951, p 33.

⁶ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Hindustan Times, 16 November 1951, p 75.

⁷ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, India News Chronicle, Delhi, 17 November 1951, p 83.

⁸ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Mail, Madras, 16 November 1951, p 79.

⁹ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Hindustan Times, 17 November 1951, p 81.

Socialist volunteers wearing red Khadi caps joined the crowds and cheered him, as the procession passed through the arches erected along the course. One of the arches was named after the socialist leader, Mr. J. P. Narain and another after Mr. J. B. Kripalani, the Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party (KMPP) leader.¹⁰ This clearly shows the acceptance of Nehru and his belief in socialism by the socialist leaders. Socialist volunteers had full faith and hope in Nehru that he will lead the country on the socialist path and give full socialist character to upcoming parliamentary democratic political system. One another reason why Nehru got warm welcome and cheers from the socialist because all the leaders and volunteers of the socialists were earlier part of the Congress in which he was among the main protagonist of the socialist ideas in the Congress.

In Mandi Masan, general parliamentary constituency that Mr. Nehru was touring, a KMPP candidate opposed the Congress candidate Rajkumar Amrit Kaur. A socialist opposed the Congress nominee for the reserved seat in the same constituency.¹¹

Nehru gave a speech in a meeting at Mandi that was attended by about 10,000 people, including a large number of women. About 3000 thousand peasants had come from different villages after trekking 10 to 20 miles along a winding hill.¹² He began his speech by saying that the Himalayan Mountains had drawn him more to these parts than the elections to express his feelings and gather attention of the people at the same time. Nehru said, 'we fought the freedom battle not only to win political freedom but also to establish Janata Raj (People's Regime). But we can only bring Janata Raj through cooperation of all the people, irrespective of caste and creed, and hard work. These cannot be done through shouting slogans alone or through government edicts.'¹³

¹⁰ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Mail, Madras, 16 November 1951, p 79.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Assam Tribune, Assam, 18 November 1951, p 88.

¹³ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Mail, Madras, 16 November 1951, p 79.

Election would provide the people an opportunity to effectively express their disapproval or approval of the policy or principles they like and stand for. Referring to this, Mr. Nehru asked the people to clearly understand that votes were not to be cast on the basis of caste or individual basis. Voting did not mean that the people should cast their votes to a candidate of their community or caste or their relative or to a mere independent candidate. Effective use of votes could only be made when they were cast for candidate representing an organization. He further said, individuals never solved big questions, however, intelligent they might be. People had now to see which organization in the country was capable enough to keep the country unified and take the people forward because country could march ahead only with unity. They had to see which organization could solve the people's problem, and the big questions of the day. Thus, he remarked that, 'the burden of grinding poverty on the shoulders of the common people has to be lifted. But this cannot be done by magic, but only through hard work and cooperation of the people'.¹⁴ Thus, he called upon the people to stand united and work together to wage war against poverty and unemployment with hard work and cooperation among them.

He referred to the Planning Commission's 5-year plan, and said people should try to understand the plan. It might not be possible for them to understand in detail everything, but they should grasp the basic points. The plan aimed at providing a square meal to the people, and solving their cloth and housing problem. He further said that,

Our country is not a poor country, although it is true that people living in it are poor. Our Country has a lot of inherent strength. We have vast productive land resources and talent. All these have to be put to proper use in a cooperative venture for uplifting the whole people.¹⁵

If people work out and make it a success, a rapid progress in the economic field could be achieved.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

He warned people to be aware of communal organizations. The communal disturbances in the country at the time of partition fully proved how through this fracas the country became weak and we have to bow our head in shame before the world for atrocities committed. He further said that, we have to see which organization is strong enough to keep the country unified and whether the principles it advocates are the right principles. We have to see whether these principles keep people together or divide them and sow dissension in them. If there is dissension, then obviously our energy and strength will be frittered away in fighting each other. You have to be on your guard when some communal organization come and ask you for your votes appealing to you on religious grounds. All such organization may excite passion in one community or caste against another community or caste. You have to remember that whatever creates barriers between the people makes the country weak. If the people of each caste think of them alone, the country will instead of advancing, go backwards.¹⁶

Nehru pressed hard on the unity of the people and appealed them to ignore all sorts of communal parties coming to them for votes, as they posed the biggest danger in maintaining the integrity and unity of the country. Although different people lived in different states professing many religions, yet basically they are citizens of one country and their problems are the same. Thus, he emphasized on to work together, and remembers the lesson taught to us by the Mahatma Gandhi that only on the basis of united cooperative effort our society could go forward. All communities live here-Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsees and others. All have equal rights and have to work together for the uplift of the people. Otherwise, our society would go astray into confused state that would lead this newly born nation to its doom. All those people and organizations, which try to divide people from people on the basis of caste or community, are only intriguing to break the hard earned unity of this nation, which is earned through the long course of our national struggle against the colonial state.

He also spoke about reorganization of the Congress and said that, after the elections were over proper steps would be taken to reorganize the Congress. He and many other true Congress leaders were distressed about the scramble for seats in

¹⁶ Ibid.

legislatures. How did nearly every Congress member vie to have a seat, either in the state assembly or at the Centre?

He further said that, it would be a good idea to form a section of Congressmen who would remain out of the legislatures and never think of becoming a legislator. He prized this renewal of contact with masses very highly, which would enable him to decide what steps are needed for strengthening the Congress, for making it what it was in its days of struggle.¹⁷ The Congress would only be successful in serving the people when they become aware of their problems. The elections, he said, were not the primary force in making him run from one corner of India to the other. It was his wish to make the elections an excuse to meet people in every part of India and renew his old contacts with them, which would make the Congress members and him available and accountable to the people, to share and find solutions to their problems directly.

He at times sharply criticized the Congress. But his criticism was mainly, if not wholly, directed against the weaknesses that had crept into the Congress and not against the organization itself. He was definitely not one of those who had persuaded themselves that the Congress has outlived its usefulness. He is firmly convinced that it was the Congress alone that could take the country forward.¹⁸

There were number of parties opposed to the Congress. None of them had acquired the strength and the confidence to shoulder the responsibility of this vast country. All others did not have any plan to build India as a great nation; rather they were interested only in creating confusion and chaos by securing the defeat of the Congress. The Congress in spite of all its drawbacks and weaknesses had proved its capacity to hold the country together. Thus, Nehru stressed upon that, 'the Congress is contesting elections with a view to consolidating the gains of freedom and resurrecting the past of the Congress, which would solve each and every problem of the people.'¹⁹

¹⁷ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, A. B. Patrika, Calcutta, 20 November 1951, p 94.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

He added that, it is social service or constructive work that brought the Congress to life-giving touch with the masses and made it into a fit instrument for fighting political battles. The Congress has only partially won the battle. The battle against poverty and unemployment was there to be won. . The Congress could never expect to win this battle if it allowed the spirit of social service to die out. There is no reason why the Congress was not being able to combine political activity with social work. The Congress could not continue, as a mere political organization. Mahatma Gandhi never conceived it as such. After the attainment of independence, Mahatma Gandhi wanted the Congress to be transformed into a Lok Sevak Sangh. That ideal must be followed.²⁰

He further stressed upon a staunch Gandhi follower Shri Vinoba Bhave's dream to have an institution, which will work solely in the social fields, keeping itself aloof from politics. At a recent prayer meeting in New Delhi, he urged Congress members out of the administration to 'take to social service with the spirit of sacrifice which had animated the Congress in the past'.²¹ Thus, the social service was stressed as the only way to revitalize the Congress and build the nation. The model of Mahatma Gandhi was seen in the role of Vinoba Bhave, who was putting selfless effort to promote social service.

Nehru in his speeches at other places in Himachal at Handi and Suket referred to the Communists and said that some principles of Communists were quite good, but the policy followed by Indian Communists was one of hatred between classes, of disruptions and of petty violence. All this could never help achieve the aims the Communists professed. The organization of Communists and Communists only harmed the country through their activities because slogans alone would not do what effort and action can do. Thus, he showed confidence that instead of following their path of Communists, the country would move forward under the guiding light of Mahatma Gandhi.²²

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, India News Chronicle, Delhi, 17 November 1951, p 83.

Assam Tribune reports that Nehru gave spirited speeches at some other places in Himachal Pradesh, obliquely hitting at the lack of organization especially of the Socialist party which was the most serious rival of the Congress. Without sufficient strength of organization and unity a party cannot help the people to go forward.²³ However, Socialists accused Congress of seething corruption and it scored over the Congress in matters of economic program.²⁴ Leftist were notoriously split up into splinter groups, and most of the recent efforts at leftist unity proved infructuous.²⁵ The phenomenon of Independent candidates is in part due to this process of falling apart and in few other cases it is due to lack of any party backup. The emergence of Independent candidates in Kerala was an apt example for this. Owing to the not so commendable personality of the Congress candidates, the chances of the independent candidates who aggregated to a phenomenal total of 200, was improved.

Nehru could not visit Chamba in Himachal Pradesh due to lack of time. Thus, he gave his message to Chamba people through Mrs. Indira Gandhi by sending her there, who gave one hour speech there and dwell at length on the difficult problems before the country, which were holding up development plans framed by the Congress government.²⁶

The two days campaign tour of Himachal Pradesh ended on 17th morning when Nehru flied back to Delhi. He took election campaign as an opportunity to recover his lost contacts with the people and become an energized Jawaharlal of his early days to serve the people. He also took this opportunity to know the problems of the people through directly listening to them and find out ways to solve them. Here he mainly focused upon the general problems facing the society, economy and polity of the newly born nation. He talked about poverty and unemployment and promised its speedy solutions through five-year plans. He focused upon hard and co-operative work by the people and told the people that all the great Nations have been built through the hard work and co-operation of its people. He asked people to ignore the activities of communal organizations, as they wanted to fan communal passions to

²³ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Assam Tribune, Assam, 18 November 1951, p 88.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Hindustan Times, New Delhi, 19 November 1951, p 93.

divide people in separate warring communal groups to earn dividends in the elections. He also condemned the Communists, as their violent ways were not going to meet their objectives and only spread chaos and confusion. He asked people not to be swayed away by the big promises of the Socialists because they did not have organizational setup to meet their goals.

He also focused upon the weaknesses of the Congress and promised to purge the bad elements from it after the election through reorganization. Nonetheless, he asked people to vote for the Congress ignoring all its weaknesses, as it was the only organization in the country that could keep this Nation united. He asked Congress workers and the people of this country to follow Vinoba Bhave in doing social service through constructive work and remarked that it is the only way to revitalize the Congress and make our Nation great and glorious. Overall, he stressed that every vote polled for the Congress was a vote for secularism against communalism.

In route to Travancore-Cochin Nehru stopped at **Bombay** on 23 November and gave a brilliant speech at **Chowpatty, Bombay**, and addressing about 3 lakhs people in the next morning. Here he foregrounded his foreign policy as election issue and directly attacked Ambedkar's comment on it that 'India has created many enemies abroad because of its foreign policy' and said that, 'Dr. Ambedkar while a minister never once had expressed his disapproval of the foreign policy pursued by the cabinet'.²⁷

He further said that, it was the best and most practicable policy that India could pursue under the circumstances, because of which India's prestige had gone up in the estimation of other countries. However, he accepted Ambedkar's point that 'our policy has angered some'²⁸. But, in the same breath he added that, we are respected by all nations of the world- big or small for our foreign policy because of our integrity in maintaining the high moral standards of truth and honesty in solving the various world problems.²⁹ Many nations today look to us for guidance at times, which is not

²⁷ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Free Press Journal, Bombay, 24 November 1951, p 113.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Indian News Chronicle, Delhi, 24 November 1951, p 114.

because we are a strong military nation but because we have all along pursued an independent and impartial attitude with regard to international affairs.³⁰ Thus, he proudly remarked that, 'our approach in foreign policy has benefitted us at every step'³¹ and this was 'the most successful of all policies in the country since independence'; which is also 'the greatest factor in raising the prestige of India in the world Councils.'³² He also believed that the present policy of keeping clear of power politics was the only way to maintain India's independence and at the same time influencing decisions in the comity of nations. Thus, there shall be no deviation in the foreign policy, left or right because he knew for certain that any deviation would mean ruination of the country.³³

Hence, he asked the people of India to reiterate their faith in the Congress, if they endorsed India's foreign policy. India's foreign policies were based not only on the fundamental principle of world peace but are pursued for the utmost material benefit of the country. It is not only practical but also extremely profitable to India.³⁴ Indian News Chronicle produced a heading on India's foreign policy that spoke all said by Nehru in a single phrase- 'Nehru on striving for peace with owner'.³⁵ This clearly showed the essence of India's foreign policy in which it aspired for world peace and the material benefit of the country without compromising with its honor and prestige.

He was confident and fearless in putting his ideas forward. Once formulated, he never gave a second thought to his ideas nor cared for its consequences and always spoke his mind out whatever he felt was right. He even never cared to make lofty promises in the campaign to secure the people's vote. Rather the campaign was an opportunity for him to put all controversial issues in front of the people in its true colors and leave all other matters like winning votes of the people at the judgments of

³⁰ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Free Press Journal, Bombay, 24 November 1951, p 113.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Indian News Chronicle, Delhi, 24 November 1951, p 114.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Bharat, Bombay, 24 November 1951, p 110.

³⁵ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Indian News Chronicle, Delhi, 24 November 1951, p 114.

the people. He had full belief in the democratic setup and the people of India as they were nourished by the ideals of the freedom movement. He believed that the people of India are politically mature enough to decide good and bad for them and also for their nation. Therefore, he said bluntly, 'we will pursue the same policy; people are free to vote against us if they think we are wrong in this sphere.'³⁶ He wanted India to pursue a policy of friendship with all other nations big or small. Hence, he made it clear that, 'while pursuing her own independent approach in the international sphere India would never be cowed down by the threats of any nation, howsoever powerful it might be'.³⁷

He said he was not there to beg people for their votes; if he begs for anything it is only the love and affection of the people. He did not want the people to cast their votes for the Congress because it had spearheaded the freedom struggle; return it to power only if you have faith in it. Replying especially to the charge of Dr. Ambedkar that 'the Congress was an enemy of the Harijans'³⁸, as during the last 30 years and particularly since freedom, the Congress has done no service but only disservice to the Scheduled Castes. Nehru was pained that a former colleague of his should have uttered those words. He said that Congress had done all it could to alleviate the lot of Haijans and added that 'our achievement in this sphere has been quite praiseworthy'.³⁹ He, however, could not say that whatever had been done for Harijans was quite enough. If the Congress was really an enemy of the untouchables, he wanted to know as to why Dr. Ambedkar never voiced his protest against the policies of the government, while he was in the Central Cabinet.⁴⁰ Thus, he believed that the Congress had striven for the amelioration of the lot of the Harijans. In this regard, he declared that the record of the Congress was open for all to examine, for the last 80 years in the social field and 18 years in the Governmental activity to prove it had done much for the uplift of the Harijans. Thus, he expressed his amazement at the declaration of the former law minister, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar.

However, Dr. Ambedkar cleverly tried to distinguish between the Congress and Mr. Nehru and signaled out only the Congress for attack. Even Dr. Ambedkar

³⁶ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Free Press Journal, Bombay, 24 November 1951, p 113.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

gave a very emphatic invitation to Mr. Nehru to join hands with socialists and people like him for the good of the country. He also remarked that, 'Mr. Nehru is quite a considerable asset to any political party and is force for the good of the country'.⁴¹ In one breath, Ambedkar called 'Nehru is a great man and he is a fool; his policies are disastrous but he is a force for good'⁴². This was certainly embarrassing to his new allies.

The parties opposing the Congress had no program of their own. They offered anti-Congress mania to the people. These parties charged the Congress with inefficiency and corruption. Some leaders urged people to throw their votes in the sea instead of voting Congress. Thus, Nehru questioned that did the opponent of the Congress think the electorate was so mean as to be insulted by such arguments? In the context of diverse influences and political currents, people had to face the future. Elections to the legislature and the Parliament were a secondary issue. It was the building up of the Nation that should occupy every mind. Hence, he believed that, in spite of its shortcomings Congress was the only organization that could lead the country on the path of economic prosperity.⁴³

Nehru urged people to look at the programs and policies of the parties and vote for the one who offered the best program. The mere existence of organizations was no criterion of the progress being made; it was the effect on the lives of the people of organizations that really mattered. Thus, he urged people to ask these questions to them and find the true owner of their vote. 'Who offered the best program for building the country anew? What were the basic principles on which they built up plans for the future?'⁴⁴ The Congress had during the days of the independence struggle, forged a sense of unity. It had showed its competence in the administrative sector. At a time when small groups increased and differences multiplied, Congress offered the platform of unity. He highlighted the role of the Congress in the National Movement and asked people to have faith in the Congress

⁴¹ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Bombay Chronicle, Bombay, 27 November 1951, p 146.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Free Press Journal, Bombay, 24 November 1951, p 113.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

which still had the organizational setup and vision to forge unity among the people of different shades.

However, he also brought out the weaknesses in the Congress organization and referred to the internal struggles inside the Congress organization. There were many defects in the organization that could be overcome. But the reform of the Congress must necessarily be held over till after the elections. He further said that the Congress could not submit an ideal list of candidates to contest the elections, which could not be helped on account of the time factor. While he exposed the weaknesses of the Congress, but at the same time also strongly put forward that 'the Congress is the only organization that can shoulder the responsibility of providing a stable administration to the country that could eradicate poverty and further economic progress in the country.'⁴⁵ In this regard, he expressed his feelings as:

I have come to you as one who struggled with you for years to liberate our motherland. I seek the unity and comradeship, which the National Movement forged to us. Though, the Congress in itself is in need to be reorganized, but it is still the party that offers the best programs, and has the biggest organization to tackle all problems arising in this country.⁴⁶

From Chowpatty to Parel, the entire route was lined long in advance with crowds standing ten-deep on either side of the road to give the Prime Minister a tumultuous welcome. While inaugurating a Social Education Week at St. Xavier's grounds here, Nehru declared that each Indian represents a problem. 'The country today faces numerous problems. I myself am faced with 350 crores of problems; for, to me, each and every Indian represents a problem which I want to tackle.'⁴⁷

In order of priorities of Nehru, education preceded by food, clothing and shelter. These were the more urgent problems 'for how can you teach a man with an

⁴⁵ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Free Press Journal, Bombay, 24 November 1951, p 113.

⁴⁶ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Bharat, Bombay, 24 November 1951, p 110.

⁴⁷ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Free Press Journal, Bombay, 24 November 1951, p 111.

empty belly, a naked body, and with no roof over his head'.⁴⁸ He also pointed out that mere literacy was not enough. People also had to be well informed about the affairs of the country and about the problems of their own professions and trade.⁴⁹ He urged educationists to 'open wide the door of knowledge to enable one and all in India to become educated and not merely literate'.⁵⁰ He further advised that, 'social education must make the masses think and not merely learn the three R's for they have to play an active part in the governance of the country because of Adult Franchise. The 350 million people of India should and must learn. Therein lies the success of our program and the attainment of our goal'.⁵¹ Education will automatically give us a better spirit to tackle our other problems.

He also appealed for 'publication of books in bold type and simple language, for the benefit of kisans and artisans. These books could be in any language, Hindi, as our national language should be given preference and it should be made simpler for its use in spreading language. Urdu should be given its due place as it is born in India and grown here. But there need no rivalry'.⁵² Emphasizing on the language feuds, he said that, 'they were wholly unnecessary and irrelevant to the cause of education'.⁵³ Because, the primary need of the Indian people then was improvement of their economic condition and increase of food production. He further said that the improvement in economic condition would simultaneously lead to improvement in the mental and cultural setup.

He further said that, India, essentially, a country of villages. The progress made in the cities could not reflect the true progress of the country. Thus, the good work started in the cities must reach and spread in the villages. This was but natural as people in the cities had a better understanding of various issues.⁵⁴ Hence, he was very much concerned to start an all round process of development in India, resolving all

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, National Standard, Bombay, 24 November 1951, p 116.

⁵⁰ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Statesman, New Delhi, 24 November 1951, p 121.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Free Press Journal, Bombay, 24 November 1951, p 111.

sorts of crisis, either arising in the cities or the villages. The Free Press Journal from Bombay reports that, Nehru tried all the tricks of his trade to convince the citizens of Bombay.⁵⁵

While replying the critics of the Congress especially the Socialists and the Scheduled Caste Federation he asked what constructive approach they have represented that the Congress did not. He said that, he did not have any quarrel with socialist principles. But, he was the one who thought that the entire world should follow their approach. But how was socialism to be achieved was the main question to be dealt with in front of the society.⁵⁶ Thus, he put forward the vision of the Congress for the country:

It wanted to create a classless society. It was a beautiful ideal and various other parties had placed similar attractive ideals before the electorate. But it was on the question of means and methods that they differed. With a view to achieve their ideal, the Congress has envisaged as a first step a five-year plan which was expected to be finalized in a month or two.⁵⁷

Elaborating on the ideals of the Congress, he said that, ‘we want to establish a classless society which will ensure complete social, economic and political equality to all sections of our people’.⁵⁸ He further said that, the main difference between Congress members and those who believed in Socialism was on the methods and the means to be employed in bringing about a socialist society. The Congress wanted to change the present social order, but while doing so, it did not want to destroy the very foundation of society. Socialist parties depict a rosy picture of the future society and use attractive slogans. He, however, warned that mere slogan mongering would not bring about a social transformation. Nor could enactment of legislations usher in a new social order without the masses of people being prepared for such a change. Thus, he said that he did not want to deceive the masses by giving them false promises.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ Ibid., p 112.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p 113.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

He also questioned the election alliances of various anti-Congress parties. He said that these alliances were hatched with one and the only one objective of defeating the Congress.⁶⁰ There was no common ground of principles or ideologies involved in these electoral alliances. Bombay chronicle called the alliance between the Socialist Party and the Scheduled Caste Federation a 'curious combine'.⁶¹ About which Nehru said that, 'it would appear that this new alliance expects only to play the role of an opposition. Positive fruit of this alliance is doubtful'.⁶²

He condemned in strong terms mud-slinging for personal vilification done by certain political parties against the Congress. Thus, he appealed to the former colleagues and present rivals that, 'they are quite mistaken to think that elections can be won by abusing each other'.⁶³ Whatever be the election tactics of these opposition parties, he wanted Congressmen to fight the election with dignity and proper decorum. Though, he accepted full responsibility for the shortcomings of the government, but did not want the people to indulge merely in destructive criticism. He, however, welcomed opposition parties to point out the genuine shortcomings of the government.⁶⁴

Launching a broadside against reactionary Communal forces, he reiterated his determination to exterminate this powerful infection spreading all over the country. He called communalism a deadly poison that was corroding the very vitals of the country and the evil could not have been over emphasized. He warned that communalism has entered the ranks of Congress members, which is the much bigger danger than any other.⁶⁵ Some friends of Nehru had pointed out that he was exaggerating the evil influence of communal forces, but he did not agree with that rather complacent approach. Thus, he was not campaigning only for the Congress, but

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Bombay Chronicle, Bombay, 27 November 1951, p 146.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ N Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Free Press Journal, Bombay, 24 November 1951, p 111.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

also for the larger good of the society, which was evident in exposing the communal color of some of his party members.

He further said that in certain Northern Indian States communalism have come to be a real force to be taken notice of, which has spelt disaster in the recent past. Heinous acts were committed in both India and Pakistan and against which he raised his voice, because he was convinced that communalism would destroy the very economic and political foundation of our society. He also brought to the notice of the people that, reactionary elements such as deposed Princes, Zamindars, and landlords were financing communal organizations like the Jana Sangh and the RSS,⁶⁶ particularly in Rajasthan. Thus, he said that, ‘they have no policy, no objective, no principles. I shall not allow them to lift their heads’.⁶⁷

He refuted the charge that he had tried only to appease Pakistan and called those people sheer irresponsible nonsense, which saw Nehru in this light and opined to march our armies against her. He brought out the foolishness of these people and said that ‘I pity their ignorance of the country’s military problems’. He would be the last person to condemn Pakistan for any of her good deeds.⁶⁸ He also deprecated the tendency of some always to find fault with Pakistan while turning a deaf ear to our shortcomings in this country. The blame of bloodshed in recent past cannot be apportioned to Pakistan alone. Communalism in India was also responsible for the murder of innocent lives.⁶⁹ In spite of this bitter memory communalism is being encouraged in certain quarters and members of such organizations are becoming bolder. Thus, he condemned the tendency to exaggerate Pakistan’s communal color and belittle India’s own communalism by saying that, ‘if Pakistan followed the right policy, I shall appease her a hundred times’.⁷⁰ Thus, he appealed people to guard them against these kinds of divisive forces and use their votes in the coming elections with

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Dawn, Karachi, 25 November 1951, p 129.

⁶⁸ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Free Press Journal, Bombay, 24 November 1951, p 111.

⁶⁹ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Dawn, Karachi, 25 November 1951, p 129.

⁷⁰ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Free Press Journal, Bombay, 24 November 1951, p 111.

care and mature considerations and put that, ‘vote is a valuable right and this right should not be misused’⁷¹.

Nehru was a great motivator and a guide, to advise and lead people in the right direction to achieve quick development of the Country. He kept hard work and endeavor above all for the people. He reminded the mammoth audience the spirit of comradeship, which guided the days of the freedom struggle and said that the election should be taken dispassionately and calmly. The country has achieved many things and failed in many other things and there were many things yet to be achieved. He further said that to achieve bigger success we must retain and develop our strength. If this strength is broken we cannot build the Nation because we will not have strength to rise up when we fall. Thus, he said that the Country could not progress by magic or prayer or blind belief or slogans. It can only happen through the hard work and endeavor of the people.⁷²

Thus, several important issues were raised in Nehru’s speeches at Bombay. Among which the most prominent was the condemnation of Dr. Ambedkar’s comments, ‘India has created many enemies abroad because of her foreign policy’ and ‘Congress is the enemy of Harijans’, on India’s foreign policy and the Congress’ attitude to Harijans simultaneously. Methods of Socialists and Communists were condemned, but their principles were upheld. The Congress strategy to lead society to achieve Socialism and Communism was upheld, while Socialists and Communists strategy of fast paced legislations and rebellion was proved not suitable and anti-people simultaneously. Election alliances of opposition parties were attacked and branded as the propagator of anti-Congress mania, as the ideology and program of participatory parties were contradictory to each other. Communalism was exposed as a deadly poison spreading all over the Country. Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee was given the befitting reply in response to his allegation that, ‘the Congress only appeased Pakistan’, by exposing Communal parties in India disguising under their exaggeration of Communal trends prevailing from Pakistan side.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

Food, Clothing and Shelter were given first priority over education. However educationists were advised to reach out to the maximum number of people, through making education easily graspable and available to one and all, as it solves many day-to-day life problems. Language feuds were condemned as unnecessary and irrelevant. Suggestions were placed to reach out developments taking place in the cities to the villages. Spirit of comradeship and co-operative work were upheld. Overall, voting with care for a proper candidate after looking at their organizational affiliation was emphasized. People were asked to vote Congress by emphasizing its organizational strength to maintain the unity of the Country, while acknowledging weakness crept into it. Promises were made to purge the Congress of its bad elements after the elections.

The same day on 23 November, after giving speeches at Bombay he reached at Ernakulam at 11:45A.M for election tour of **Travancore-Cochin**. Enthusiastic cries of ‘Jawaharlal ki jai’ and ‘Congress ki jai’ greeted the Congress president as he stepped out of the special Dakota. Long before the plane’s arrival, thousands of people gathered at Cochin aerodrome to have a glimpse of Nehru. Prominent leaders of Travancore-Cochin received him there. A khadi garland was presented to Mrs. Indira Gandhi who accompanied the Prime Minister. The Congress President then proceeded in an open car to Embarkation Jetty, from where they were taken to Bolghatty Palace, by special route across water, for lunch.⁷³

Nehru addressed about a dozen wayside gatherings with two major public speeches at Ernakulam and Trichur. He addressed his first election meeting in Travancore-Cochin from the balcony of the Durbar Hall. A large number of people began gathering their in the afternoon and about a lakh of people heard his 45 minutes speech in the evening, standing in lawn surrounding road and buildings. He said at Ernakulam that, Congress victory was important for holding the various parts of India together, for maintaining its unity and progress; otherwise it would lead to a great disaster. The promise of bringing economic freedom was made, through Planning Commission that would solve the problems of poverty and unemployment. Replying to critics he said that, ‘ it is very easy to write down anything and give slogans. We

⁷³ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Mail, Madras, 24 November 1951, p 115.

wanted to be practical and realistic and at the same time as idealistic as possible'.⁷⁴ Referring to Socialism he said that Slogans, legislations or decrees could not reduce the gap between rich and poor. It could only be done through changing the whole structure of the Country.⁷⁵ Nehru Mentioned Communists complains that, they were not given fair chance as India lacked in maintaining the civil liberties of its people. To this he said that, 'the freedom of speech, read, write and other forms of civil liberties in India could be compared with almost any Country anywhere in the world'.⁷⁶ He also expressed his happiness regarding Communists getting a chance to contest the election over general behavior of the Communist party.⁷⁷

He rounded off his 3-day election tour of Travancore-Cochin with a public meeting at University stadium in Trivandrum on 26th night. Addressing over 50,000 people, he said that, 'they should put an end to their racial and communal feelings and be aware on the need for unity and stability in the Country' and added that 'I should have thought that the partition of India was enough for us learn from it'.⁷⁸ He further focused upon the Nation's need to have mental discipline of trained mind, because every activity of a nation required mental discipline to have progress and development.⁷⁹ This could only lead a Nation successfully on a self-defined path of growth and keep it independent from the influence of the foreign powers. Thus, he said that:

Learn from others, but to think that we will repeat England of the 17th, 18th, or 19th century or the France of the revolution or the Russian revolution in India immediately before us is but to pursue the wrong track. Therefore, we have to solve our problems ourselves. In solving them, we can learn a great deal from other people, from other countries.⁸⁰

⁷⁴ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Hindu, Madras, 25 November 1951, p 126.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Statesman, New Delhi, 27 November 1951, p 154.

⁷⁹ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Mail, Madras, 27 November 1951, p 153.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

Above lines guards the psychology of the common people against the examples of development given by the Communists influenced from Britain, Russia and France. These lines critiqued Communists' policies and program in solving India's problems and instead teach people to have belief in their own abilities and be the arbiter of their destiny themselves.

In a whirlwind tour of this state from Trichur to Cape Comorin, Nehru covered 410 Miles, addressing 10 meetings in major cities and 42 in villages. During his stay of only 69 hours, he was talking for 19 hours, travelling for 32 hours, leaving only 18 hours for his personal needs and rest. The purses presented to him by the public amounted to nearly 70,000 rupees.⁸¹

Nehru got tumultuous welcome on his arrival in **Madras** city, on 27 November at 11-55 a.m. The prominent leaders of the Congress from that region received Nehru. The large crowd that lined the boundaries of the airport cheered lustily, as Nehru emerged from the plane dressed in spotless white khadi sherwani and churidar. Nehru acknowledged the ovation with folded hands. He moved on to get into a government house car, then, the arguing crowd was kept back with great difficulty by the army of police with fixed bayonets. Nehru was unhappy of police arrangements as it stopped people to approach him and said that, 'they are stopping my friends from coming near me. I have come here to meet them all and you cannot stop them'⁸².

As the car glided out of the airport premises, Nehru, who stood in the car, the sliding roof of which was pushed back to enable the Congress president to stand to the view of the crowd, acknowledged the greetings from thousands that lined the long route from the airport to the government house and subsequently from the governmenthouse to the city, which included a large number of students. The crowds cheered 'Nehru ki Jai' and 'Ingat va' and 'Darshan kodi' (please come here and give us darshan).⁸³ Nehru directed the chauffeur to go round the ground slowly along the

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Indian Express, Madras, 28 November 1951, p 159.

⁸³ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Hindu, Madras, 27 November 1951, p 152.

fringe of the crowd. A middle aged enthusiastic person managed to extricate himself from the surging mass and ran up to smiling Congress President, who warmly shook hands with him. Then drove to the government house, where the governor and the Maharaja of Bhavnagar greeted him.⁸⁴

A Memorandum was presented to Nehru, on behalf of the Andhra citizens of Madras city dealing with their claim for adequate representation in the state and union legislatures, by Lt- colonel T. S. Shastri. It said that both the Tamil Nad and Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee had unfortunately ignored the resolution and requested that, 'at least in the election of candidates still to be made for the election to the State Legislature Council and the Council of States, the present disequilibrium should be corrected. The resolution impressed on all the major political parties setting up candidates for the legislatures from Madras city, to put up candidates to the city constituencies of the legislature in equal number from Andhras and Tamil.⁸⁵ Nehru assured them of fair conduct.

Nehru went to inaugurate the centenary celebrations and open an art gallery at the Museum at 3 p.m. A large number of women were present to listen him. Decorated samiyana was raised with fitted loudspeakers at its corners. He was given a great ovation, when he rose to speak. He said that, Congress still has a mission to take country forward; no other party seems to be capable of carrying out the same responsibility. Thus, he regrets lack of real opposition and said that the present election is only a matter of expedience.⁸⁶ The only thing that brought opposition parties together was opposition to the Congress. They did not have their plans like the Congress party to solve problems of the people.

While speaking about his last 5 days tour of South India, he claimed that on a rough calculation, he had met at least 4 million people in South India, which was an exhilarating experience, that imbued in him a feeling of exuberance that overcame mental and physical fatigue brought on by travelling and speaking. He expressed his

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Mail, Madras, 28 November 1951, p 162.

feelings as, 'I felt as though I was awakened from sleep in which I had fallen some time ago and was coming into touch again with my Countrymen'.⁸⁷

He said that the political independence won by the freedom struggle was only one stage reached. The real journey of a nation or individuals never ends. The function of the Congress has also changed. After independence, it had now become an organization working for agrarian reform and to lead Country in the direction of achieving economic and social independence. This direction of the Congress might be called socialistic.⁸⁸

After recalling the events which followed in the wake of independence and the division of India, he said that, because of them, dreams and plans of social reconstruction had to be put aside because those who represented ideas of progress had to fight for survival, a conflict between the forces of reaction and those who stood for social and economic progress. Even the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi was not an isolated act of a mad man but culmination of a large number of dark forces. Against such a background our program and plans were upset and conditions appeared which made it difficult for us immediately to go ahead as we wanted to. The Congress slipped mentally, it was unsure of its ground and could not function as it should have or would have functioned 10 or 15 years ago.⁸⁹ Thus, he warned against the continuance of the Muslim League in Madras even after the league's migration to Pakistan. He said, 'I will fight all kinds of Communalism with all my strength, whether it be that of the Muslim League in the South or the Hindu Communalism in the North.'⁹⁰

He further said that, he gave his time and energy to the Congress because he felt that, the Congress still have a mission to fulfill, even though it may have fallen into error, and at many places it was in the hands of cliques and groups, though faction had risen, though many Congressmen have become lazy, doing nothing, expecting favors to come. The Congress needs reorganization, which would be done

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Hindustan Times, New Delhi, 29 November 1951, p 172.

after the elections. Apart from all these weaknesses, he had firm belief that the Congress is the only organization that could lead our Country to fulfill its mission.⁹¹

Nehru also stressed on the vital need for a strong opposition and said that, 'there is no party outside the Congress, which had principles which it would not compromise and not care only for electoral process. Those who talked in the highest terms of principles came down to the lowest terms of compromise.' Referring to the alliance between the socialists and the scheduled caste federation, he said, 'it was extraordinary what discoveries people made on the eve of an election'. Mentioning about Communists, he said, 'some people were frightened by the very mention of the word Communism. He was not, for no body need frightened by anything.' By assuring the meeting that he was unmoved by the election and did not care whether he wins or loses, he declared, 'I like a good fight for I give a good fight'.⁹²

Nehru further said that, selecting candidates for the Congress to contest the elections was an annoying, painful and irritating experience. The whole procedure evolved by the working committee, or the election committee, had proved to be bad, and he hoped they had seen the last of that kind. 'We shall have to think afresh and evolve something new on another occasion.'⁹³

Thus, at Madras only few specific points were raised which directly relates to the region of Madras. The most significant was Nehru's opposition to the division of states into linguistic units like Andhras and Tamils. Agrarian reforms were stressed keeping socio-economic developments in the forefront. It was to attract attention of the people away from the Communists who promised same things but through violent means of Class struggle. Their methods were condemned. Communal clashes were blamed to be the biggest hindrance in the efforts made by the Congress to build a new India after independence. Communal activities of Muslim league in South India were pointed to be similarly dangerous for the Country as Hindu Communal groups were in North India.

⁹¹Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Mail, Madras, 28 November 1951, p 162.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.

After this rest of the speech was just a smart political oration. Nehru credited Congress to have a mission to achieve for the Country and said that it has no real opposition. Socialist alliance with the SCF proved to be opportunistic, just to oppose the Congress. Though groupings and unfair selection of the candidates were focused upon, however, Congress as a party was presented as the only driver of the country's progress.

Overall, speech at Madras had very little new things to offer and several points were the repetition from earlier meetings. Thus, from hereon only significant points, which would be specific and crucial to a particular region would be raised. People also responded in the similar fashion at every place, with very little unique happenings. Thus, stress will only be led on the unique events.

On the morning of November 28, Nehru fled to Delhi. From there he went on to 3 days tour of **Madhya Bharat** from December 2, which concluded on December 5. Maharaja Yeshwantrao Holkar of Indore offered him a purse of rupees 1 lakh.⁹⁴ The same day he reached Gwalior, and asked students through his speech to build their Character and go in the right direction, as they are the leaders of tomorrow.⁹⁵ At Bhopal, addressed a gathering nearly 50,000 people on the task of consolidating the Country and 'binding together in mind and thought the millions of Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, parsees, Jains and Buddhists living in the vast land'.⁹⁶ Referring to the Hindu Mahasabha, he expressed surprise that this organization should talk of civil liberties. He warned the people against the Communal activities of such parties.⁹⁷ At Rajasthan, in an election speech at Bharatpur, he attacked his opponents by defending Congress policy and program by saying that, 'it is visionary to think that legislatures can change the Country overnight. No one, except the blind fanatics will say that no time is necessary for the fruition of a process of growth'.⁹⁸ Thus, in Madhya Bharat the only most dominating agenda of campaign was to discredit the Communal parties.

⁹⁴ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Tribune, Ambala Cantt, 6 December 1951, p 7.

⁹⁵ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Hitavada, Nagpur, 10 December 1951, p 14.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Hindustan Standard, Delhi, 11 December 1951, p 15.

He arrived **Allahabad** by air from Delhi on 12th morning at 9:15 a.m. he was accompanied by Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Mrs. Vijaya Laxmi Pandit and Mr. Sri Prakash. People greeted him with shouts of 'Inquilab Zindabad' and 'Jawaharlal ki Jai'. Mr. H. P. Mody, Governor, G. B. Pant Chief Minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri Congress General Secretary and prominent Congressmen received him.⁹⁹ Within a minute of his arrival at Bamrauli aerodrome here today, he showed on of his famous bursts of temper against idle hero worship. He threw the autograph book of a person and said angrily, 'it is absurd and impertinence'.¹⁰⁰ He drove in an open car from Bamrauli to Anand Bhavan, his home. He stopped at three places in covering a distance of 4 Miles and received greetings and cheers from the people with folded hands and flung garlands at children gathered there.¹⁰¹

Here Hindu Code Bill was the most significant issue about which Nehru said addressing about 500 Congress workers at swaraj Bhavan that, 'whether I win or lose in election by supporting Hindu Code Bill is immaterial, but I must not budge an inch from the stand I have taken'.¹⁰² When a Congress worker drew his attention to a statement issued by Mr. Prabhu Dutta Brahmachari, in which he had said that if Nehru gave him in written that he would drop the Hindu Code Bill he (Brahamchari) would withdrew in his favor; then Nehru remarked amidst laughter and clapping that he would be willing to give in written to Brahamchari that he stood by the Hindu Code and would contest election on this issue.¹⁰³

Nehru observed that the nation was on a trial and strengthening the Congress was the key to go ahead with the task of Nation building. He was not worried about the results of the forthcoming General Elections. What really mattered to him was that the Country should make progress. Thus, he gave advice to the Congress workers to make Congress strong. He asked them not to canvass for individual candidates but to

⁹⁹Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, A. B. Patrika, Calcutta, 13 December 1951, p 19.

¹⁰⁰ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Leader, Allahabad, 13 December 1951, p 23.

¹⁰¹ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, A. B. Patrika, Calcutta, 13 December 1951, p 19.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

raise the tone of their work, to provide political education to the masses. He resented the dissensions in the Congress ranks and advised the workers not to indulge in mud slinging at each other. Though he admitted that during the past few Years weaknesses had crept into the Congress, but it was the only organization that could take the Country forward.¹⁰⁴

He showed no interest in his constituency and said that ‘I am in 4,000 other constituency in India from where Congress candidates are contesting elections’.¹⁰⁵ Thus, he left all the reins of his constituency on the Congress workers and asked them to understand thoroughly the election laws. If this were not done, there might be hundreds of election petitions. He further asked them to remember that, ‘we have a lot of work to do in the Country and we have no time to get involved in these election petitions’.¹⁰⁶ He gave prominence to giving political education to the common people over winning the election and said that, ‘only when the people are so educated could they take an effective part in running a democratic Government’.¹⁰⁷

Addressing a public meeting of over 1 lakh of persons on 12 December, he said the Capitalist system could not fulfill the growing needs of society any longer. It must be changed for the good of the society. He reiterated that he agreed to a large extent with the principles of Socialism and said, ‘our ultimate aim as far as I understand it is to establish a classless society. When this will be achieved I do not know. It will depend on us, on the conditions existing in the world and a hundred other things’.¹⁰⁸ Thus, by mentioning the first article of faith of the Congress to establish a classless society and a co-operative commonwealth, he replied to his critics that,

If there is criticism that our pace of progress in the achievement of this aim has been slow, I agree with it. We may have followed the wrong

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Hindu, Madras, 13 December 1951, p 21.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

path, but such things cannot be achieved by our rushing through things. In doing so, we may remain where we are.¹⁰⁹

Thus, he said that Socialism could not be achieved rapidly through legislation. Not that Socialism could be brought about only slowly, it could be achieved rapidly provided the Country and the people were prepared for it and the right conditions existed for a rapid change.¹¹⁰ He further said that,

If one did in a hurry thing, which did not fit in with existing conditions, one would only succeed in undoing what one wanted to achieve. These things could not be achieved in any dictatorial manner. It was only by adopting the proper methods and means, keeping in view the conditions obtaining at a particular moment that any progress could be made in the achievement of this aim.¹¹¹

Referring to Five Year Plan he said that, ‘when we see we can go still further in achieving our aim. We shall certainly change the plan accordingly’.¹¹² He further said that, in taking the people forward we have to take so many things into account. We have to build the edifice of a new social order, brick by brick. Ultimately, it is a problem relating to the problems of the whole people, their ways of living and their method of work.¹¹³

He referred to the Chinese revolution and said the Chinese people under the leadership of the Communists achieved a revolution. But Mao Tse-tung, Chinese Communist leader, had himself said that to bring in Communism it would take him 20 years. Nobody should, therefore, think that Socialism could be achieved by merely passing resolutions. Thus, he comments that, ‘if anybody thinks that Socialism can be achieved by legislation, then I will respectfully submit that the person who says so knows nothing about Socialism’.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

Attacking the Zamindari system, he said that, it was necessary at one time for the organization of society. But it had outlived its utility and had to be done away with. This did not mean that they had anything against the Zamindars. The same thing could be said about Capitalism. At one stage, capitalism did play a part in liquidating the old order of things. But it also outlived its utility.¹¹⁵

He also stressed the need for consolidating the forces binding the people of this Country politically and economically. The country had been united but the consolidation of mind and heart of the people living in India remained to be done. This was very essential as without it no progress could be achieved. Thus, he attacked Communalism by exposing Jan Sangh and said that,

It is nowhere written on paper that the Jan Sangh is a Communal Organization? It is also not written on the forehead of any person that he is Communal or stupid. The only way to find out whether a person is Communal or not, is from his deeds and his methods of work and what he says. If there is any organization in India, which is Communal from top to toe, it is the Jan Sangh. It is an utterly, wholly reactionary organization. All the reactionary people in India, I say this deliberately, Princes and Jagirdars, who are to my mind the real backward classes, are behind the Jansangh. They are financing Jan Sangh?¹¹⁶

He remarked that, these Communal organizations are spending ten times more than the Congress, as moneyed people had opened their purse-string in support of them. He further said that,

The Communal organizations are trying to open an old wound in our body politic, which is dangerous thing. It is not only a Hindu-Muslim question but relates to the different castes among the Hindus. If even a little quarter is given to Communalism, then I am sure it will tear away the roots of our unity and our Country.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

Referring to the Kashmir Issue, Nehru denied that there was any secret pact with Pakistan. Replying to a statement by Shyama Prasad Mukherjee at a press conference here the other day that 'he had a doubt that India had made a secret pact with Pakistan over the Kashmir issue', Nehru said 'this was an utterly false and baseless thing without an iota of truth in it'.¹¹⁸ Commenting on another statement by S. P. Mukherjee that, 'following the removal of Chaudhary Ghulam Abbas from the territory of so-called "Azad Kashmir", Pakistan would "absorb" this territory in its own', Nehru said that, 'Dr. Mukherjee is a responsible person and when he is making such statements, people are apt to have a doubt that there may be some truth in them because a responsible man who was in the cabinet like him is saying so. Dr. Mukherjee could have asked me orally about this matter or written to me. But I declare here and now that in relation to the Kashmir issue there is nothing that we are keeping back from the world'.¹¹⁹

Thus, the election campaign here revolved around Communalism, Hindu Code Bill, Zamindari system, Capitalism and Socialism. People were advised to remain aloof from Communal parties and ignore instigating speeches from their leaders, as they talk of hatred among communities, which is anti-human and anti-social per se. Hindu code Bill was supported in strong words and declared it to be the main agenda of election campaign of the Congress here. Zamindari system and Capitalism were sought to be outlived its time and promised to be replaced by the Socialistic system of society in the process, when the people and society, both will be prepared to adjust to it. Last but not the least, Congress workers were advised not to campaign for the individual candidates but to strengthen Congress as an organization, which could play a leading role in educating the people about the election process, to make this election a success in larger good of the democracy.

Congress President arrived in **Orissa** for his 2-day tour on 13 December. At Cuttack addressing about 100,000 people, he condemned Communist activities and said that 'no quarter would be given to the Communist party of India to sow

¹¹⁸ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Delhi Express, Delhi, 13 December 1951, p 20.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

disruption and anarchy in the Country'.¹²⁰ They, by declaring time and again that India was not really a free but dominated by the Anglo-American, were defaming the Country.¹²¹ Thus, the fundamental need to strengthen the Country's unity was stressed.

Nehru addressing a mammoth gathering of 75,000 people at Balangir declared that 'the sooner the privileges of the former rulers of what were known as Indian States disappeared the better it would be for the Country'.¹²² He further said that, 'we want special privileges enjoyed by former rulers of old Indian State to disappear because we do not want to exist between high and low, rich and poor'.¹²³ He strongly condemned the election tactics of the former rulers of small states in Orissa connected with the all India Ganatantra (Republican) Parishad formed here recently by them to contest the elections. He further said that, these former rulers big or small, had a right to contest elections but if they adopted methods as some were doing, which were against all propriety and decorum, a serious view would be taken of it.¹²⁴ Thus, election Campaign here was focused on strengthening the Unity of the Country, condemning disruptive and feudal activities of Communists and Ganatantra Parishad respectively.

Nehru arrived at **Warangal** in the morning on 15 December from Orissa. Streets were decorated and people looked in festive mood. Nehru drove in an open car greeting the crowd with folded hands. He playfully threw flowers at cheering crowds and a 12 Mile motor Car procession from Mamanuru to Hanumakonda was a riot of enthusiasm. He addressed a public meeting of about 75,000 people, that included a large number of peasants who had come from neighboring areas, including the districts of Nalgonda and Karimnagar, which were the worst affected by the armed struggle of the Communists.¹²⁵ He started his speech by saying that he had come there not as Prime Minister of India, but as Congress president. He further said that, 'I

¹²⁰ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Delhi Express, Delhi, 15 December 1951, p 32.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Free Press Journal, Bombay, 15 December 1951, p 33.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Bharat Joyti, Bombay, 16 December 1951, p 37.

want to forget this position of the Congress President also and want to be in your midst as just Jawaharlal Nehru'.¹²⁶ He hoped people would ponder over what he said and act in the best interest of the Country.

He also promised to take action against misbehaving Congress legislatures and said that 'the Congress candidates took a pledge that they would adhere to the discipline of the Congress, and if anyone acted against the Congress principles and ideals, he would be asked to resign. He asked people not to discard the Congress party on the count of some bad candidates; they will be purged off from the Congress. Therefore, he appealed to the people to return all Congress candidates to the Parliament and the State Assemblies, ignoring defects in the election of candidates. Thus, it shows the spirit of Nehru to work himself and make the people work also for bringing rapid economic, social and political transformations in our Country.

The Telangana affair in Hyderabad, he said, was not so much a Communist movement but a rebellion against the state. It created a lot of trouble. This anarchy has taken lives of thousands of people in several areas here. Because of which no body felt secure of his life and property.¹²⁷ He further said no government should tolerate any rebellion, because, if it did, it would sound its own death knell. Pointing at methods of Communists as dangerous and harmful to the Country, he said that, 'this is not the way to solve any problem. Remember, if this kind of thing is tolerated, the sword and the gun will begin to decide the issue in the whole Country. In that case, might would be right.'¹²⁸ Hence, he said amidst loud cheers that, the Communists here were following a bad way and he was happy to learn that 'this story has nearly ended and it is right that it should end'.¹²⁹

While showing stark amazement at the tactics adopted by the Communists to solve the land problem, he said that, 'none of their problems would be solved, if they took the violent means of Communists. Now that violence stopped in Telangana, so

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Deccan Chronicle, Hyderabad, 16 December 1951, p 39.

¹²⁸ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Bharat Joyti, Bombay, 16 December 1951, p 37.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

we could think of creative means to solve the land problem calmly'.¹³⁰ Thus, he admitted that the land question was a vital one and had to be quickly solved. He further reminded that the Congress had realized these 20 years ago and decided to end Zamindari and Jagirdari. He called the delay in its abolition in several states due to some legal hitch or some other problems unfortunate. However, he promised people that the Congress was committed to abolish these systems as soon as possible.¹³¹

He later accepted that there were certain good things in Communism, which people often liked. Thus, he continued, 'we all liked the Communist principles of equality. There should be no big gap between the high and the low. But what we have to see is that the ways we adopt to achieve this equality are not improper, nor undignified'.¹³² He further deprecated the move for the disintegration of the state of Hyderabad. He pleaded that the people of the state, who were to decide the question ultimately postpone consideration of this question until they solved the economic problem confronting the Nation and consolidate the position of the Country.¹³³

He stressed the need for unity by paying a tribute to Sardar Ballabhbhai Patel on the first anniversary of death exactly a year ago and said Sardar's name would go in history as a 'great consolidator of our freedom and national unity'.¹³⁴ Thus, people of our Country should take inspiration from his life and take united co-operative and planned action to eradicate poverty and achieve economic prosperity. Mrs. Vijayalaxmi Pandit also spoke at the meeting appealing to the people to vote for the Congress.

Nehru and his party led for **Hyderabad** by 11:30 A.M on the same day by plane. Many prominent leaders of the Congress received him. Nizam also greeted him and carried him and his sister to King Kothi palace for Lunch. He addressed a public meeting attended by about 2 lakhs of people at Fateh Maidan. While speaking he

¹³⁰ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Deccan Chronicle, Hyderabad, 16 December 1951, p 39.

¹³¹ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Bharat Joyti, Bombay, 16 December 1951, p 37.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Deccan Chronicle, Hyderabad, 16 December 1951, p 39.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

dwell at length on the Communists and Socialists systems and said they could only be achieved when the people were ripe for understanding them. These could not be achieved through legislations or by shouting slogans or repeating certain political phrases. He quoted Mao Tse-tung words that, 'it would take them 20 years to build Socialism' and remarked that Socialist society can only be achieved in a process, through hard and co-operative work. However, while declaring that the proper organization of society could only be done on the basis of Socialism and Communism he hoped that, 'society will be organized on this basis ultimately not only in India but other countries also'.¹³⁵

Referring to the Communist's activities and violence, he said that, 'the biggest enemy of Communism in the Country is the Communist Party of India'.¹³⁶ However, he accepts that, 'the Communists have special relation with the people of Hyderabad', but at the same time, exposes disorder and trouble created by them in certain areas of the State. He acknowledges Communist's demand that 'land must belong to the people', but discards methods adopted by them and said that, 'the methods adopted by the Communists will not solve the problem'.¹³⁷

He further said that, 'I do not know that our Communist brothers have in their mind and how they think but they do talk a lot in the air. An ordinary person cannot understand their talk'.¹³⁸ Thus, he expressed difficulties in establishing a Socialist or Communist state that, 'we have to create the roots of Socialism in the minds and hearts of crores of people. We have to change their ways of thinking and habits. You cannot have Socialism, when the people have no relation with these ideas and do not understand them'.¹³⁹ Hence, he further expressed his wish that:

Socialism should be established quickly. It can be done by mutual consultations among the people. I am not afraid of far reaching changes being effected immediately provided they lead to rapid improvement in

¹³⁵ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Deccan Chronicle, Hyderabad, 16 December 1951, p 40.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

the economic structure. But I have full confidence that if we rush through things and create an upheaval in society it will only lead to chaos.¹⁴⁰

He elaborated his statements made at Warangal, ‘any division of the state at the present moment would only add to their problems’, against the immediate disintegration of states by saying that:

The Partition of the Country had made him view all such questions cautiously. For the present it would not be in the best interests of the people to begin dividing the states. Far from enabling them to advance further it would only retard their future progress. When the Country was fully consolidated and was strong, the longer problem of the linguistic provinces could be taken up.¹⁴¹

While referring to the atrocities committed on the people in the state by the Razakars before integration of the state and sufferings of the people in certain areas following it, he said:

We do not want to hide these facts, and we have to steps to ameliorate the position of people who suffered, I have heard that people in areas like Osmanabad and Bidar suffered a lot immediately after integration. I am sorry for it and I do not want to hide it. A bad thing could not be excused if it was hidden. This is of course an old story and we have to forget it and we cannot open old wounds. But we have to heal these wounds quickly.¹⁴²

He carefully observed the demise of the suffering people due to integration of Hyderabad into the Indian Union and promised them speedy remedy and solutions to their problems. Thus, this showed his seriousness to tackle all the problems of the people.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Ibid.

While referring to Osmania University in the context of proposed disintegration of the state he said that, 'if you begin to talk of dividing the state then this University cannot grow'.¹⁴³ He expressed his likings for the University and wanted it to flourish to become a center in the South for promoting unity among Indians.

Alluding briefly to foreign possessions in India like Goa and Pondicherry, he said that:

After freedom it was impossible for any foreign power to have a foothold in India. I am of the firm opinion that these foreign possessions have to be merged with India. We cannot tolerate in any circumstances their remaining out of the Indian Union. But we do not want to take any step, which might embroil us in violent conflict with foreign powers, which have possessions here. We have received our training under Mahatma Gandhi and we want to do every thing peacefully. After all, all these possessions will remain where they are. We want to solve the issue related to them peacefully, even if it takes some years.¹⁴⁴

Thus, it shows the clear tactfulness of Nehru to explain complex problems in simple words to the people. He never excited people for revenge or hatred against any community or any foreign nation and always asked people to maintain peace and spread love for rest of the humanity.

He reached Raichur, a Kannada speaking town, for the first time on December 16, on second day of his Hyderabad tour, with Vijaya Laxmi Pandit and other prominent leaders from Hyderabad through plane. He addressed a meeting here, in which a purse of rupees 25,000 was presented to him. He told people to develop qualities of a soldier to face new responsibilities of the Country. By giving example of army's organizational strength and discipline, he said that, 'if every soldier did things on his own, the army would become a rabble.'¹⁴⁵ Thus, he considered it necessary an atmosphere in this Country where people could work in a united way. However, he

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Deccan Chronicle, Hyderabad, 17 December 1951, p 55.

mentioned that, 'in creating this atmosphere we have to fight forces which aggravate Provincial feelings and strengthen caste barriers dividing man from man'.¹⁴⁶ Hence, stressing on the unity and co-operative work, he warned people against elements showing disruptions among the people on the basis of caste and creed by saying that, 'if such elements were allowed to preach dissensions, the Country would weaken'.¹⁴⁷

He criticized certain Congressmen here who were standing as independent candidates in the forthcoming elections, because they did not get Congress tickets. He did not have much respect for such people because they were more interested in their individual selves than in the larger interests of the Country. He further asked the people to strengthen the Congress because its historical role of taking the Country forward had not yet been completed. Referring to Tungabhadra project he said that, 'the people of Raichur will be benefited from it, if it is completed. But this project could be made successful only when people of Raichur gave unstinted co-operation to government and co-operated among themselves.

He left at 2 P.M for Aurangabad on the same day. The prominent leaders of the Congress gave him and his sister warm welcome. People arriving from adjacent parts of Aurangabad choked up all roads to almost bursting point since morning. He addressed a meeting here of about 1,50,000 people at Anikkhas Maidan, in which he was presented a purse of rupees 27,000. Here he explained the term 'Bharatmata' saying that, 'the term "Bharatmata" did not denote a particular women or an attractive girl. It meant all citizens of Bharat, high or low, of all the states representing various customs.' He further declared that, 'you and I from Bharatmata and we should work for our good'.¹⁴⁸ Reverting back to the issue already raised in the meeting at Hyderabad, of atrocities committed by Razakars on the people here, he further elaborated that, 'such acts only prevented people from going forward'. He further said that:

We should never do anything, which might dishonor to our nation. When men committed atrocities on other men, it created wound not only of the

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Hindustan Times, New Delhi, 17 December 1951, p 58.

body also of the mind. We should consider the whole people as a living body and remember that pain caused even to one man would affect the whole body. We have to raise the standard of our Country in every respect.¹⁴⁹

In 2-days campaign tour of Hyderabad State, he addressed four meetings at Hyderabad city, Warangal, Raichur and Aurangabad. In these he mainly focused on the dangerous activities of the Communists, demand for division of the present State of Hyderabad into linguistic units, merger of the foreign possessions into Indian Union as soon as possible, to develop qualities of a soldier to face new responsibilities of the Country and the Tungabhadra project. Violent methods of Communists were condemned declaring those as the biggest obstacle in achieving the objectives set by them to establish an ideal Socialist or Communist society. Whereas their objectives were praised to be the marker of any ideal society, but people were advised to go for it only when the society becomes prepared to achieve it. Demand for division of the State was vehemently opposed by drawing from the experiences of the Partition that division will only aggravate the problems of the people. Foreign possessions were to be merged into the Indian Union, as it was shameful for an independent Country to have their territorial part under the foreign influence. People were advised to achieve this peacefully as true followers of Mahatma Gandhi.

The suffering of people before and due to integration of Hyderabad was focused upon and people were promised for speedy recovery and the maintenance of law and order problem. The concept of Bharatmata was explained as including one and all to forge unity among the people and disruptions on the basis of caste and creed were condemned. Last but not the least, action against misbehaving Congress legislatures were promised and people were asked to vote for Congress ignoring selection of some bad candidates, who were to be removed from the Congress if they do not follow its principles.

He began his 2-days tour of **Madhya Pradesh** in the morning of 17 December when arrived in Akola capital of Vidarbha, by air from Aurangabad. His sister

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

accompanied him. State's Chief Minister R. S. Shukla and other Congress leaders received him. Receiving cheers from the crowd on the street, he reached the Gymkhana grounds which was also known as Tilak ground and addressed a huge public meeting of about 1,50,000 people, twice the size of Akola's population. His 45 minutes exhortation was torrential feat of words. He never faltered and concluded with 'Jai Hind' chorused by the huge concourse. Surajmal Singhi presented a purse of rupees 53,151 to him.¹⁵⁰

He began his speech by making a slashing attack on Dwarka Prasad Mishra, former member of Congress and Home Minister of Madhya Pradesh, and cautioned people against his activities, standing just opposite the dispensary of K. W. Joglekar, the independent candidate who is supported by all parties like the Socialists, Jan Sangh, Communists and Ram Rajya Parishad, against the Congress nominee Brijlal Biyani.¹⁵¹ Thus, he mentioned here amid loud cheers that, the Congress is the only organization, which is not communal.

While attacking on Zamindari system, he recalled Karachi resolution passed by the Congress 20 years ago and said that:

About 20 years ago, at Karachi, Congress passed its program. It then resolved to abolish Zamindars. The majority of people in the Country live on land. The country cannot advance until the land is improved. The people agreed that Zamindari system is not beneficial to the Country. May be there are some Zamindars who are good. Our question is not of individuals. We are opposed to the system.¹⁵²

Thus, his speech had the content and tonality that always convinced people of his words. He never criticized something bluntly; he always had a good logic for what he spoke.

¹⁵⁰ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Hitavada, Nagpur, 18 December 1951, p 88.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Ibid.

Referring to the roadblocks in solving these new problems after independence of poverty, unemployment and lagging economic development, he said that, Maharajas and feudal chiefs oppose these economic development to maintain their status by keeping the status quo. To fulfill their interests lords and ruling chiefs supported Communal organizations. Thus, Nehru explains:

In the wake of Swaraj came great difficulties. The Partition was with our consent. But what followed, some 90 lakhs of people were displaced and had to be looked after. The problem was communal. There were powers working behind the curtains. The vested interest wanted to change the entire prospect. Behind the move were big and small lords and ruling chiefs. They wanted to create anarchy for self-preservation.¹⁵³

Thus, he further said that, they are trying to follow the tactics of ‘Divide and Rule’ as followed by the Colonial state to rule us. Therefore, we have to exhibit the same unity to defeat these reactionary people, what we showcased in our fight against imperialism.

These reactionary lords and chiefs are supporting these communal organizations. Their absurd effort will weaken India as a Nation, dividing people in the name of religion and culture. Thus, he referred to Communalism as harmful and said,

If you look back into the history of India you will find that disunity has been the chief cause of our fall as a nation. Those who do not want change in the economic setup or social order take shelter behind a Communal organization.¹⁵⁴

He further said that, ‘once the door of Communalism is opened-it spreads. It makes us forget that we are that we are the sons of same soil. There is no Muslim question now.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

But in the Punjab it is Hindu versus Sikh. In Travancore, it is Christian citizens of India versus others. In Madras, it is Brahmin versus non-Brahmins'.¹⁵⁵

Hence, he concluded by referring to lessons of past and said that, 'we should learn to work together. A divided Nation cannot stand in the present world beset with dangers'.¹⁵⁶ These showed how communal organizations was the source of weakness to the Country, the proof of which is the creation of Pakistan due to the spread of Communal virus by the Muslim League.

Reached Nagpur the same day at 11:45 A.M and was received by Governor and Pradesh Congress Committee president, Nagpur. He addressed Congress workers at the Chief Minister's residence, before going to the government house. He addressed a public meeting of about 1 lakh people among which several thousands were women. He was presented a purse of rupees 75,000. He began his 1 hour-long speech declaring that, the Congress was the only organization free from Communalism.¹⁵⁷ He sternly warned the people against the Communal parties in the Country and said that, 'not one of these organizations have any economic program for the general betterment of the people, and they have always depended on wealth magnets for their funds'.¹⁵⁸

Nehru made special mention of the RSS, the Jan Sangh and the Hindu Mahasabha among the Communal organizations and asked people to keep themselves aloof from the activities of these bodies. He further said that, the RSS, an organization which took its birth in Nagpur, protested to be a non-political body. But they all knew that it was apolitical body though its leaders worked secretly. Warning people of the activities of these Communal bodies, he said that, other Communal organizations like Jansangh and Hindu Mahasabha also had no program or support from the public. On the Hindu Mahasabha criticism of his speeches at Gwalior and Bhopal, he said, 'I

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Statesman, New Delhi, 18 December 1951, p 92.

¹⁵⁸ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Bombay Chronicle, Bombay, 18 December 1951, p 72.

would like to tell you that whatever I have said in my speeches at these places was after a through enquiry, and with a full sense of responsibility'.¹⁵⁹

While speaking about, S. P. Mukherjee, president of Bhartiya Jan Sangh, he said 'it was amazing how Dr. Mukherjee was making irresponsible statements every other day. If I follow the opinions expressed by him, the whole Country will certainly be ruined'. Amid loud cheers, he further said, 'it was very easy to excite people on the basis of religion and culture, but it was just deluding people'.¹⁶⁰

While disapproving secret alliances among the parties and a great hue and cry created against the Congress through a network of created lies to confuse the people, he declared:

Politics in India till now had been an open affair. There was no secrecy about it. These critics are content to follow backdoor and underhand methods in influencing others and are afraid to work in the open. The Congress has fought always in the open and we shall continue to fight in the open with our head-high.¹⁶¹

Thus, he appealed people to channelize the immense power of the Congress for tackling bigger tasks. Attacking further on the alliances of these parties, he said, the making and unmaking of all sorts of alliances everyday resembles like jigsaw puzzle. He expressed his amazement at organizations making alliances, when their principles were opposed to each other.¹⁶²

Referring to the secret pamphlets, about which he only come to know when he came here, distributed in Nagpur some days ago in praise of Godse, asking people to observe Godse's death anniversary, he said 'this shows that there were still some

¹⁵⁹ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Mail, Madras, 18 December 1951, p 90.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Indian Express, Madras, 18 December 1951, p 89.

¹⁶² Ibid.

parties working secretly in the Country'.¹⁶³ He declared that, 'Khare's threat that violence might break out as in February 1948, if Nehru continued to make allegations against the Hindu Mahasabha had no effect on him'.¹⁶⁴ Thus, he warned the people not to be cowed down by such threats and said that people must rally under the Congress banner and have no truck with Communal bodies.

While revealing certain Communal parties engaged in making secret alliances and purchasing arms to create disturbances in the Country, by instigating young men to resort to violence, he said, 'so long as there were people like Dr. Khare such disturbances were inevitable because such people invited such disturbances'.¹⁶⁵ He condemned the presence of so many independent candidates, as they could not guarantee efficient administration in the Country. He further mentioned that, he was not afraid of opposition. On the contrary he wanted responsible opposition in the Parliament and in the state legislative assemblies.¹⁶⁶

While delivering speech, a telegram was handed over to him, which he later read out aloud. The telegram alleged the Maharaja of Bastar, former state that was then merged into Madhya Pradesh, was exercising undue influence on officials in regard to elections. The Telegram said the Bastar Maharaja had set up independent candidates for the state assembly, and almost all village headmen and village officials were helping these candidates at the instance of Maharaja. Congress candidates were being threatened with murder if they fought against these candidates. After reading out the telegram, he said, 'it may be the telegram is exaggerated. But there is bound to be some truth in it, and my advice to Bastar Maharaja will be not to exert any influence on officials in elections. If he did so, he would be held responsible for it'.¹⁶⁷

Thus, this proves that he was very much careful in declaring things. Without proper investigation and efficient proof, he never uttered a single word against any

¹⁶³ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Bombay Chronicle, Bombay, 18 December 1951, p 72.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Times of India, New Delhi, 18 December 1951, p 93.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Mail, Madras, 18 December 1951, p 90.

party or individual in his campaign. But above all this, he was committed to the cause of establishing a representative democracy with a successful election, giving all the parties and independent candidates an equal opportunity to win the election through democratic means. Therefore, he as the Prime Minister of our Country had the sole responsibility to get maintained the law and order situation in all parts of the Country to have free and fair elections without having any influence of any dominating party in any part of the Country. Hence, he warned the Maharaja of Bastar to respect the democratic process of election and abstain from creating any sort of law and order problem.

He arrived at Gondia from Nagpur by plane on the same day at 4 P.M with his sister. Deputy Commissioner, Bhandra and prominent Congress leaders of the District and Tehsil received him. Addressing a meeting of about 1 lakh people here, he said that the foremost problems of food, clothing and shelter would be solved through stepping up production by our hard work. Every citizen rather than a few should share the wealth produced in the process.¹⁶⁸ He further said that Communalism must be quarantined to make India a strong and integrated Nation. He also attacked Socialists by saying that, they did not take into account the fast moving world. He further gave examples of England and America, where people took it as their personal responsibility to increase production and said, 'if our Countrymen emulated their spirit, and worked in the same direction, the task before us would not be difficult to achieve'.¹⁶⁹

At Raipur, in the night of same day, he addressed over a lakh of people and said buttressing the role of the Congress that:

We have forged this weapon of Congress during the last 70 years. We have to continue to use this weapon for many more years. It may be that the Congress has become of late a bit rusty. But that does not mean we

¹⁶⁸ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Hitavada, Nagpur, 18 December 1951, p 82.

¹⁶⁹ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Mail, Madras, 18 December 1951, p 90.

should throw it aside. We have to remove the rust and sharpen this weapon once again to fight new economic battles of the day.¹⁷⁰

Thus, he remarked that, 'the strength of the Country would increase to the extent the strength of the Congress was consolidated'.¹⁷¹ He was presented a purse of rupees 50,000 here.

Nehru addressed about 6 lakhs people in 4 meetings on 17 December. People had come from places as far as 50 Miles away to hear the Congress president. At Gondia 70 year old sick man came to the meeting place in a wheelchair.¹⁷² He spent not more than 3 hours at Akola, Nagpur and Gondia. At Raipur, he spent the night and proceeded in the morning for the tour of Bilaspur, Khandwa and Jabulpore consecutively.

In the next morning on 18 December he arrived at Bilaspur from Raipur, by plane. He drove for 6 Miles from the Chakarbhata Aerodrome to meeting ground, where addressing a public meeting of about 75,000 people, he said, 'greatness of a Country did not come by legislation. Legislations, no doubt, helped in the path of the progress. It was for the people to work harder and increase the wealth of the Country not in terms of silver or gold but in terms of production of goods'.¹⁷³ He further said that, land was the first major question on the economic front. Thus, they had to remove burden on land and bring about agrarian revolution on a peaceful and persuasive basis. He later advised people to consider these and other problems and tackle them methodically drawing up priorities as they had only limited resources at their disposal.¹⁷⁴

While criticizing the methods and tactics of Socialists and Communists, he said, 'the society had to built from the bottom. If we built it from the top it will

¹⁷⁰ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Delhi Express, Delhi, 18 December 1951, p 75.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Mail, Madras, 18 December 1951, p 90.

¹⁷³ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Hitavada, Nagpur, 19 December 1951, p 108.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

crumble down. We have prepared plans for land, industry and power projects. When these projects get into stride immense benefit will accrue'.¹⁷⁵ He later made particular reference to the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak sangh and said, 'it is child's play for an organization to train the youths at night parades and in behind the scene activities and make people sign in blood. Why not they come out in public? Is this the way Bharat is advancing?'¹⁷⁶ Thus, he advised not to get involved in Communal politics but regard themselves as citizens of the Republican India, whose duty was to help one another and keep the honor of the Country high. He was presented a purse of rupees 15,001 here.

He reached Khandwa from Bilaspur by plane, and after a one hour journey by train from there, he reached at Burhanpur, where he addressed a public meeting most of the towns population of 75,000 were sitting in the hot sun. There he spoke for 30 minutes and said that election is an opportunity to strengthen Congress for the good of our Country and its people. He asked people to wipe out in the elections all organizations manifesting Communalism. He also condemned Communists and said that, communism could not be achieved by waving red flags or shouting high-sounding slogans or through murder, loot and arson as perpetrated in Telangana.¹⁷⁷

He returned to Khandwa at about 2-30 p.m. He motored from the station to the meeting place where nearly a lakh of people were sitting in the sun to hear him. Even many of them had come overnight. He was presented a purse of rupees 10,101 on behalf of Khandwa citizens. He started his 50 minutes speech by appealing people to ignore mistakes in selection of candidates because the party was greater than individuals in a democracy. Vijayalaxmi Pandit, who was accompanying Nehru also addressed the Khandwa meeting; telling the large number of women that had gathered why they should vote Congress.¹⁷⁸ A son of independent candidate tried to mount the dais and give a handbill to Nehru prepared by his father. The police held him back.¹⁷⁹ He took off for Jabalpur at about 3-45 p.m.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Delhi Express, Delhi, 19 December 1951, p 98.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

At Jabalpur, while addressing a mammoth meeting here attended by about 4,00,000 people, he said that, the Congress, despite its weaknesses, was still ‘the mightiest and only organization in the Country’ which could effectively help the people solve problems of poverty and unemployment. In all 1 lakh had been donated by the people of Madhya Pradesh to the Congress.¹⁸⁰ With this meeting, Nehru rounded off his 7-days strenuous tour of Allahabad, Orissa, Hyderabad and Madhya Pradesh. He covered in this tour 3500 Miles by air, train, and car and addressed more than 1,50,0000 people.¹⁸¹

Thus, in the tour of Madhya Pradesh, Communal parties and their vicious propagandas were exposed and condemned. People were asked to do away with this communicable disease, which was and still is the biggest danger for the Country’s unity. Problems of food, cloth and shelter were given the first priority. Communist party’s methods of sloganeering and violence were told to ineffective in achieving their goals. Secret alliances of parties were condemned, as they did not maintain their ideological purity. In an instance, even all Communal and Secular parties accept congress, supported an independent candidate who contested against a Congress nominee. A large number of independent candidates rising in the elections were also condemned, as they did not have any plan or administrative setup to solve the problems of the people. Hence, this campaign of Madhya Pradesh represented the complete war between the Secularism of the Congress party and the Communal propagandas of the Communal parties.

After his ‘Scathing attack on Communal Bodies’¹⁸² in **Delhi** campaign on December 20, he went on 3-days election tour of **Punjab** and returned to Delhi on December 23. He visited 12 towns, which are Panipat, Karnal, Ambala, Hoshiarpur, Jullundur, Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Ferozepur, Faridkot, Sirsa, Hissar and Rohtak. He initiated his tour from Panipat on 21 December with an appeal to the ‘strife torn

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., p 99.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Times of India, New Delhi, 21 December 1951, p 138.

Punjab to rise above petty squabbles and contribute their mite towards the building of a new India and new Punjab of their dream'.¹⁸³

He further said justifying the suspension of Constitution in the Punjab that, 'it was the wisest step that could be taken by the Congress and the Government of India in the circumstances prevailing in the State 6 months ago. The subsequent events, had amply proved the dismissal of the Congress Ministry in the Punjab was the right course to create a healthy atmosphere'.¹⁸⁴ These ministries were suspended because they were seeking support of the Communal bodies. Thus, Nehru said 'disgruntled ministers making alliance with Communal parties were most detrimental to the interests of the Country'. Hence, he appealed, 'Punjab could prosper only if they shed Communalism'.¹⁸⁵

Later addressing a mammoth gathering at Karnal, he said that, the partition of the Country was not only the responsibility of the Congress alone, but also of the other parties including the Akalis and the Hindu Mahasabha. The consent of these organizations had also been obtained to the vivisection of India. Thus, he warned the people against hymn of hate sung by the Communal organizations and said that the harmful propaganda done by them would compel them to postpone their plans and projects for the posterity of the Country.¹⁸⁶

Referring to the refuge problem, he said that, 'the example of India dealing with the refuge problem had been unparalleled in the world'. India had grappled with the colossal problem and creditably. Nearly 1 crore refugees had come from western and eastern Pakistan, most of whom had been resettled on land, new towns built for them and their training arranged for gainful employment'.¹⁸⁷ The united nation experts who visited to study the methods of dealing with refugee problems were surprised to see the wonderful achievement in their rehabilitation. However, Nehru

¹⁸³ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, Delhi Express, Delhi, 22 December 1951, p 144.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

admitted that, 'the question has not been solved to the full satisfaction of the uprooted brethren but I feel that enough had been done to improve their lot'.¹⁸⁸

Similar points were raised at Ambala, Jullundur, Amritsar and other towns in Punjab. Communalism and Communal parties threat to our Nation were the prime concern of Nehru, in his speeches at all the meetings here. He vociferously condemned the allegations made against Congress by the Hindu Mahasabha and the Akali dal that, the Government is not making serious efforts in rehabilitating the refugees, and for Partition only the Congress party is responsible. Punjab was the State that beard the maximum burnt of Communal clashes after independence, which cost its people their lives and property. This also instilled psychological fear in the minds of the people, which were the main factor in giving birth to Communal organizations and Communal feelings in the people. Thus, we see a single agenda carried by Nehru in his Punjab Campaign to condemn the mushrooming of these Communal organizations while asking people to remain aloof from their vicious propagandas. Hence, he instilled faith in the people that the black days will not return and the Government will make all possible efforts in quelling the effects of Communalism and its further growth.

After the Punjab tour, Nehru went back to Delhi on December 24 and visited Idar, Ahamdabad, Bombay, and Poona the same day. On December 25, he went to Belgaun, Hubli and Dharwar. On December 26, he visited Mangalore and Bangalore, and toured various places in Andhra on December 27 and 28. He tours Bihar on December 28 and 29, and proceeds to Assam on December 29 for a 3-days tour ending on December 31. He reached Calcutta on December 31, the same day. He leaves for Muzaffarpur on January 2. He returned to Delhi on January 3. And at last, spent last 3-days of his whirlwind campaign in his own constituency, in Allahabad, ending it just one day before the election on January 6.¹⁸⁹

In the tour of last 10 days, he led very enthusiastic campaign in which he toured from east to south and addressed several meetings. Most of the points were

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, National Herald, Lucknow, 20 December 1951, p 117.

repeated, which are already mentioned above in the campaigns of various regions. One of the most significant points was raised in Mysore, where he said that all the part B states would be included in the part A States, but many of these did not had legislators, which was the main difficulty in giving these States the status Part A States.

Overall, these last 10 days were truly a conclusion of a whirlwind campaign by Nehru. He repeated almost all the points, which he made at several meetings earlier. But when we classify region wise then we find variations in his speech. In North and Central India, the single most dominant agenda of his campaign was to condemn communal forces and promote secular ideas of coexistence and unity. Hindu code bill and the abolition of Zamindari system were the most dominant campaign agendas in the North and central India. In South India, he mainly spoke against the Communist violence and unrealistic promises of the Socialists. He also condemned the Communalism by Muslim League in the South India, as similar to the Communalism in the North India. In Western and South India, India's foreign policy and the formation of States as linguistic units was also the significant agenda. Wherever he may be standing and speaking, he condemned Communalism with full vigor and force, and advised people to maintain unity and carry out the cooperative work, which would naturally strengthen the hands of the Congress to build India as a great Nation. Hence, he gave a call to the people of this Nation to remain united under the banner of the Congress.

Many Communists and Socialist leaders called the campaign by Nehru as 'sound and furry'. They said 'in a Country where people are predominantly poor and illiterate, pep talk by popular leaders goes a long way in winning votes.'¹⁹⁰ But the context and circumstance was same for all the parties and candidates. And if it was so easy to earn votes from the people then why were those leaders of Communists and Socialists parties not able to motivate the public opinion in their favor. However, Nehru stressed upon taking Country forward in the socialist direction, when it overcomes the immediate challenges in front of the people of illiteracy, poverty and unemployment. But, other party leaders ignored these all quality words of Nehru, as

¹⁹⁰ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Free Press Journal, Bombay, 20 November 1951, p 98.

they were intentionally pitted in criticizing Nehru and the Congress. Thus, they could not realize the larger picture drawn by Nehru and kept themselves busy in day-dreams to defeat the Congress, without chalking out any significant policy or program, or developing a strong party organization to give a robust challenge to the Congress in the elections.

They also alleged that the electioneering is a big business. He who controls the purse strings controls the votes.¹⁹¹ Yes, this was a serious problem then. However, Nehru put all possible efforts to counter these malpractices. This did not leave the electioneering to be an equal playing field. This was a serious threat to democratic institutions then, that is even in much more bigger form today. This is ignored which must be looked at.

They further alleged that for Nehru individuals do not count, the party mandate does.¹⁹² This is true, Nehru asked people to vote for Congress in the name of Congress and its contribution in building the Nation. He said at several occasions that Congress is the only organization that can maintain the unity of the Nation. He even admitted that many wrong candidates have managed to be selected to be the Congress candidates in the elections. The small amount of time available to select the candidates did not allow Congress to have proper scrutiny of its candidates. Though asking vote for candidates who have bad name cannot be justified. However Nehru promised people to purge them off after the elections, through the reorganization of the Congress.

Free press Journal wrote that Nehru is guilty of asking votes for bad candidates which is all the more regrettable. That is Congress way. Judging from its work in office, the Congress party has forfeited the right to represent the people. The people are willing to work; can the government provide work for them. Stripped of all the verbiage, the Congress president speeches signify little.¹⁹³ Nehru loved these types of criticism because it maintains the healthy traditions of democracy and democracy per se.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

The pioneer writes on the election campaign that:

Politics in all countries is talkative process, but it is doubtful whether in any other time in our National history there has been such a torrential stream of oratory and counter oratory as now. Thanks to the Constitution, which guarantees to everyone the right to speak for himself and thanks again to the elections, that right is literally used. In talkativeness, India took to the British model in which the individual quality of the backbenchers is blanketed by the greater predominance of party leadership. The fool, if he is a fool, has much less opportunity to make a fool of him in public¹⁹⁴

Whatever may be the criticism, but the election campaign of the first general election of India was the one-man show. Nehru's campaign was so big and massive that other parties just looked a cog in the wheel. Criticism raised against Nehru was a big support in his campaign, as these criticisms were availing him an opportunity to explain his stand on the issue more clearly and extensively. Other parties campaign looked like suggestions to Nehru, who graciously took their points and explained them the difficulties in following their policies and program. Only Communal parties were vehemently condemned and opposed by him, which he considered the biggest danger to the India's unity, stability and progress. Thus, Nehru's election campaign may be remembered as a War of secular ideas against the Communal forces, which may be repeated in the words of Bipan Chandra as,

It is perhaps utopian to ask for the replication of Jawaharlal Nehru who made communalism the central campaign question during the elections to the first Lok Sabha in 1952. He urged the Congress not to enter into any alliance, cooperation or understanding, explicit or implicit, with any communal organization, whatever its designation might be. Nor would he make any ideological compromise with communalism whatever the electoral consequences. "So far as I am concerned", he was to declare

¹⁹⁴ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, November 1951, NMML, Pioneer, Lucknow, 21 November 1951, p 101.

later in 1954, “I am prepared to lose every election in India but to give no quarter to communalism or casteism”.¹⁹⁵

Election campaign by Nehru was a crusade to promote Secularism against Communalism. He stood his words, ‘he only aspired to work for the Congress and the Country like an active soldier as long as I Live’¹⁹⁶ told in reply to Ashok Mehta’s comment ‘Mr. Nehru should give his responsibilities to the next generation of leaders’, truly in a heroic spirit. The sole source of energy behind his unflinching conviction to work and burning desire to serve his Country and Countrymen truly resembled in his words, ‘There was no need of a memorial to be built after him. The best memorial considered fit was his work and service to the people and the Country’,¹⁹⁷ which made his campaign a grand success and an example possibly not to be repeated in the electoral history.

Methods of Campaign

Election campaign focused hugely on the election meetings addressed by every party’s star speakers, who led from forefront where party fate completely depended on him and his speeches. Though more votes have perhaps been mobilized through less conspicuous method of door-to door canvassing or through the shortcut of winning over local or caste leaders, the so-called manipulators of ‘Vote Banks’.

The election campaign of 1951-2 was conducted through large public meetings, door-to-door canvassing, and the use of visual media. ‘At the height of election fever’, wrote a British observer, ‘posters and emblems were profuse everywhere- on walls, at street corners, even decorating the statues in New Delhi and defying the dignity of a former generation of viceroys’. A novel method of advertising was in display in Calcutta, where stray cows had ‘vote Congress’ written on their backs in Bengali.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁵ Chandra, Bipan, *Essays on Contemporary India*, Har-Anand Publications, New Delhi, 1991, P 145.

¹⁹⁶ Nehru Clippings, Roll No. 6, September 1951 to February 1952, December 1951, NMML, National Herald, Lucknow, 20 December 1951, p 117.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ Ramachandra Guha, *India After Gandhi: The History of the World’s Largest Democracy* (New Delhi: HarperCollins, 2007), p. 137.

A popular method of campaign was seen in Trivandrum (Kottayam), Kerala, and the place where maximum percentage of vote was polled. People used pigeons, crows, and kites as their means of election campaign. Small cards containing different political party's symbols were tied to the neck of crows and pigeons. When birds used to fly here and there, the vibrating sound of cards seek people's attention towards it. Different types of shining kites were seen flying in the sky, containing different political party's symbol on it.¹⁹⁹[Use of pigeon, crows and kites in the election campaign, 5 Dec 1951; Hindustan]. This euphoria for the election aptly portrays people's interest and enthusiasm in it. Thus, this shows people's faith in the democratic system of rule and its process of establishment.

Taking an example from the election campaign in Uttar Pradesh, most prominent in that were distribution of leaflets and party literature, exhibition of cinemas and the use of local and regional songs in the campaign.²⁰⁰ Uttar Pradesh, a state of 60 million people, where not more than 10 percent were literate, party literatures and similar kinds of writings were very less effective in the propaganda making. Thus, the need of different modes of campaign was felt necessary. Apart from 250 cinema halls screening slides containing information about the election process and the party ideology, agendas and propagandas; street exhibition of slides were also conducted to attract voters to vote and vote for the party concerned. This was popular among the resourceful parties like the Congress and the Kisaan Majdoor Praja Party (KMPP). Parts of Congress president Mr. Nehru's speeches were recorded for screening through these slides. Exhibition of posters and different election symbols allotted to different parties and independent candidates were common. Songs are composed in the vernacular languages, containing information about the Party and their plans, which was used as a medium to connect with the people by different parties.²⁰¹

Jansangh created a group of more than one lakh 'Swayamsevak'. They carried 1-lakh cards to one-lakh families, on one face of it symbol of Jansangh 'Burning Earthenpot', was printed. They also used 'Prabhat Pheries' to give their messages to

¹⁹⁹ Use of Pigeon, Crows, and Kites in the election campaign, Hindustan, 5 December 1951, p. 1; NMML, 15 September to 8 December 1951, Tape no. R4319.

²⁰⁰ Hindustan, New Delhi, 12 December 1951, NMML, p 1.

²⁰¹ Ibid.

the people. Jansangh and Communists used dance, song and drama in villages to make illiterate people better understand their ideas and promises.²⁰²

Socialists had made campaign groups of 20-20 people to conduct 'Sabhas' in villages to give their messages to the people. They conducted meetings and public debates daily to make their ideology and programs clear to the voters. They also carried out 'Cycle Procession' to attract people. They sought slogans on streets and give frequent lectures to the group of people gathered at whatever places they meet them.²⁰³

People's responses to the Campaign

In this, I will look for the people's responses to the various campaign methods and will try to capture the people's excitement and anticipation, as it was all happening for the first time in their life. Election was totally a new experience for the people. They took it as a fruit of Independence and celebrated it like a festive occasion.

People participated in the polls fully aware that their vote was a prized possession. In many places, people treated polling as a festival, as a public celebration, with many decking themselves up for the occasion in festive clothing, the women wearing their silver jewelry.²⁰⁴

Election campaign kept town and Countryside both buzz with speeches and the lanes and houses looked colorful and festive drenched in the colorful posters of different parties. Frequent arrival of motorcars in the area made people anxious to catch a glance of it and participate in speeches of various leaders. People were very enthusiastic to have a look of their heroes of freedom struggle. People exhibited a lot of respect and reverence for the freedom fighters rising in the elections. Cities and sites of campaign were decorated in flowers, in a manner that resembled like a public fair or festival celebrated by the people. Women folk used to rain flowers on Nehru and sang patriotic songs wherever he used to enter a city for campaign. Such was the popularity of Nehru that his 'Gandhi Topi' and 'Nehru Coat' became the popular

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Bipan Chandra, et al. *India Since Independence*, Penguin, 2006, p. 170.

dressing style and a symbol of prestige for the people. In gatherings scores of people looked similarly dressed in Khadi kurta, pazama or white Dhoti, Nehru Coat and Gandhi Topi. The verve of the freedom fighters was such popular in public domain that it became a respectable identity.

The freedom struggle loomed large during the election battle in 1951-52. Any candidate who hadn't been to jail during the freedom struggle felt a little ashamed of himself, and his chances of winning were slim indeed. The prevalent mood was perhaps best reflected at Amritsar, where the voters bluntly told a young lawyer to either withdraw or be prepared to face social boycott in addition to certain defeat. His fault was that, he was opposing a lady who had taken part in the freedom movement. Until her opponent withdrew, the lady herself adopted a novel method to impress her constituents. She simply announced that in Amritsar's cold she would not wear shoes or sandals "until my brothers elect me to the assembly".²⁰⁵

The spell of the freedom struggle was so great in 1952 that the droves of independent candidates who had jumped into the fray tried to capitalize on it. "In Independent India, vote for Independent candidates", they proclaimed gleefully. The slogan apparently began to catch on, for even Nehru had to take notice, '**what fantastic nonsense are these independents talking. Who and what are they independent of?**' he asked angrily. Yet 41 independents were elected to the Lok Sabha and 326 to the state assemblies.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁵ Campaign Trail, The Times of India (1861-current); 31 March 1971; Pro quest Historical Newspaper: The Times of India, Jawaharlal Nehru University Library, p. 17.

²⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 17.

Chapter 3

Election Results: Secularism or Communalism

The results of the 16th General Election of India got declared and a basically communal party emerged in a full majority. And this result is vertically opposite to the results of the first general elections, in which the Congress won with a majority and the communal parties were in minuscule minority gaining just 6 percent of the electors support. In that election, the Congress won 364 seats out of 489 seats for the House of the people. Out of the 61.2 percent of total eligible voters exercising their vote, 45 percent was polled for the Congress party. Socialists and Communists were the first and second runners up with 10.59 percent and 3.29 percent of total votes respectively.¹ This was the absolute mandate for the secular parties, which is brought upside down in the last General Election.

This captured the imagination of the nation, and left her thinking about the communal ideological force, capturing the seat of democracy politically. This led intellectuals on a retreat journey into the past to find out, how communal ideology became victorious with a full majority in a democracy like India, which has a secular civilizational base and a rich secular legacy of its freedom struggle? What are the reasons behind its acceptability among the common public? Do they have any contribution in the freedom struggle before independence or in the nation building process after the independence? Are they suitable for the nation that uphold and feel proud of its diversity and plural culture since antiquity? Does their brand of Hindu Communalism represent the aspirations of diversity of India? Does this nation belong only to Hindus and are the remaining vast humanity residing in this country foreigners?

There are many more questions raised by intellectuals, media houses national and international, secular parties and the common public, but it looks absurd to put all those questions here after asking the last two, the answer of which completely delegitimizes the ideology of Hindu Communalism to be the national ideology of

¹Election Commission, *Election Commission Report of first General Election in India, 1951-52*, Vol. 2 (New Delhi: The Government of India Press, 1955), p. 94.

India. It can represent a community but not a nation. Communalist can only create farce rhetoric of Hindu communalism. They call India the motherland of Hindus and consider the remaining children of their 'Bharat Mata' as foreigners. They play over the emotions of majority, which is put in by Bipan Chandra as, 'communal party minus communalism is a big zero'. Their idea of nation and nationalism, which is actually communalism, is based on myth and the wildest imagination of a fanatic Hindu, V. D. Savarkar, which has nothing to do with the historical past of the nation or the rationality of mind. It reads:

At last the great mission which the Sindhus had undertaken of founding a nation and a country, found and reached its geographical limit when the valorous Prince of Ayodhya made a triumphant entry in Ceylon and actually brought the whole land from the Himalayas to the Seas under one sovereign sway. The day when the Horse of Victory returned to Ayodhya unchallenged and unchallengeable, the great white Umbrella of Sovereignty was unfurled over that Imperial throne of Ramchandra, the brave, Ramchandra the good, and a loving allegiance to him was sworn, not only by the Princes of Aryan blood but Hanuman, Sugriva, Bibhishana from the south - that day was the real birth-day of our Hindu people. It was truly our national day: for Aryans and Anaryans, knitting themselves into a people, were born as a nation. It summed up and politically crowned the efforts of all the generations that preceded it and it handed down a new and common mission, a common banner, a common cause which all the generations after it had consciously or unconsciously fought and died to defend.²

This imagination of a maniac can never be accepted by the majority of the people and will remain only an ideology confined in the bounds of its community that too only followed by a section of this community. Bipan Chandra aptly explained this as:

The people of India will not readily yield before the forces of disintegration. If secular nationalism is seen as inadequate in meeting their challenges, the people will

² V. D. Savarkar, Essentials of Hindutva, Hindus - A Nation, p. 6.

turn to communalism masquerading as nationalism. Ideologies like fascism, Nazism and communalism grow only when secular and democratic forces are unable to overcome the crisis plaguing a society.³

This narrative by him clearly helps in understanding the recent election in which the major secular national parties like the congress and the Left parties lost their major share of deposits and gave way for a basically communal party, BJP.

Thus, Bipan Chandra says that 'Communalism is a single ideology which takes Hindu, Muslim, Sikhs and Christian forms'.⁴ Majority or minority Communalism both are dangerous, especially the claim of communalists to serve the Nation and its people is regressive and destructive. He further says that, 'Minority communalism hurts minorities above all. Muslim communalism became a major force before 1947 - and even successful in its own terms. And Muslims of the sub-continent are still paying the price of this success, whether they live in Pakistan, Bangladesh or India. The main victims of Sikh communalism have been Sikhs - and the longer it prevails the more this will be so.'⁵

Thus, it can be understood clearly that, Hindu communalism will do maximum damage to the plural fabric of the Hindu community. And to say precisely, a great amount of damage has already been done to their community and their religion, since they have started riding on the back of religion to be home in the life of its people. Hinduism is misrepresented as a homogeneous religion, by the Hindu communalists, which has been heterogeneous religion like an ever-expanding confluence of varied faith born in India or outside.

These communalists have harmed their community in a big way, as their assertion is breaking apart the social relations of the Hindus with other communities residing in this country or outside. This has also made Hindu community vulnerable: to be looked at by others with suspicion. And to be more precise, Hindus are doomed to suffer a set-back in their people-to-people relations with the other people of the

³ Bipan Chandra, *Essays on Contemporary India*, Har-Anand Publications, New Delhi, 1991, p. 169.

⁴ Ibid. p. 159.

⁵ Ibid.

world, due to the obscurantist nature of Hindu communalists who are even in minority in the Hindu community. The repercussions of the upsurge of a bad element from a community is well understood if we look at the defamation of the Muslim community brought by 1 percent of terrorist-like mentality of people among them.

Therefore, the majority mandate to a communal party comes about only because of the failure of the secular parties at different levels and the counter rise of BJP under the guise of development agendas. Thus, Bipan Chandra's argument looks apt here that, 'success of Hindu communalism will precisely mean fascism over the majority as also the destruction of the centuries old Indian culture and value system.'⁶ He further blames secular parties for the rise of communal parties by tracing their support given or taken from these communal parties to earn political dividends as:

A major factor in the growth of communalism since the 1960s has been the political opportunism, towards the communalism practiced by secular parties, groups and individuals. They have often permitted the intrusion of religion (and caste) into politics. They have compromised with communal forces. And, far worse, they have entered in alliances with communal parties. The Congress was the first to do so in Kerala in the early 1960s. The Congress several times opened its doors to Sikh and Hindu communalists in Punjab, while the Communists, on their part, allied with the Akali Dal. In 1967, the Socialists and other secular parties and groups did not hesitate to join the RSS-Jan Sangh in forming governments in several states. The high watermark was reached when Jan Sangh was permitted to become a part of the Janata Party in 1977.⁷

Hence, the present context, in which a communal party is ruling the country with full majority, made me inquisitive and curious about the results of the first general elections. Because that was the period when India faced the biggest communal flash-out in its history: in the form of Partition, violence and displacement. No tragedies in the world have witnessed the violence and displacement of people at such a large scale.⁸ This gave communal parties a chance to communalize our society

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Bipan Chandra, *Essays on Contemporary India*, Har-Anand Publications, New Delhi, 1991, p. 140.

⁸ See Sucheta Mahajan,, *Independence and Partition: The Erosion of Colonial Power in India*, Sage

by fanning religious emotions in the people. This communalization of society and politics by the activities of communal organizations also became the sole reason for Mahatma Gandhi's murder by a Hindu Mahasabha fanatic, Nathuram Godse.⁹

The last decade preceding the elections of 1951-52, and the independence was the decade of communal flash outs. The Central, Western, North and a considerable part of East India was under the direct stroke of Communalism, which included Madhya Pradesh, Madhya Bharat, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Orissa, West Bengal, Punjab and PEPSU (Patiala and East Punjab states union) of that time. Hyderabad was also under communal effect of Muslim League.

Therefore, it becomes interesting to look at how these Communal organizations were marginalized in the first general elections that took away their energy gained from the partition and blunted their growth. How were they outplayed from the minds of the people leaving full ground for Secularism and the aura and legacy of freedom struggle to consolidate and establish it? Thus, the study of ideological war perpetrated by various political parties, between the ideas of secularism and communalism in the first general elections in its immediate context and circumstances becomes extremely useful to find solutions to today's communal problems. Hence, it is very essential to inquire about and learn lessons from that to save our country going astray on the communal lines.

This chapter will look at the manifestoes of all the national parties to substantiate my hypothesis that the first general election represented the ideological war between the ideas of Secularism and Communalism. This will further look at the regions where Congress lost, and will analyze whether some other secular party won there or a communal party. At last this research will figure out what dominated this election, whether a secular or communal trend, and why?

Publications, New Delhi, 2000.

⁹ Bipan Chandra, *Essays on Contemporary India*, Har-Anand Publications, New Delhi, 1991, p. 169.

Analyzing Manifestoes

Manifestoes were the most important part of a party's stand in the election. All parties presented their programs and policies in their manifestoes to solve the vital problems of our national life, to motivate the electorate to vote for them. These manifestoes were the sole source to know the views of these parties on the crucial problems of our national life. And this knowledge about the varying stands of different parties on different issues was quite necessary for the voters to exercise their votes intelligently and consciously.

Proper voting by the electorate to their choicest candidate or party was the only way to establish a democratic system in its full essence. Proper voting for the suitable candidates or parties was very vital, since the members of legislative assemblies, both State and Central, were to be elected through this process. And these elected legislatures had the sole responsibility to make laws, which would determine the future of the many millions residing in this country.¹⁰

These elected representatives were to enact laws regarding each and every problem facing our country. They were to decide for 'our food, clothing, housing and general economic condition, our civic freedom and foreign relations, our education and culture'.¹¹ Thus, it was necessary to give this responsibility to a deserving party, whose policies and programs suited the demands of the people. It could only be achieved when electors could fully understand the policies, programs and propagandas of all the parties fraying in the election and decide their votes accordingly.

As a result of their programs, some parties were popular among the people and some others could not look attractive to the people. Some parties presented progressive programs, and some others hinged on their reactionary programs to glorify the distant past. Programs of some parties favored the private property, while some others vouched for the equal distribution of wealth among the people of our country. These programs of various parties either focused on the secular ideas of unity

¹⁰ Asia Publishing House, *Asia Guide to the First General Elections*, Bombay and Calcutta, November 1951, p. 220.

¹¹ Ibid.

and equality or the communal ideas of divisiveness and inequality. Therefore, the programs of these important parties can be comparatively studied to group them in the conceptual framework of secularist or communalist's programs. Either a party was secular or communal can only be understood after analyzing their stand on significant issues in front of our nation at that time. However, these programs and policies of various parties could be defined as secular or communal only when a comprehensive framework of secularism and communalism is understood based on the amalgamation of pre-existing theories and the development of ideas while studying sources on the first general election.

Bipan Chandra explains communalism as 'basically an ideology or belief system through which society, economy and polity are viewed and explained'.¹² When a political party promotes the interests of a community formed on religious, caste or class lines, it becomes a communal party. These communal parties design their programs and policies as such that serves the vested interests of a particular community or group or may be certain selected groups of people.

The legacy of freedom struggle was maintained in the form of secular ideals and ideas endorsed and promoted by the secular parties, which is explained by Bipan Chandra as:

From its early days, the national movement was committed to secularism. Secularism was defined in a comprehensive manner which meant the separation of religion from politics and the state treatment of religion as a private matter for the individual, state neutrality towards or equal respect for all religions, absence of discrimination between followers of different religions, and active opposition to communalism.¹³

Thus, from this the essence of secularism comes out to maintain the equality and unity among all shades of this culturally diverse nation, through disseminating proper knowledge about the joy of peacefully co-habiting, while enjoying the company of people following diverse cultural, traditional and habitual practices. Hence, in my

¹² Chandra, Bipan, *Essays on Contemporary India*, Har-Anand Publications, New Delhi, 1991, p. 21.

¹³ Bipan Chandra, et al., *India since Independence*, Penguin, New Delhi, 2008, p. 32.

opinion just giving equal respect to all religions will not serve the purpose of maintaining a truly secular society, as it is evident from the communalization of society and politics in the present context, for this to be maintained people of different religions will have to mingle with each other and share and enjoy each others' cultures while shading even a knack of preexisting reservations, premonitions and hatred. It will also require secular people and parties to be courageous to challenge each and every communal idea publicly on the war footing, to purge this society of this dark element, which communally aligns with the selfish interests of the majority of the people and perpetrates hatred against minorities to realize their cherished ends.

Secularism is also about giving all people an equal opportunity to excel in their lives as per their choice and progressively making effort to end the gap between the rich and the poor. Overall, it endorses the talisman given to the nation by Bapu that 'people must treat all kinds of works and workers with equal respect'. Thus, Bipan Chandra remarks that, 'it is the program, policies, and ideology of a political party that are of critical importance'¹⁴ to analyze whether a party is communal or secular. Therefore, in this section, the programs and policies of the important political parties will be analyzed through reading their manifestos to understand them as a secular or communal party.

These parties have already been analyzed and understood on ideological level by Bipan Chandra in his books¹⁵, which is a great source of inspiration to analyze them on the basis of programs and policies presented by them in the first general elections of India. Thus, a comparative study of the programs and policies of various important parties will be done to analyze their stand on various issues mentioned in their manifestos for the first general elections.¹⁶

To deal with the economic problems facing the country, these parties presented their objectives of Economic Organization. Indian National Congress (INC) and the Kisan Mazdur Praja Party (KMPP) put forward the proposal of mixed

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 15.

¹⁵ Read *Ideology and Politics in Modern India and Essays on Contemporary India* by Bipan Chandra and *India since Independence* written with his co-authors Mridula Mukherjee and Aditya Mukherjee.

¹⁶ To conduct this study, I will fully depend on the last three chapters of the *Asia Guide to the First General Elections*, published by Asia Publishing House in January 1951 and *Election Manifestoes of important parties* compiled by M. Venkatarangaiya in a booklet in 1953, available at NMML.

economy based on controlled capitalism and mixed economy with decentralized industrialists' predominant sector simultaneously. Thus, INC favored the balanced growth of public and private sector both, while keeping a check on the growth of big capitalists. This party was strictly against the monopoly of Indian economy by certain business houses. Instead it developed the program of keeping all the major industries under government control, while giving private players a limited chance to grow, for bringing rapid developments in the country. It also promised to nationalize more and more economic institutions in the future and move the country on the path of socialist economy, once the Indian society is prepared for this transition.¹⁷ KMPP on the other hand talked of mixed economy with the decentralization of predominant sectors of industrialists. Like the INC, it was also not in favor of the growth of big capitalists, instead promoted decentralizing of the business and wealth from the single private owner to the various players at the local level. Akhil Bhartiya Hindu Mahasabha also put forth their objective to establish mixed economy based on controlled capitalism, but did not believe in the possibility of classless society like the Congress, Socialist or Communist Party. Socialist, Communist and United Socialist Organization of India planned to bring about a socialist economy, under which economy would have been fully nationalized and equal distribution of wealth and resources among the people would have been promoted.¹⁸

On the other hand, the Jan Sangh promoted the concept of welfare capitalism, through which it appealed to protect the private property of the existing Maharajas and Zamindars while promoting the growth of big business houses, which was the assertion of monopoly capitalism, under which the necessities of Nation and its wanting people would be decided by the arbitrary decisions of these big private players. It would have assisted the rich to grow richer and restricted the upward mobility of vast majority of poor by giving them the token welfare schemes, while depriving them of real opportunity to develop and share the resources with the upper echelons of the society.

It would have set the major divisive trend in the society, in which the vast

¹⁷ This Nehru spoke in his several speeches while critiquing Socialist and Communist parties in the election campaign in the South India. For this, read the second chapter of this Dissertation.

¹⁸ In developing the theme of this chapter, my inferences from the study conducted on the election campaign in the second chapter of this dissertation will play the central role.

majority of common people would render their service to the wealthy and rich, on terms and conditions set by the latter, as the former would have been fully dependent on their service provider for their livelihood. Under this pattern of economy, growth of democracy would have been unrealistic and a façade, where poor would have been suppressed by the brutal force of the state in the name of jingoistic nationalism to strengthen the command of the big capitalists over economic resources and institutions. And this would certainly lead to the communal politics, because it would have been the only means left to gather support of the people in the name of religion and caste while ignoring the real development programs and schemes. Indeed the same economic trend is visible in the policies of the present government at the center. They have not deviated even an inch from their forefathers, miraculously taking the country backward in the time of reactionary feudal economic system. And the same objective was proudly reiterated by the Hindu Mahasabha in their Manifesto for the first general elections, ‘the objective of Mahasabha is to recreate an old world, a world which cannot have any appeal today. A vote for Mahasabha is a vote for an old world which has vanished and which can never be revived’.¹⁹

These parties had presented in their manifestoes varied approach to deal with the agricultural problems. They have different programs to develop land relations in India. The Congress proposed the abolition of Zamindari with compensation. Socialist, Communist and United Socialist organization of India stood for abolition of Zamindari without compensation. Socialist and KMPP further demanded land for the actual tiller. The Socialist Party further demanded that a single holding of a person should not be more than 30 acres of land. The Communist party asserted the demand to abolish Princely states without compensation. United Socialist organization of India presented their program to vest Zamindari lands in community under which they proposed to fix a minimum holding for a cultivator while vesting the excess in the community. On the other hand, the Manifesto of the Hindu Mahasabha read:

It will not abolish landlordism. It will not interfere with the proprietary interests of the landholders. The Zamindars and the big landlords have nothing to fear from its rule. It will however introduce all other

¹⁹ M. Venkatarangaiya, *Election Manifestos*, Madras, M. Sesachalam & Co., 1951, p. 36.

improvements of a technical and economic character- like co-operative farming, cheap credit, marketing facilities etc. These are all non-controversial. Every party is prepared to go in for these. The essential point is that the Mahasabha will not bring about any changes in the proprietorship of land. It will maintain the status quo.²⁰

Thus, it put forward the sanctity of private property and guaranteed it to its owners by stressing on land to be the proprietary rights of the landholders. It completely and clearly stood for the rights of the Zamindars and Maharajas upholding the ideals of the old system to be maintained. It demanded reasonable compensation when it becomes absolutely essential to take over these rights. Whereas Jan Sangh favored the cause of granting land to the landless and also improving the condition of existing tenants. Thus, they did not favor the cause of the abolition of Zamindari. They never stood with the idea of equality in granting resources and opportunity to the peasants. Instead they were quite satisfied with and promoted the cause of big Zamindars. They never spoke against the Zamindari system because these Zamindars were their financiers in the election. Thus, they wanted to maintain the divide and rule like the British, while ignoring all the necessities of those people who are not of their interest.

All India Scheduled Castes Federation had the most comprehensive program for the development of agriculture. It advocated mechanization of agriculture and realization of river valley projects for irrigation. Thus, the party promoted the idea that: 'The State should supply all the mechanical equipment to the farmer and at a rental to be discovered along with the land revenue'.²¹ It promised the replacement of smallholdings by the large farms, on which collective or co-operative farming could be introduced. It also holds the view to supplement agriculture with cottage industries.²² While dealing with miscellaneous activities related to land, it also proposed compulsory insurance for all state and private employees, where this insurance system was advocated to be nationalized. The party asserted its demand for

²⁰ Ibid., p. 34.

²¹ This quote from the Manifesto of the Scheduled Caste Federation is quoted in *Asia Guide to the First General Elections*, Bombay and Calcutta, November 1951, p. 192, authored and published by Asia Publishing House.

²² Asia Publishing House, *Asia Guide to the First General Elections*, Bombay and Calcutta, November 1951, p. 192.

‘more and more afforestation of the uncultivable land’.²³

The Socialist party also proposed the establishment of Union Land Commission with State Commission, Regular Commission and Village Panchayats based on the principle of active association of peasantry with agrarian production. On the other hand, the Communist party advocated the cancellation of debts and adequate wages to the land workers and United Socialists promised to establish National Council of universal agriculture co-operative, with village as the base unit. Thus, these secular parties presented the comprehensive plans to develop agriculture under which land was given to the tillers, under supervision and protection of the land commissions. Hence the communal parties like Hindu Mahasabha and Jan Sangh promoted the cause of the Zamindars and proposed to safeguard the private property of its owners, which would perpetuate the inequality between rich and poor in our society and aggravated the problem of poverty and unemployment. They had no care about the problems facing the country; instead they wanted to maintain the status quo, which was certainly the path of doom for the newly born Nation.

Industry was one of the most crucial sectors to be developed in order to build the nation at faster rate. Nationalization, controls and industrial relations were the three main areas to be looked at by various parties while proposing their manifestos. On the issue of nationalization of industries all these parties had slightly similar but mostly varying set of opinions. The Indian National Congress stood for state ownership or control of basic industries. The Socialist party advocated public ownership of key industries, credit and insurance. KMPP talked about nationalization of defense and key industries and was opposed to wholesale nationalization of industries. The Communist party asserted to confiscate and nationalize the British capital in India. The Hindu Mahasabha also talked of State ownership and control of all key industries. The All India Scheduled Castes Federation kept expansion of production at the center of their programs and proposed to omit or adopt nationalization accordingly in its Manifesto, which reads:

²³ This quote from the Manifesto of the Scheduled Caste Federation is quoted in *Asia Guide to the First General Elections*, Bombay and Calcutta, November 1951, p. 192, authored and published by Asia Publishing House.

For the purpose of increasing production, the Scheduled Castes Federation will not be bound by any dogma or any pattern. The pattern of industrial enterprise will be matter regulated by the needs of the time and circumstances. Where national undertaking of an industry is possible and essential, the Scheduled Castes Federation will support national undertaking. Where private enterprise is possible and national undertakings not essential, private enterprise will be allowed.²⁴

Thus, this party focused on the need of the country and its people, and promised to take the suitable step as per the demand of the hour. To say in other way it supported the mixed economy like the Congress party but at the same time kept itself away from any set pattern of the economic development. Hence, it kept all its routes open to take the turn, which they felt suitable for the nation at the time. The United Socialist Organization of India stood for socialization of defense, basic and key industries, banking, insurance and others. It also opposed the investment of foreign capital in India.

Deviating from all these proposed resolutions, the Jan Sangh talked about 'planned decentralization of industries and the development of small and medium size industries aiming at regional self-sufficiency as far as possible'.²⁵ They demanded so because in some regions of India like Madhya Bharat, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Rajasthan they had complete support from the economic giants like Princes, Maharajas and big Zamindars.²⁶ Thus, they wanted to have autonomous economic zones in their hands to maintain status quo and assert themselves more stringently and effectively against the center. They had nothing to do with the country as a whole and just wanted to consolidate them in particular regions to bully the government ruling at the center. Hence, they wanted to safeguard and strengthen communal forces in these regions to promote regionalism and divide our country, which would certainly be a death knell for a newly born democracy in the making.

²⁴ This quote from the Manifesto of the Scheduled Castes Federation is quoted in *Asia Guide to the First General Elections*, Bombay and Calcutta, November 1951, p. 191, authored and published by Asia Publishing House.

²⁵ Asia Publishing House, *Asia Guide to the First General Elections*, Bombay and Calcutta, November 1951, p. 185.

²⁶ This data is from the second chapter of this dissertation.

While dealing with the control over distribution of commodities, the Indian National Congress proposed the controlled distribution of commodities in short supply. The Socialist party, Communist party and United Socialist Organization of India favored complete control over the affairs of industries. The Hindu Mahasabha, Jan Sangh and KMPP stood for progressive decontrol. The same reason mentioned above is also relevant here. By progressive decontrol they wanted to keep power in their hands in certain regions in order to regulate the affairs of industries on their own terms.

While dealing with the problems of industrial relations the Congress proposed welfare legislation for labor. The Socialist party advocated for free trade unionism, social security for workers and participation of workers in the control of industry. The Communist party stood for joint production council, recognition of trade union rights and also living wage and social security to the workers. The United Socialist Organization of India also stood for living wage for the workers, equal pay for equal work, and social security for the workers and was also opposed to compulsory arbitration. On the other hand, the Manifesto of Hindu Mahasabha read:

The Mahasabha industrial policy consists in the state-ownership and control of key and defense industries and in leaving all other industries to private enterprise. It will encourage cottage industries. It guarantees security of employment and minimum wages to workers. It has no specific measure in view in regard to trade and commerce, banking credit and currency, which it undertakes to regulate in the best interests of the nation.²⁷

Thus, they promoted private enterprises to take major role in the process of economic development and had no specific policies for the finance sector. Instead of formulating their economic policies they depended completely on the national interest, which was the biggest danger for the nation. For example, we can see the economic policies of any fascist government, in which they promote their dictatorial ideas to fulfill their own objectives under the garb of nationalism. It also talked about

²⁷ M. Venkatarangaiya, *Election Manifestos*, Madras, M. Sesachalam & Co., 1951, p. 34.

equitable distribution of profits between workers and employers without detriment to the cause of consumers. It also talked about the security of employment and minimum wages.

The Jan Sangh also talked about the guaranteeing of minimum wage and social insurance for the workers. On this, apart from secular parties, communal parties like Jan Sangh and Hindu Mahasabha also talked about the welfare measures for the workers as their inherent motives were not dependent on their relations with the welfare of the labor class but on the workers' large share of the electorate. They were also indifferent to this issue because they knew their position in the Indian polity and had no plan for the nation as a whole. They only wanted to make themselves dominant in certain areas to put forward their interests and agendas as pressure groups. Their approach on various issues was contradictory, which cannot be offered in the same plate. They talked about welfare capitalism, welfare measures and social security for laborers and sanctity of private property in the same breath.

There were several political problems, which were to be dealt by these political parties. Most of them accepted the secular character of the State. While Hindu Mahasabha advocated for a truly democratic Hindu State. The Manifesto of the party explained, 'the Mahasabha will use the state machine for amending the constitution so that it may be in consonance with the tradition and culture of the land and make Bharat a truly democratic Hindu State'.²⁸ Thus, they were not happy with the secular constitution of India formed by the committee of leaders like Nehru, Ambedkar, Patel and others; and wanted to inject communal tradition and culture in it, by utilizing the power of the State. Hence, it shows, they had no respect for the democratic values and wanted to create an authoritarian state that imposes its will on the people with force, without taking any cognizance the general will of the people.

They also raised a self-exposing question; 'in a state which includes millions of non-Hindus is there a possibility of creating a Hindu State which is at the same time democratic?'²⁹ This question was seminal in a sense that it exposes their objective of establishing "commucracy" in place of democracy in India. Thus, Nehru

²⁸ M. Venkatarangaiya, *Election Manifestos*, Madras, M. Sesachalam & Co., 1951, p. 33.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

in several of his election speeches questioned how these communal parties could talk of civil liberty and democracy, since their ideologies and principles were completely against these ideals. Hence, they had no right to deceive people by enumerating these principles.³⁰

In case of the formation of linguistic provinces all parties were in its favor but with slight variations. The Congress party was in favor, subject to economic and administrative consideration. The Socialist party was in favor, but demanded it to be consistent with geographical contiguity and economic viability. The Communist party was in favor with right of self-determination. The Hindu Mahasabha was in favor of, subject to needs of defense, area population, and economic stability, as well as proper rehabilitation of refugees.

Though the Congress tried to avoid this through their election campaign made by Jawaharlal Nehru, putting forward the economic and administrative problems to be solved first, however, it looked like the only possibility that materialized in later years. The formation of States on the linguistic basis was the first setback to the legacy of the freedom struggle, to uphold the unity and composite culture of the Country with peaceful co-existence, in independent India. Separating people in the administrative linguistic units was a form of communalism promoted, which shows its ugly face at various occasions in different parts of the country.

While dealing with the problems of the minority the Congress party upheld the provisions provided in the Constitution of India. The Socialist party demanded full freedom regarding the practice of language, script and culture. The Communist party advocated full freedom to minorities. The Hindu Mahasabha proposed to have just and equal treatment to minorities who will be loyal to India. This was sheer denigration of the minorities to the position of second grade citizens of India: who would have to prove their loyalty to the Indian State to get equal treatment from them, and where the statesmen would decide the content and form of their loyalty, on which these minorities neither had any say nor control. Thus, their emotions and interests were to be suppressed by the arbitrary decisions and impositions by the majority, i.e.

³⁰ This is taken from Nehru's election speech at Bhopal mentioned in the second chapter of this dissertation.

the Hindus. Hence, communalism was clearly evident in their programs and policies.

Referring to the refugee problem, the Congress party stressed the present efforts to be continued. The Socialist party appealed to give this problem the first priority. The Communist party promised to give aid to the refugees. KMPP advocated for the present effort to be continued more rationally. The United Socialist asked for their settlement on land of Muslim immigrants and reclaimed waste. Whereas the Hindu Mahasabha and Jan Sangh were much more engrossed in this problem to prove their loyalty to the Hindus, as the maximum number of refugees were of this community. The Hindu Mahasabha gave first priority to the problem and proposed to levy a special tax if necessary for the purpose.³¹ The Jan Sangh advocated for their rehabilitation by using untapped economic resources of West Bengal, along with the efforts that were already carried out. The survey of its Manifesto done by the Asia Publishing House explained it as:

Rehabilitation of the refugees will be integrated with the untapped economic resources of West Bengal in such a way as will benefit the refugees as well as the present residents in the State. Suitable compensation will be demanded of Pakistan in respect of properties left by Hindus and others who have migrated to India. Adequate financial assistance will be provided by the Center and the State of West Bengal for refugee rehabilitation.³²

Thus, they gave special attention to the refugee problem and also demanded compensation for the properties left by migrated Hindus in Pakistan, but failed to justify their principle of reciprocity, as they did not talk about just adjustments being made between the properties left of the Muslims in India and Hindus in Pakistan by putting mutual effort displaying understanding of brotherhood.

While looking at the backwardness of Scheduled Castes and Tribes, the Congress promised them their social uplift. The Socialist party paid more attention to

³¹ M. Venkatarangaiya, *Election Manifestos*, Madras, M. Sesachalam & Co., 1951, p. 34.

³² Asia Publishing House, *Asia Guide to the First General Elections*, Bombay and Calcutta, November 1951, p. 186.

their problems and advocated to provide them special facilities for their economic and educational advance. It promised to give administrative autonomy to Tribal Regions. The KMPP committed to give urgent attention to their uplift. The Communist party proposed assistance to backward communities and regional autonomy to Tribal people. All India Scheduled Castes Federation asserted their commitment to fight for the raising of the backward classes, the untouchables and the tribal people both in the matter of education and services, as it was the single most dominant objective of the party. The Hindu Mahasabha said to give special attention to their development. The Jan Sang remained quiet on the issue, as it was evident from their other programs that they want to maintain perpetual inequality, which would help them in creating and promoting communal tensions on caste and class lines.

Issues related to women were dealt only in the manifestos of secular parties. The Congress party stood for the removal of their social and other disabilities. The Socialist party took their problems more seriously and advocated equal pay for equal work, reservation of places in professions and a civil code granting equal rights. The Communist party also promised them complete removal of their social and economic disabilities and equal wages for equal work. Upholders of 'Manu Code' remained quiet on the issue, as they were entrenched in the feudal times where emotions and interests of women were suppressed by all assertive patriarchal codes and its devoted practice by women with full religiosity attached to it. They wanted to maintain these practices imposed on women on that they had no control, nor had any way out to protest against their servitude.

Regarding education, the secular parties make more or less similar promises. The Congress party stressed to put emphasis on basic education. The Socialist party advocated having free primary education to develop the country on the path to attain universal literacy. The KMPP talked about basic education and mass literacy. The Communist party asserted their demand for free and compulsory primary education. The United Socialists added in this the provisions of employment for all educated. The Hindu Mahasabha promised in their Manifesto to make primary education compulsory and free, but with certain absurd imposition on the curriculum. They

asserted to provide moral education based on Hindutva.³³ Whereas, it's cousin Jan Sangh was committed to spread the highest traditions of 'Bhartiya Sanskriti'. Thus, the Hindu Mahasabha and the Jan Sangh were head bent to carry the country back in time to the 'Gurudakshina system' of 'Gurukul education', where only privileged few were admitted. While secular parties were committed to have progressive and compulsory primary education for all, these communal parties like Hindu Mahasabha and Jan Sangh were deliberately proposing communal and caste ridden education system of earlier times to hinder the economic, social and cultural progress of the Country and its countrymen.

Foreign policy was one of the most important issues dealt in the manifestos of all the parties in detail. On the issue of attitude towards the Commonwealth, the Congress party cleared its stand to continue as a member of the Commonwealth, whereas all other parties advocated withdrawing from the Commonwealth. The Socialist, United Socialists and the Communist party advocated withdrawal or break from the Commonwealth to make India completely free to exercise their universal right of self-determination. The Communist party also opposed India's continued presence in the Commonwealth because its head capitalist Britain was vertically opposed to the principles of communism in the world politics.

On the other hand, the Hindu Mahasabha rejected India's continued presence in the Commonwealth to prove them bigger nationalists than others. They tried to prove this through expressing dislike towards the British, with whom they shared very friendly and cordial relations before independence. They had no role in the freedom struggle of India. Thus, they also must not have any say in deciding either India will remain the part of Commonwealth or not. If these communalists had been at the helm of affairs of Indian politics before independence, then India would neither have been independent nor seen these democratic elections, as they were loyal to British. Hence, they would have certainly established a Dominion State as proposed by the British and enjoyed the exploits sharing with the British, while keeping the remaining populace colonized to serve both the British and them.

³³ M. Venkatarangaiya, *Election Manifestos*, Madras, M. Sesachalam & Co., 1951, p. 35.

While referring to Indo-Pakistan relations all secular parties stood for friendly relations with Pakistan, while communal parties wanted to have the policy of reciprocity to govern the relationship. The Congress party promised to make continued effort for friendly relations. The Communist party also advocated for non-aggression pact to be signed between both of these countries. The All India Scheduled Castes Federation suggested accepting Partition as a settled fact. Whereas, Jan Sangh clamored for the idea of united India, the founder of this organization, Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, was the member of the Hindu Mahasabha at the time of Partition, and this organization was in support of Partition of India.³⁴ And now in their election manifesto they are making claims to regain the 'Akhand Hindutan' through reuniting India and Pakistan, if not possible through constitutional means then through war.³⁵ It was against the appeasement of Pakistan. It always presented the threat of Muslim communalism in Pakistan to the Hindus residing there to aggravate the Hindu communalism in India through creating hatred against the minority. This was all done to fan the communal passions in majority Hindus to strengthen its political positions.

Kashmir issue was burning then as it is now. The Congress party held valid the accession of Kashmir to Indian Union. It advocated for its future to be decided through a plebiscite held under the Kashmir Constituent Assembly of that time. Apart from above mentioned points the Socialist party rejected arbitration by United Nations Organizations (UNO). While rejecting UNO's arbitration, the Communist party of India asserted to remove the issue from UNO and advocated for its peaceful settlement through self-determination of its people. The United Socialists stood for settling the problem independent of UNO. The Scheduled Castes Federation advocated Partition as a peaceful solution for the issue. The Hindu Mahasabha, while holding present accession valid, rejected UNO's arbitration on the issue. The Jan Sangh appealed for withdrawal of the aggressor and the reference to UNO as a preliminary for the settlement of the problem.

All the secular parties at that time were in support of the establishment of quasi-federal state in India and even Socialists and the Communists had promised to decentralize power from the center to create fully federal system of states in India.

³⁴ Nehru's election Campaign Speech at Nagpur mentioned in the Second Chapter of this Dissertation.

³⁵ M. Venkatarangaiya, *Election Manifestos*, Madras, M. Sesachalam & Co., 1951, p. 32.

Thus, they were progressively looking for more and more autonomy given to the States to have the power of self-determination to choose their course of development, while cohesively existing with other States of the Country. While all this, the leaders of Mahasabha were thinking in the opposite direction, which is evident from the reading of its Manifesto:

The Mahasabha will also create a highly centralized unitary state in the place of the present quasi-federal state. It is prepared to divide the Country on a linguistic basis but only subject to certain conditions and the provinces created will not be autonomous.³⁶

Thus, the Mahasabha and the Jan Sangh were willing to have centralized power in their hands to limit the growth of democracy in India. They did not want to have diverse players contributing in the decision making process of the Country. They also were not in favor of granting equal status to non-Hindus residing in this Country. They had huge problem with the legacy of the freedom movement to be carried forward as they had no contribution in that struggle. Thus, they were anxious to change the secular constitution of India by the use of state power. Overall, they had their central objective to impose their Hindutva project on the people of this Country, and that was not possible without quashing the secular legacy of the freedom struggle and its secular child, the Constitution of India. Thus, they openly put this in their Manifestos and campaigned to gain people's support to establish a Hindu Communal State in India. Hence, the contest among secular and communal ideas, policies and programs were central attraction of the first General elections of India. Therefore, it would be wise to analyze the results of this election to see the final position of Communalism vis-à-vis Secularism.

Looking through Election Results

An analysis of the results would give us an understanding of the varied political landscape of the Country. It makes us aware about the people's choice in the elections. Though the policies and programs of the Congress were liked all over the country, however, other parties were also liked in their strong belts. These strong belts

³⁶ M. Venkatarangaiya, *Election Manifestos*, Madras, M. Sesachalam & Co., 1951, p. 32.

of other parties must be looked at to find, whether these other parties were secular or communal parties. Overall, it will help to establish the extent of victory of Secularism over Communalism. To say in other words, it would help to analyze the contribution of all the secular forces together in quelling the dangerous communal waves flowing in the country, which was aggravated by the communal parties. In sum, under this theme, it will be comprehensively analyzed to find an answer to the question, whether this election was a mandate for Secularism or Communalism?

Evaluating the comparative strength of parties in the House of the People would help us understand, the mood, character and nature of the electorate and their mandate, due to varying reasons in different regions of the Country. This will also help to analyze the question, which party's policies and programs, got maximum support in general or were accepted by the people in a specific region in particular; and why?

In the first General Elections, the total members for House of the People were 499 out of which 489 were elected. None of the parties contested all these seats. Even Congress contested only 472 seats.³⁷ Out of 10 nominated members 6 was from Jammu and Kashmir, 1 from Andaman and Nicobar, 1 from Assam Tribes and 2 were from Anglo Indian community. Total number of electors on rolls was 173,213,635 and the total number of electors in the contested elections was 171,747,300. This election also had several 2 and 3 member constituencies.

Now, when we look at the results of the general elections to the House of the People³⁸, then we find that the Congress party won in almost all parts of the Country. This party won majority with total 364 seats and got polled approximately 72 million votes, which was 45 percent of the total vote polled. The Communist party of India contested 49 and won 16 seats, which were located in the coastal regions of South, Southeast, East and Northeast India, that includes Madras (8 seats) in the South to Orissa (1 seat) and West Bengal (5 seats) in the East and Tripura(2 seats) in the Northeast. Why they won in the coastal regions only is a point to be explored. This

³⁷ Election Commission, *Election Commission Report of first General Election in India, 1951-52*, Vol. 2 (New Delhi: The Government of India Press, 1955), p. 94.

³⁸ This study of results of the General Elections to the House of the People, 1951-52 will fully depend on my study of the Map given in the Election Commission report, Vol. 1.

Party got approximately 8 million votes, which was 4 percent of the total vote polled. The KMPP won total 9 seats, of which 6 were in Madras, 1 in Mysore, 1 in Madhya Pradesh and 1 at Delhi. The founder of the party, J. B. Kriplani won from New Delhi, a parliamentary constituency out of 3 seats of Delhi. This party got approximately 12 million votes, which was 6 percent of the total vote polled. The Socialist party won 12 seats, of which Bihar (3), Uttar Pradesh (2), Manipur (1), Assam (1), Madras (2), Hyderabad (1), Orissa (1) and Madhya Pradesh (1). This party got approximately 18 million votes, which was 11 percent of the total vote polled. This party also had the presence in almost all parts of the Country.

A communal party, Jan Sangh, won only 3 seats of which Midnapore and Southeast Calcutta were in West Bengal and Chittor in Rajasthan. This party got approximately 6 million votes, which was 3 percent of the total vote polled. They were present in almost all parts of the Country, but were outplayed by the people in the elections. This election also witnessed the considerable number of Independent candidates or candidates from other small parties elected for the House of the People. They were total 85 in number, who polled approximately 54 million votes, which was 31 percent of the total vote polled. Among these independents many were former members of the Congress party and the erstwhile Princes and Maharajas raised many others.³⁹ This huge chunk of votes shared by them will be more clearly analyzed and understood while looking at the results of the State Assembly elections.

When we look at the elected members then the Communist party of India was the second largest party. Whereas taking the share of votes polled for a particular party, the Socialist party was the second largest party followed by the KMPP, leaving the Communist party to be settled at the fourth position. Whatever may be their position in the election results, they all stood for the principle of secularism. They were all progressive in their approach, willing to meet the basic necessities of the people through tackling various day-to-day life problems facing them. They only varied in their methods and approach to solve these problems, which was natural, as different leaders could have different ideas to solve the same type of problems, while

³⁹ My inferences from the speeches made by Jawaharlal Nehru in the Election Campaign for the First General Elections.

keeping their center fixed at the core values of secularism, such as unity and peaceful co-existence among co-inhabitants.⁴⁰

Secularism or Communalism

Seeing this way, total percentage of votes polled for Secularism was approx. 100 million, which accumulates to 66 percent of the total votes polled. Mentioning communal parties like Jan Sang (3 seats), Hindu Mahasabha (4) and the Ram Rajya Parishad (3) looks irrelevant here, as they got total 10 seats sharing only 6 percent of the total votes. And they were down to this mark while contesting in more than half the total number of constituencies for House of the People. Among these, Jan Sangh alone contested 93 seats and won only 3.⁴¹ Thus, the results for House of the People shows that, the policies and programs of the communal parties were completely rejected by the people, barring few pockets of the country dominated by the erstwhile Princes and Maharajas such as Orissa, Rajasthan, Madhya Bharat, and so on.

The former Maharajas of princely states dominated all the Communal strongholds of Central and western India, including Orissa. They promoted feudal system and reactionary laws to maintain their status quo, as the principles of democracy were a death knell for them. Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and West Bengal were communalized because these states have had the largest mix of Hindu and Muslim population, who were polarized, faithless and apprehensive of each other due to prevailing situation of recent past of partition and violence, and present controversy about the Hindu Code Bill. Punjab region was polarized maximally due to the maximum partition violence there. And communal parties continuously aggravated this situation through their propaganda. This was the broad framework in which the first general election was held.

These communal groups in various regions of India had formed some regional communal parties like Akali Party in Punjab, Ganatantra Parishad in Orissa and Jharkhand, which won considerable number of seats in the State Assembly Elections. Their success can be studied in comparison with the success of secular parties in the

⁴⁰ My inferences are generated from the study of second chapter written in this dissertation.

⁴¹ Election Commission, *Election Commission Report of first General Election in India, 1951-52*, Vol. 2 (New Delhi: The Government of India Press, 1955), p. 94.

particular state to see, whether the study of their results becomes relevant in comparison to the secular parties or not? Then the national and regional, both types of communal parties taken together with their results at center and state level combined can be compared with the combined results of all the secular parties to establish the exact mandate of the electorate for Secularism against the vile of Communalism. Thus, to bring out this outcome in the first general elections overall, looking at the manifestos of all the regional parties and State Assembly election results becomes a necessity to demarcate them as secular or communal parties while establishing the extent of acceptance of policies and programs of these parties. Hence, this remains to be explored in my next venture of research work. But as per my recent study of the sources, it is pretty much clear that; more than two third mandates was for the secular parties contesting the first General Elections.

Therefore, the most remarkable trend set by this election was the huge mandate for secularism, which was either represented by the Congress or other secular parties like Communist and Socialist. At whatever places the Congress lost, it was mainly because people accepted the radical ideas of other secular parties to promote Secularism and bring radical social change through rapid economic progress, barring few pockets where reactionary Maharajas were still dominant promoting their feudal system. Thus, after this election, the communal parties were outplayed from the political scene; however, they kept themselves alive at the grass-roots level through various kinds of cultural activities and creating their network of educational institutions.

The first general election was a big blow to these communal parties that ruined them off their legitimacy to play a part in India's progress. To say in other words, their policies and programs were taken by the people as, divisive, reactionary and regressive after they were exposed in the first general election campaign, by secular leaders, especially Nehru. They could not lift their head until Babri Masjid - Ram Janambhumi incident of 1990s that led to the massive polarization of Hindus, which made Bhatiya Janata Party (BJP) the single major party in the 11th, 12th, and 13th general elections of India held in 1996, 1998, and 1999 respectively. And in the 16th general election they won a majority with 282 seats out of 543 seats for the House of the People, obtaining 31.34 percent of the total vote polled.

BJP getting 31 percent of the total vote caste is the lowest share of votes by a party that won majority, in the electoral history of India. This is the irony of Indian democracy today that the opinion of 69 percent of its voters is marginalized in support of the 31 percent. And the major share of this 31 percent is the flowing votes of dissatisfied people with the secular parties or the people swayed away in the false rhetoric of campaign, laden with farce developmental promises, which is known in popular terms as 'Jumlebaji'.

The BJP winning a majority is not a spontaneous event, but the result of a long process of communalization of our society, by the spread of communal ideologies and ideas, through the means of education and popular culture. This was not the result of a single general election, but the culmination of a long drawn ideological process, which started in the last century, and grew structurally and organizationally with the advent of the RSS and the Hindu Mahasabha, which spread the venomous idea of 'Hindu Nation' through creating false consciousness in the minds of the people that Hindu culture and civilization is in danger from the masquerading foreign cultures. Thus, their whole philosophy of existence is concentrated on creating hatred against minority communities living in our country.

These organizations survive by creating hate among majority and minority communities. They follow a reactionary, feudal, outdated and divisive policy that breaks the unity of our nation and makes her weak. The same divisive policies were followed by the British rule in India to keep us divided and weak, to rule over us. The same is done by these communal parties, which will certainly lead to the crisis situation in our Country. They are present in our society in hydra headed forms, who all have complete similarities in their policies and programs. Thus, they are seen by scholars as sister organizations. The most visible among them are Vishwa Hindu Parisad, Hindu Mahasabha, Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh, Bajrang Dal and Shiv Sena.

The election results of 2014 general election is a significant event, which shows that these communal parties have taken a long stride ahead than their positions in the earlier decades, before and after independence. It raised several questions, if

this ideology was so important as it is now, what was the reason behind this remaining negligible or playing the peripheral role in the Indian politics, either before independence or after it. In fact, they had very little organizational existence before independence and also had played no role in the freedom struggle against imperialism.

Though the tall leadership of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, including other secular parties and their leaders, suppressed these communal wings, but their ideology still remain alive that played venomous and organized role at the grass root level of politics, which resulted in the Partition and bloodshed. Thus, the independence of India accompanied with it a big communal outbreak that helped communal parties in strengthening themselves feeding on each other. They kept growing organizationally.⁴² They planned and murdered Mahatma Gandhi and faced a ban on their organization till the first general election. Their ban was lifted respecting the principles of democracy, which proved to be the biggest fault line in the history of India.

The partition provided a fertile ground for Hindu communalism to grow rapidly in our country, spewing venom against Muslims and Pakistan. They tried all their means available to grow their organizational base, putting all possible effort to unify majority Hindus under their banner. They were successful in more than one ways. They tried all means to break the Congress into progressive and conservative groups. Jawaharlal Nehru suppressed this communal faction in the Congress, which is evident in the removal of Purushottam Das Tandon from the post of President.

Therefore, Bipan Chandra argued that, Nehru could not fight communalism on its ideological level. There was no countrywide movement against communalism after independence, similar to the scale of one launched by Gandhi against the imperialist state. As per my research, I would not buy these conclusions. The first general election campaign by Jawaharlal Nehru looked per se a nation-wide war against communalism, in which in almost every speech Nehru spoke about it at considerable length. He attacked their method, policy and program in full. This effort of his also

⁴² Look at *Essays on Contemporary India*, Har-Anand Publications, New Delhi, p. 199, written by Bipan Chandra.

yielded him and his party dividends par expectations. For example, in the regions of Orissa and Punjab, Gantantra Parishad (31 out of 140) and The Akali Party won considerable number of seats in the State Assembly elections respectively, not only restricting the Congress Party from sweeping the polls, but also reducing it to a minority party in the State Legislatures. However, in the same region the Congress Party swept the polls for the House of the people.⁴³ Thus, a clear mandate to the Congress Party for House of the People in these regions was exclusively for Nehru to be the Prime Minister of this country. His election campaign had a huge impact on the people, who convinced by the words of Nehru, even rejected the policies and programs of communal parties in their strongholds to support the ideas of secularism. Hence, the countrywide massive campaign by Nehru to establish the principles of Secularism and Democracy in the first General election was an ideological war against the vile of Communalism.

However, it may be right to argue that, Communalism was countered only at theoretical level and at practical level it was left unchallenged. Because Nehru believed that with the advance of logical and rational thinking, Communalism will wane per se. Thus, Communal parties kept discovering new practical means to enter into the lives of the people through Prabhat Pherie, Shakha, through organizing Kusti competition, Ram Leela and other cultural events. These are so popular because it has direct connections with the day-to-day lives and practice of the people. The most important of all, they have opened thousands of schools at primary and higher secondary levels to capture the young minds to give them communal education tainted with religious principles. These institutions are Vidya Mandir, Saraswati Vidya Mandir, DAV Public Schools and others. Thus, this capturing of practical ground to enter into the lives of the people through indirect and creative means today resulted into a communal party sweeping the General Elections.

Therefore, it is necessary to challenge these communal parties in their practical grounds from where they have transformed the mandate in such a fashion, that it looks a dream of a maniac or an insane person witnessing the results of the first

⁴³ This study of results of the State Assembly Elections, 1951-52 will fully depend on my study of the Maps given in the Election Commission report, Vol. 1.

General Elections transforming into reality. Secular people and parties will have to devise creative means and methods to challenge and expose these communal tactics practically in the public domain. They must devise means, which directly relates with the daily lives of the people and catches their imagination with the least effort. Hence, challenging them in their practice grounds through creative secular means is the only way out to drive the country out of the communal fire.

CONCLUSION

One of the major challenges in front of the Indian Government after independence was to conduct the general elections as soon as possible, to establish a full-fledged representative government. To achieve this, the prominent leaders had debated vigorously in the Constituent Assembly of India to formulate ideas and structures of the elections and the government both. The Constitution of India provided the legal framework for the elections to be conducted. This election presented a huge challenge in front of the election commission of India, as it had to manage the complex process of preparation, conduction and results of the elections.

The first general elections of India completed the first stage of the transition to democracy in India. It witnessed the exercise of universal adult suffrage given to all males and females above 21 years of age, which was a clear exhibition of government's faith reposed in the people of India, of which more than 80 percent were illiterate. Never before had such a vast electorate gone to the polls. Therefore, it gained worldwide attention and appreciation.

The successful completion of the general elections in India constituted an important landmark in the history of democracy. The public enthusiasm and satisfaction evoked by these elections gave a robust foundation to the future of the democratic life in India. Free and fair conduct of these elections was one of the most successful experiments carried out in the history of elections, which reposed public faith in the verdict of the ballot box. Nehru as the Prime Minister played a huge role in controlling corruption and misconduct in elections through making administrative arrangements and giving direct warning to the government officials to abstain from any wrongdoing. And this earned faith of the people in the democratic process and values was the most notable achievement of these elections that set high standards for future elections to follow.

It began the process of a democratic nation in the making, in consonance with the values enshrined in the Constitution of India. It was also the first litmus test for the secular and democratic values of the Constitution, and also proved to be the best medium for promulgation of its principles and ideas. It was this election that gave people of India

the wonderful experience of being part of a single nation, as the whole of the country was going together for polls for the first time. It was also a remarkable event, for hundreds of Princely States were taking part in these elections, which earlier had followed their independent methods of election or selection of their Maharajas. Thus, this election became the unifying force among diverse cultural, traditional and political units to make it one into a single politically integrated and strong nation.

For the satisfactory completion of this formidable task of these elections, the greatest credit goes to the millions of voters who realized that it was their right as also their duty to participate in the elections by exercising their franchise. They earned worldwide admiration by the enthusiasm that they displayed during the elections and the orderly and peaceful manner in which they went to the polls. At several places this election was celebrated like a festive occasion, in which men and women both got dressed into colorful dresses and went to cast their votes singing and dancing on the beats of drum. This was the popular exhibition of the exuberance coming into the lives of the people from the attainment of freedom.

Arranging for the machinery was a huge challenge in front of the government. They had to create a system to be fit for the millions of illiterate voters. Inadequate transport and communication challenges also posed significant problems to be tackled by the government. Preparation of the roles, ballot papers and ballot boxes were some other significant tasks to be completed within the fixed time period. The management of this election also needed a huge number of qualified service personnel to carry out the various responsibilities of polling agents, polling officers, returning officers, and so on. This long and complex process of these elections could not have been a success without proper security arrangements. For this a huge contingent of police and officers were trained to maintain law and order during the full process of the election. All these challenges were tackled with spirit and enthusiasm that resulted into the successful completion of the elections, for which India and its people earned a lot of praise from the people of eminence, from inside and outside India both.

The government servants had a difficult and vital role to perform. They faced the difficulties and hardships inherent in such a vast administrative undertaking with commendable public spirit. By their conduct during the elections, they had helped in

consolidating the healthy tradition that public servants must perform their duties in an entirely independent and non-partisan manner in connection with elections. By doing so, they not only earned the gratitude of the nation, but made their own task smoother for the future as well. The police who had no direct part to play in the elections had all the same a very onerous duty to discharge. They had to maintain perfect law and order not only during the polling but also before and after polling. That they went through this severe test successfully reflects greatly on their morale and organization.

The political parties and the candidates contributed in no small measure to the success of the experiment. Diversity in their campaigns' method and means made this election extremely colorful and attractive. Differing policy platforms through the medium of manifestos and speeches presented to the electorate were the central attraction of this election, from which followed their policies and programs that engaged the attention of the larger section of the society. They had also played a leading role in engaging with the electorate to make them understand the value of their votes. Without them it was not possible to bring such a huge number of people to cast their votes. The candidates were mostly law-abiding and committed no crimes or mischiefs, barring few sporadic happenings.

Among all these, the contribution of the Congress party was the most notable. It was the ruling party then, and carried out its responsibilities with full accountability. It had the largest organizational set up running deep into the provinces down to the village level. It also had the best reputation among the general public, as it was the lone successor of the freedom movement of India. It also managed to have the maximum amount of money in the form of donations from the big business houses and the people to carry out the process of elections. The Congress party swept this election with full majority and the credit for this goes to its lead campaigner Jawaharlal Nehru.

The whirlwind campaign of Nehru dwarfed all other parties and leaders, which looked feeble in front of his efforts. The number of places he visited in his campaign still lies unsurpassed, contradictory to the claims by the current Prime Minister today. He visited almost all the major towns of India and gave hundreds of speeches promoting the concept of democracy and secularism. He vehemently condemned communal parties and their divisive ideas. He not only campaigned to win elections for his party but also

campaigned to make people aware about their rights and duties. He was the sole attraction of the election; to catch a glimpse of him people flocked like a herd of cattle.

The first General Elections were the battleground for the ideas of Secularism and Communalism. If the freedom movement and its successful fruition in the form of independence was the legacy for the secular parties, then the partition of India on communal lines was a catalyzing force for the communal parties to take over the free and diverse state of India. All the people harassed by the divisive politics of the colonial government and had taken part in the anti-imperialist struggle supported one secular group or the other. And all the loyalists of the colonial government who had enjoyed all sorts of privileges were part and parcel of the communal groups.

These communal people such as erstwhile Princes, Maharajas and many Zamindars tried to maintain the status quo, to enjoy the same status and privileges, as they had during the colonial period. They tried all possible tactics and policies to keep people divided and weak to rule them. They clearly put their objectives in the election campaign to reestablish the old order to sustain their power and sovereignty. They were opposed to the secular constitution of India as it was detrimental to their prosperity and interests. They were also against the establishment of the democratic state and its institutions, as it would have robbed them of their privileged position while making them liable to the laws of the land like any other citizen of this country.

This election was also known for its huge mandate for the ideas of secularism, which carried the message of unity and equality and promoted the concept of a cooperative commonwealth. This whopping mandate to form a democratic and secular government set the process of nation building apace. The Congress party won almost in all parts of the Country. Wherever it lost, other secular parties like Socialists, the Communists, KMPP and United Socialist parties tended to win a major share of the seats. Thus, in the first general elections, the people in all parts of the country accepted the ideas of secularism.

Thus, the first general election report reiterates the success of this election in these words:

Looking back on what has been achieved during the first general elections in India, it can be confidently claimed that the elections were free and fair. This has been acknowledged universally and the country has taken its due place amongst the democratic nations of the world.¹

¹Election Commission, *Election Commission Report of first General Election in India, 1951-52*, Vol. 2 (New Delhi: The Government of India Press, 1955), p. 208.

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