

**Bharatiya Janata Party: A Study of the
Socio-Economic Background of its
Lok Sabha MPs (1980-91)**

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BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY

**A STUDY OF THE SOCIO - ECONOMIC
BACKGROUND**

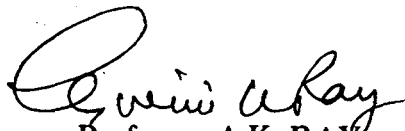
OF ITS LOK SABHA MP's (1980-91)




DECLARATION

This is to certify that this dissertation entitled, "BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY :- A STUDY OF THE SOCIO ECONOMIC BACKGROUND OF ITS LOK SABHA MPs (1980-91), submitted by PANKAJ BHATTARAI in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the DEGREE OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY, has not been previously submitted for any degree in this or any other university. This is her original work.

We recommend this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.


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PREFACE

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is a relatively new party in the Indian political arena. It was formed on 5th April, 1980 and by 1991, it had emerged as the main opposition party; next only to the Congress party. The BJP is now being portrayed by its party leaders as a party waiting to assume power at the centre and a section of the media concurs with this assessment. At this point, it seems imperative to assess the BJP and its leadership in order to understand the party's approach on the various important issues and the kind of government it is going to provide if they come to power.

The present dissertation seeks to analyse the BJP's programmatic concerns, its ideological base and socio-political linkages, electoral performance, formal and informal organisational structure, socio-economic base and the method adopted for selection of candidates for election, which together give a complete picture of the party. This study seeks to apply the elitist approach to study of leadership and organisation to analyse the BJP legislative elites and party. The analysis is based on data collected through primary as well as secondary sources.

The introductory chapter of this study includes a review of elite leadership and party studies as well as its critique by democratic theorists. Chapter I provides a review of works on elites in the Indian context which is a

mixture of tradition and modernity. These two chapters together seek to throw up a frame work for analysis of the BJP elites and party. In chapter II, a study of the BJP's origin has been made with specific reference to its ideological and political predecessors namely, Hindu Mahasabha, Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (RSS), Jana Sangh and Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP). In the light of this study, the BJP's policies are analysed in chapter III to find out the extent to which they are continuing the policies and programmes of their ideological predecessors and the changes that have been effected. A study of the electoral, political and ideological evolution of the party from its origin in 1980 to the present, and its stance on various crucial issues and party policies have also been examined in this chapter, along with emerging trends in party leadership. Chapter IV forms a vital part of the dissertation. In this chapter, an attempt has been made to study the socio-economic base of the BJP legislative elites and the constituency which the BJP actually seeks to represent. In the conclusion, the party leadership and organisation has been analysed, keeping in view the various elite studies reviewed and the composition of party MPs.

I hope that this study would make a positive contribution in understanding the party and help in making an objective assessment of its policies and programmes.

I am deeply indebted to my guide Prof. C.P. Bhambri for his guidance and kind help. I also want to acknowledge the support extended by my family. However I am solely responsible for any defects left in the study.

New Delhi

Bhattacharai.
Ms. Pankaj Bhattacharai.

INTRODUCTION

ELITE LEADERSHIP STUDIES AND DEMOCRATIC THEORY

One of the most debated question is whether a government can be established that will achieve rule by the people based on consent and political equality?

The first answer to this question is the establishment of the majority rule wherein all policy conflicts are settled by the majority of citizens through their representatives who are elected by direct or indirect elections. Legal and constitutional protection of the basic rights of individuals further ensures free consent.

The second answer is in the negative. Such a government cannot be established, as all political systems whatever form they belong to are ruled by the elites. Oligarchy is inevitable. Among the causes of political inequality are social arrangements, individual characteristics and in representative governments, the very process of representation.

The third answer incorporates both elitist and democratic theory but adopts a simple terminological distinction from the above answers. In this theory, the term democracy is reserved exclusively for an ideal state of affairs.

The actual systems that appear to approach the ideal state of affair more closely along some dimensions are polyarchies. The polyarchies also, however, fall short of democracy by a significant margin but it offers ground for believing that the gap can be narrowed.¹

Elite Leadership

To most sociological writers, leadership is the exercise of the power of influence in social collectivity such as groups organization, community or nation. This power may be focussed on any of the following three related and general functions :

- (a) establishing goals purposes or objectives of collectivity;
- (b) creating the structures through which the purposes will be fulfilled;
- (c) maintaining and enhancing these structures.(2)

Sociological studies have emphasised the last function. “Thus most theories of leadership are conservative in that they are addressed to the maintenance of the social system rather than to change.”³ The social system is programmed through leadership. The understanding of the leadership, therefore, helps us to understand the social system.

One of the structure that has been the focus of many elite leadership studies is the political party. Maurice Duverger says, “Political party is an

organization of like minded people who struggling through constitutional means, aim to capture power”⁴ G. Sartori feels that “parties represent people’s aspirations, class and multiple group interests and aim to harmonise these in their policies”⁵ Political parties can be studied from four perspectives, viz;

- (a) Organisational : Having all the negative and positive attributes of organisation.
- (b) Elite : Representing an elite group which are a minority of total population.
- (c) Ideological : The kind of ideology the party reflects and the electorates which it targets through this ideology.
- (d) Power view : The person or group where decision and policy making power is concentrated.

Some political sociologist have come to consider politics as more than a reflection of social stratification and ideology and have increased their concern with the analysis of those institutions and social systems through which the political process operate.

Harold Lasswell asserts that “the study of politics is the study of influence and the influential.”⁶ He further states “political analysis is the study of changes in the shape and composition of value pattern of society.”⁷ Lasswell says :

It is this task to describe and explain the world revolution of our time that necessitates the comparison of world elites in terms of social origins, special skills, personal traits, subjective attitudes and sustaining assets such as, symbols, goods and violence.(8)

By learning the nature of elite we learn much about the nature of society. In answer to the question whether elite concept is useful, in social and political analysis, he said that “the elite concept fills a blank in the language of science and policy as it covers both leadership and the strata of society from which they come.”⁹

The elitist theory claims that there exists in a society, a minority of the population which takes the major decisions in the society. They further believe that the power structure of any society is determined by the character and abilities of its political leadership. According to Martin Marger, “The key analytical problem regarding elites is not only who are the decision makers and influential in society ?, but also whose interest do elites serve and how do the masses try to hold the elite power in check?.”¹⁰

A study of elites in a Party is thus necessary to understand the value system of a society as well as to locate who possesses power and determines the policy in a democratic set up. The political elite in a democracy claims to represent the aspirations of the masses. How far this is true may be established

through a study of their social, economic and political background which has a bearing on their party policies. Elite studies of the political parties, specially their organisation has gained crucial importance in determining their ideological and class position. The ideology and social base of a well organised party is continuously diluted by the need to coalesce many different and conflicting group within itself.

Study of party organisation is crucial to understand the decision making process of the party. Important issues to be analysed in this context are -

the relationship among various levels of party organisation (i.e. between policy making and policy executing levels), the role of rank and file in the decision making, the extent to which their voice is heard in the higher echelons of the party heirarchy, inner democracy in the party, the extent to which hierarchy is entrenched and bureaucratisation of organisation has taken place, factionalism within the party, internal organisational election as well as basis of selection of candidates for the various elective bodies at local, state and national levels.(11)

All these and more reflect the nature of the party organisation as well as the type of leadership which controls the party.

REVIEW OF THE WORK OF SOME WESTERN AUTHORS:

Some of the well known western authors, who have dealt with empirical study of elites and sociology of political organisation are - Robert Michels,

Robert Dahl and C.Wright Mills. A brief review of their works has been attempted in the subsequent paras.

ROBERT MICHELS

In his classic work "Political Parties : A Sociological Study of Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy" ¹² drew attention to the unavoidable emergence of elite rule or " Oligarchy" at the top created by the structure of modern social organisations. To demonstrate his thesis that democracy and large scale organisations are incompatible, Michels examined the behaviour of the Socialist Democratic party in Germany which at that time seemed to be most committed to democracy.

Michels was dissatisfied with the psychological explanation of the oligarchical tendencies in organisations. His analysis was founded most basically on the key variables of social organisation and division of labour. His initial formulation was concerned with the bureaucratic features in party organisation. Michels studied the special case of men who despite their commitment to democracy often act in ways not conforming to their values because of the demands of the organisation. "It is organization which gives birth to the dominion of elected over electors, of mandatories over mandators, of the delegates over the delegators. Who says organization says oligarchy."¹³ This is Michels famous 'iron law of oligarchy'. The sheer problem of administration

necessitates bureaucracy in large organisations whose result is concentration of power at the top and lessening of influence by the rank and file members.

Michels concerns himself in large part of the book with the way leaders take advantage of incompetence and emotionality of their followers to hold on to power and become a defacto oligarchy. After doing so, they do not submit to free electoral confirmation. Michels rejected the assumption of a representative leadership. He argues that, “those who become full time officials of political parties whilst belonging by social position to the class of the ruled have in fact come to form part of the ruling oligarchy.”¹⁴ The so called leaders of the masses, therefore, do not reflect the will of the masses but their own and organisational interests. The objective of mass based elites is to replace the power of one minority with another (themselves), hence they will continue to oppose other elements of the ruling strata such as business and aristocracy.

Leadership in Democratic Organisation

Michels says that Democracy is inconceivable without organisation. “As a result of organization, every party or professional union becomes divided into a minority of directors and majority of directed.”¹⁵ Michels asserted that, if a democratic party is not internally democratic, democracy is impossible. As a general rule stronger the organisation is, lesser is the degree of applied

democracy and greater the power of elite leadership. Michels feels that “for technical, administrative and tactical reasons a strong organization needs an equally strong leadership.”¹⁶ As the structure of organisation solidifies in the evolution of a political party, professional leadership emerges, which is anathema to democratic functioning. Democracy is utterly incompatible with strategic promptness which a fighting organisation aiming for power needs.

Michels ideal party is elitist, a group sharing a commitment to an ideological understanding of class interest and harmonious direction of will towards identical objectives. His conceptions did not encompass parties with substantive goals or modern mass parties.

Michels states that in modern democratic parties only a minority participates in party decisions. The majority does not resent this but is grateful to leaders who look after their affairs. This creates a psychological basis on which a powerful hegemony flourishes. The supremacy of leaders also depends upon the reverence paid to them because they are superior in formal culture, knowledge and skill to the masses. Another favourable factor regarding leadership is that the composition of rank and file is always fluctuating and leaders form a more stable and constant element of organisation. He asserts that the “special competence and expert knowledge which the leaders acquire

on certain matters, gives them a security of tenure which conflicts with essential principles of democracy.”¹⁷ In management of affairs, a certain degree of authority and despotism is essential and thereby a deviation from pure democracy takes place. In genuine democracy marked by frequent elections, there is lack of stability and difficulty in mobilisation. As the chiefs become detached from the masses, they tend to form cartels and intimate groups. This also results in nepotism which is a grave oligarchical phenomenon. The financial dependence upon party of leaders enshackles them to organisations and also results in a financial hierarchy where the wealthy leaders gain higher status and control policies. This is the financial oligarchy of democracy. In all modern parties there is a continual latent struggle among leaders. New aspirants try to take over the role of old despots with the help of masses and after winning the struggle, go on to become the new oligarchs.¹⁷

CRITIQUE

(a) If democratic leaders do not respond to the expectations and desire of their constituents they will be defeated at the polls. Also according to democratic theory wishes of the constituents will coincide with leaders in democracy. Thus, Michels non-confidence of representatives does not hold ground.

(b) On the question of Michels claiming internally unequal parties

to be non-democratic, Lipset¹⁸ and Sartori¹⁹ have pointed out that competition between parties makes the politically organised minority dependent at times and to a degree on majority. This competition assures citizens a degree of participation in power.

(c) Regarding Michels conception of ideal party having a specific common ideology, Lipset and Sartori note that more specific the substantive goal of an organisation, the more difficult it is to find commitment to a procedural goal such as democracy. The narrower the goal less likely it is that the members have the time to participate in and influence policy of the party.

(d) Sartori further says that “Michels is not justified in passing from the premise parties are not democratic” to “democracies are not democratic.”²⁰ The proof given by Michels is too narrow to derive a general conclusion. He says that one cannot conclude universally that all oligarchies are incompatible with democracy.

(e) Another point of criticism raised against Michels is that his field of observation is too narrow as it deals only with the Social Democratic Party of Germany.

Robert Dahl unlike Michels denies the very existence of elite saying that it is not empirically valid as we are not able to trace the thread of political decision making to a particular group of people. This he claims

is not an operational model. Sartori refutes this argument as untenable and counters that, "we cannot legitimately conclude that a model is useless unless we can show that it does not apply to any system."²¹ Pluralist like Dahl, Lasswell, Lipset, etc. stress that multiple political elites in a democracy compete amongst themselves and act as a bulwark against violation of democratic norms and rules by a single elite.

ROBERT DAHL

Robert Dahl in his book "who Governs? Democracy and power in an American city"²² has taken up the question about the working of a democratic system amidst inequality of resources and power amongst citizens by doing a case study of an urban American community - New Haven.

Dahl identifies a bargaining model in the United States characterised by a pluralistic pattern of political power. While recognising that the elites dominate the political process, he rejects the notion of a single unified and cohesive elite controlling all key socio-political issues. The elites in this system represent diverse spheres of social life and are subject to a system of countervailing checks and balances. In this approach, political elites are crucial as they perform a mediating and adjusting role between various institutional sectors of society. In this model, the basic issue is the necessity of creating conditions under which a differentiated elite can make decisions.

According to Dahl, in the expression “democratic pluralism” , the term “democracy may refer to an ideal or specific type of actual regime” and the term, “pluralism refers to organisational pluralism that is the existence of a plurality of relatively autonomous organisation within the domain of a state.”²³ By this definition all democratic countries are pluralist democracies. In democracies, the major institutions of government-executive, legislature, bureaucracy etc. are in important respect independent of each other. Interacting with Government organisations are political associations like parties and interest groups. Relatively independent organisations are desirable according to Dahl because they create --

- (a) Mutual control by helping to curb hierarchy as every organisation develops impulse towards its own independence.
- (b) Democracy on a large scale is made effective.(24)

Leadership in democracy

While commenting on the question who rules in a pluralist democracy, Dahl says - “viewed from one perspective leaders are enormously influential,”²⁵ and “from another, the leaders seem to be captives of their constituents.”²⁶ In fact the leaders influence the decisions of the constituents and their decisions are determined by the preferences of the constituents. In New Haven, Dahl found that the difference in sub-cultures of political and apolitical strata extreme, as the former exerts a direct and active influence on Government policy

and latter is noticeably less active. "The political stratum does not constitute a homogenous class with well defined class interest."²⁷ It can be penetrated by any one whose interest and concern attract him to the political culture of the stratum. This is possible as factions of political parties give politicians a powerful motive for expanding their coalition and expanding their following. The independence, penetrability and heterogeneity of various segments of the political stratum guarantee that any dissatisfied group will find a spokesman. Dahl and other pluralists suggests that there are a number of loci for arriving at political decisions as businessman, trade unions, politicians, consumers, voters and farmers and many other aggregates have an impact on policy outcome. Each of them is highly influential over some matter but weak over many others. The most relevant aspect of political life of New Haven is that to build an effective political coalition and allocating rewards one must take into account large number of different categories of citizens. The American creed of democracy is highly valued. Dahl says in a pluralist democracy there is popular control over policy of leaders as those leaders who win elections tend to reflect the preference of people. Everyone in the political stratum adheres to political democratic doctrines. The effective scope of majority rules is limited in polyarchies in three ways -

- (a) Many matters of policy like religious belief and practices are effectively outside the legal authority of government.

- (b) A great many questions of policy are placed in the hands of private, semi-public and local government organisations. In this way policies can be made by smaller groups of like minded people who enjoy legal independence.
- (c) Whenever minority fear to be adversely effected by national policies, they get extensive opportunity for presenting their case and negotiations are done for suitable alternative(28)

Thus the basic principle of the system is not majority rule but unanimity.

In polyarchies, barriers against opposition are much lower than in hegemonic regimes.

CRITIQUE

- (a) In the pluralist theme, voluntary association play an important role but these organisations themselves are oligarchically governed bureaucracy where individuals voice is lost. Another issue is that all voluntary organizations are not powerful enough to make themselves heard by authority in government. Smaller associations are the losers.²⁹
- (b) Participation in such associations is limited to upper and middle strata, while most individuals prefer to sit back. Thus, the unorganised strata is not party to the decisions taken.³⁰
- (c) The balance of power among various institutions, which pluralists talk of, is impossible. Different institutions have vastly unequal capacity to pressure and affect policies. For example, in a capitalist system, an economic institution

would be more powerful than educational institution.³¹

(d) Role of the state is not of a neutral mediator among various interest group as pluralist claim. Public problems and issues are monitored by ruling elite and such issues and groups which threaten the dominance of established groups are kept off the political agenda.³²

C. Wright Mills on the other hand like Dahl holds that power complex is made up of three different elites from economic, political and military arena but unlike Dahl's and in consonance with Michels point of view, he views the masses as passive who are subjugated by the elites.

C.WRIGHT MILLS

C. Wright Mills in his book "Power-Elite"³³ has dealt with the question of who has power and how it is exercised. Mills begins by identifying the key institutions in the United States wherein the most consequential decisions are made. Issues involving war and peace and basic economic policies are those which have societal impact. The power to decide such issues is the kind of power on which Mills focuses his study. He concludes that, "in post World War II period American Institutions with such powers are the giant corporation, the top echelons of the federal government and the military."³⁴ He next goes on to identify the person holding the top position in these institutions.

Mills sees the masses as not incompetent like Michels but as manipulated and exploited by elites who rule in their own interest. He also stresses that power holders in the United States and similar societies are a cohesive groups and made up of socially alike persons drawn disproportionately from upper class. New members of the elite may at times be recruited from lower ranks but they are co-opted into accepting the basic legitimacy of the established power structure. Thus, elites perpetuate themselves by selective recruitment and socialisation of elite values. The elites control key power sources like corporate wealth, government and societies, communication system. By controlling the latter elite are able to regulate the flow of ideas and information and can, therefore, engineer public opinion in their favour.

Power elite is composed of men who are in a position to make decisions having major consequences for the nation. They are in command of the major hierarchies and organizations of modern society, namely, economic, military and political structures which provide them prestige and power. There is an ever increasing inter-locking of elites at the top of these three structures and their positions are inter-changeable. "The elites are more or less a compact social and psychological entity."³⁵ Mills says that we can prove that powerfuls are united by studying the structural positions of the high and mighty and the consequences of their decisions, as indicated in the following situations:

- (a) If the power elite is composed of men of similar origin education and life-style, it indicates their psychological and social base of unity.
- (b) The structure and mechanic of institutional hierarchies over which the elites preside is also important. How the major hierarchies are related with other hierarchies determines whether they are a dis-jointed or co-herent group.
- (c) Many elites have come to realise that their interest could be achieved more easily if they work together informally as well as formally.³⁶

Elites, Leadership and Democracy

Mills says that, "the structural clue to the power elite today, lies in the political order."³⁷ There has been a decline in the genuine public debate of alternative decision where parties and autonomous organizations connected lower and middle level power with top level of decisions. America is now more a formal political democracy than a democratic social structure and even the formal political mechanics are weak. Business and Government have become intricately involved with each other. Another structural clue is that virtually all political and economic actions are now judged in terms of military definitions of reality. The structural clue in economic order is that the relationship between big corporations and military further subordinates the role of political man. The total picture that emerges is that the power elite has been shaped by coincidence of interest between business and military and there has been

decline of professional politicians. He feels that the political psychology and actual decisions of the political directorate should be analysed. He further states that, “we should control any inference drawn of political actors from social origin by close observation of the institutional land scape in which they act.”³⁸ “The most important set of facts is the criteria of admission, praise, honour etc. that prevails among them. If these are similar within a circle they will tend as personalities to become similar.”³⁹ All these coincidences result in class consciousness among elites. The result of coincidence of objectives between economic and political and military institutions is the “rise of a set of men who are by training and bent professional organizers...unrestrained by democratic party training.”⁴⁰ Their cohesiveness in turn leads to a decline in their control by masses which is an antithesis of democratic socio political order.

CRITIQUE

(a) The existence of powerful person in a society need not necessarily be equated with elites.⁴¹

(b) In modern society where many elites emerge in different institutional areas - the economy, polity, educational field and so on, it may be difficult to sustain a unified and homogeneous leadership group.⁴²

(c) We cannot just claim that all elites act for self interest alone. They

act for altruistic motives too, more so in a democratic government.⁴³

(d) The tripartite classification of power offers no analysis of the relative importance of each, their origin and their consequent impact in the social structure. The overlapping interest of the elite makes it all the more difficult to analyse the relative power of each.

Thus, we see that, while the elite theories claim that democracy and elite leadership is incompatible, the pluralist deny the existence of a single elite and maintain all democracies have plural elites who compliment democratic functioning.

DEMOCRATIC THEORY ON ELITE LEADERSHIP

From the above study of elite leadership theories, we can wrongly come to the conclusion that democracy and elites are incompatible. "To confuse the percentage of leaders with the test of democracy is a mistake, since a society can be democratic and express itself through a small leadership. The key question turns on accountability,"⁴⁴ says Sartori. Elite theories give the impression of inequality, disparity and superiority, which are concepts repugnant to the democratic ideal.

According to Sartori, we can not speak of elites en-bloc because this concept has been used in liberal democratic as well as aristocratic theory. Secondly, the assumption that elitism has an anti-democratic implication should

be rejected on logical grounds, as the very existence in every society of a ruling elite is a fact. Thirdly, the derogatory meaning of elite reverses the original connotation where elite means 'worthy of choice'. Sartori says, "Democracy can be saved only by expert and accountable elites from excess of perfectionism, demagoguery and degeneration and this is why adequate leadership is vital to democracy."⁴⁵ The threat is not from political elites but from the opposite danger i.e. absence of leadership and advent of mediocracy.

"Even a democratic government," is defined "as a system where majority designates and support the minority that governs."⁴⁶ Further there is a difference between minority which is an oligarchic body and minorities which are groups performing different functions. "If a controlling group is closed and transmits power by heredity, it is a ruling class incompatible with the democracy but if the leading minority is a polyarchy of multiple elites it is democratic."⁴⁷ A decision is democratic when leader is responsible to led and hierarchical when power holder exercises control over subordinates.

"The distinctive feature of democracy as a form of government is that it permits elite to form freely and establishes regulated competition between the elites for a position of power."⁴⁸ The conception of democracy as a political system in which political parties compete for votes of a mass electorate implies that elites are relatively open and are recruited on the basis of merit.

Even if we accept Michels law of trend towards oligarchy in party organisation, these elites cannot remain stable in a democracy. In a democracy, the governed can always remove the leaders or force them to take decisions in the interest of many. The democratic elite has a mass background and unlike the picture presented by Michels, the masses are neither inert nor ignorant of their electoral power. Parties also take care to formulate policies they feel will gain most votes.

It is not only the competition between parties which helps, reconcile elites and democracy. The plurality of elites in a democracy defend their members interest which results in a government by compromise. Those in power are always aware of their precarious position and are hence considerate of opposition. An additional factor pre-disposing political leaders to be moderate and cooperative is prior existence of tradition of elite accommodation.⁴⁹

In conclusion, as Sartori says "formula for democracy is neither to eliminate nor submit passively to power but to make it a function to control leaders in exercise of their functions and to put in office responsible, accountable and capable leaders."⁵⁰ The core argument developed by Sartori goes thus "democracy ought to be a selective system of competing elected minorities."⁵¹ Sartori suggests that "democratic theory of elites in the light of present day actual knowledge is the core of democratic theory itself."⁵²

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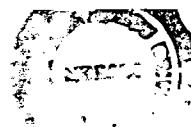
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49. See G. Sartori, n.5, for the whole argument.
50. Ibid., pp.96-128.
51. Ibid.
52. Ibid.

CHAPTER- I

REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON ELITE LEADERSHIP IN INDIA.

J.H.Broomfield in his book, "Elite conflict in a plural society", has observed that Indian independence is not simply a replacement of European imperialism by Indian Nationalism and democracy but also a complete process of elite circulation.¹ Concerns with political stratification in the form of elite segment of the population or dominant caste, figures largely in the study of contemporary local, state and national politics in India. Anothony T.Carter in his study of rural Western Maharastra found that "a large majority of those who hold power are members of one section of population."² These are the power elites, a term coined by C.Wright Mills. Myron Weiner in his article, states that;

With independence a native westernised intellectual class emerged into power...concerned with establishing western parliamentary institutions and a remodelling of Indian society in accordance with its own image of what is modern.(3)

There is though Weiner says, " a danger in looking at tradition as

static, Western influence as dynamic, and to consider all change, therefore, a result of the new outside stimuli.”⁴ “By westernised elites”, he means “those who favour a unified national state, large scale economic development and are concerned with making substantial modification in the social structure.”⁵

This restructuring is being attempted through democratic parliamentary institutions.

He has identified three conflicting groups in the Indian political structure

The anti- western Hindu minded who have strong reservation about changes in the traditional social structure, the Western minded who in principle accept the goal of modernisation, industrialisation, programmes to change the Hindu social structure and unified national state...and finally the westernised leadership in government itself, which works for modernisation....(6)

Conflicts or tension between the minority of western educated men and the traditional rulers and their associates are common because only a few benefit, from the new order. The new criteria for authority and status in society, becomes position in government, university education, fluency in English etc. replacing the old criteria of caste and family position. The relationship between caste membership and historic and contemporary position of one's caste in the community and one's attitude towards modernisation and towards western type democratic institutions is worth examining. Myron Weiner points out some striking characteristic of Indian politics :

- (a) Rise of charismatic political leadership e.g. Gandhi and Nehru to whom common man looks

up with reverence.

- (b) Substantial gap between real and ideal behaviour specially as regards political behaviour. Ideally according to India's Constitution, Parliament and Cabinet are responsible for crucial decisions of Government, though in practice authority rests not with one institution or group of institutions but rather with a handful of men who wield decisive influence e.g. Congress Working Committee.
- (c) Another difference between Indian and Western countries is relative lack of organised special interest groups in India. The net result is that unorganised and generally inarticulate segments may express themselves through mob violence and revolts. (7)

Edward Shils says that the elite leadership in the new states of Asia and Africa is of the intellectual kind, which is due to "... the special affinity which exists between modern intellectual orientation and practice of revolutionary and unconstitutional politics".⁸ One of the reasons for their pre-eminence is that there was no one else to hold the realms of power. By intellectuals in under- developed countries, Edward Shils means:

...a person exposed to the set course of modern intellectual culture in a college or university. It is not, however, the diploma which makes the intellectual. It is his prolonged contact with modern culture which does so.(9)

Elite studies in India have mainly been confined to sociological analysis of the background of the members of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, among the earliest being that of Morris Jones.¹⁰ These studies provide meaningful

insight into the structure of legislative elite at the national level in India. On the whole emphasis has been on the analysis of the organisation and composition and role of legislature in the constitutional system but now various studies are being conducted regarding social composition of legislatures and their behaviour and attitudes. B.N. Singh,¹¹ E.Wood¹² and others in their exclusive study of leadership have drawn the overall conclusion that the traditional basis such as kinship, caste, wealth and the like continue to be effective, though the degree of their influence varies from area to area. Sociologist M.N. Srinivas¹³ and S.C. Dube¹⁴ have made specific contribution to the study of leadership both in terms of concepts and methods. Srinivas regards the concept of dominant castes, as crucial, for the study of leadership. He observes that a dominant caste is functional for the maintenance of village community and also works as an ideal for the lower caste to improve their socio-economic position. Dube on the other hand feels that the concept of dominant caste is redundant since only a handful of individuals or families in a caste hold prestige, financial resources and position of influence within and outside the caste group. This gets further weakened in the wake of village factionalism. There are some notable exceptions like Andre Beteille¹⁵ and Robert Hardgrave¹⁶ who have focussed attention on wider field and made use of comprehensive conceptual frames.

The evolution of elite leadership in India has been the subject matter of the writings of various authors.

RAJNI KOTHARI

In his book 'Politics in India'¹⁷ and his article on 'Caste and politics in India'¹⁸ he has dealt at length on the inter-relationship of caste and politics in the Indian society. His work revolves around the confrontation of modernity and tradition which creates a hiatus in ideological thinking between society and polity. The former is considered traditional, while the latter as modern and developmental. Answering the critics of caste in Indian politics, he says that, politics deals with identifying and manipulating existing and emerging allegiances in order to mobilise and consolidate one's position with the aim to capture power. When politics is mass based, the aim is to articulate support through organisations in which masses are to be found which in India is provided by the caste structure. "The alleged casteism is no more and no less than politicisation of caste."¹⁹ The new contestants for power i.e. the politicians draw upon both the inter-acting structure i.e. mobilise caste groups and identities to organise their power and at the same time change their form too. Kothari disagrees with the view that politics is an instrument wielded by a particular stratum of society to consolidate or raise its position and it simply reproduces patterns of dominance without affecting the prevailing

structure of society. "This approach", according to Kothari, "ignores the developmental reality which is of dynamic inter-action and not an approximation to an antecedent society."²⁰

"The secular integrative and ideological aspects of castes have provided a sophisticated and differentiated cultural background for receiving the modernist impact and responding to it without hostility."²¹ The caste system has been penetrated by liberal education Governmental patronage and expanding franchise. Economic opportunities, administrative patronage and position offered by the new institutions and new leadership has drawn articulate sections of society into the modernist network. Kothari says:

The caste-system in turn made available to the leadership, the structural and ideological basis for political mobilisation...The leadership was forced to make concession to local opinion taking its cue from consensus that exists regarding claim to power, articulate political competition on traditional lines and in turn organise castes for economic and political purposes...The politics and society thus move together and a new infra-structure comes into being.(22)

The process of inter-action between caste and modern institutions took place in three stages. In the first stage, struggle for power and benefits was limited to entrenched castes comprising high caste men united by common social and intellectual grounding rather than organisational or political mobilisation. In the second stage, caste fragmentation and factionalism took place as a result of inter caste competition and politicisation. In the third stage, mobilisation

of further support from contending factions gave rise to a process of co-optation from other castes, which were till now kept out of the power system.²³

Wherever vertical ties (like inter-caste bonds on economic and agricultural grounds) already existed, the upper tier of each of the rival chain simply got recruited in politics and in the process carried the whole network with them. The vertical framework of political organisation also enabled different levels of castes to come face to face with each other at a higher level (e.g. Kammas and Reddis in Andhra Pradesh). Association with federal forms cut across fragmentations based on ascription and lineage, though this was limited to leading two or three castes. However, Kothari says :

Mobilisation of lower castes in politics started to add to the factionalised support base of rural leaders either by a process of cooptation of leaders from dormant sections of society by offering them junior posts or by entering into coalition with sub-caste groups and...appealing to wider identity.(24)

While in the former case, the critical leaders were induced into power elites. In the later case in which the masses were involved, they could forge a coalition to challenge the entrenched castes. This depended on their numerical strength, degree of economic independence, nature of leadership and the extent to which their caste consciousness took on the form of political class.

Nature of leadership and Elites in Indian Polity

Different Stages in the social organisation of politics demands different

leadership and organisational skills. Brahmanical leadership gave way to men from commercial and peasant proprietors. These new innovators of politics were less educated and more rural based and populist. Their ability to organise, to show a pragmatic evaluation of things, to take risks and to utilise modern means of technology and organisation came from inherited characteristics and early socialisation and not from a new culture. The process of factionalism, cooptation, coalition etc brought about fragmentation of caste system. The structure of particular loyalty was replaced by cross cutting allegiances and greater awareness of individual self interest, which is a mark of modernisation. Caste shifted to a new base of competition and integration.

The author says that secular involvement in the modern period has exposed caste and communal ties as inadequate and prejudicial for building stable support as :

- (a) Caste where they are large are not homogenous and when small is not numerically significant.
- (b) Close identification with one caste by a party alienates other castes.
- (c) Political parties gain stability only by involving all major sections of community, the result being highly secular.(25)

Commenting on elites in India Rajni Kothari says that, "India has a small elite homogenous in social background, mainly upper caste, English educated and constituting one class."²⁶ Both the ruling and opposition group

emerged from this class. He therefore feels that there is a basic sharing of outlook and ideological consensus among the two and basic institutions of the system are not challenged. "This has resulted in continuity in personnel, ideological and pragmatic commitment and even style of politics."²⁷ Another typical aspect of politics here is the exaggerated emphasis on personalities in mediating political relationship. Death of a tall leader in a party invariably results in crisis though the phenomenon is on the decline with modernisation. As political mobilisation has increased, the role of local parties and regionalisation of national parties has increased. Such ascendancy of diverse parties with diverse background, interest and ideological positions is leading to greater confrontation on issues and specific aspects of policy. Such politics is the ultimate test of a nation, when old entrenched elites are challenged by the ascendent elites -- feels Kothari.

ANDRE BETTEILLE

In his book 'Caste, Class and Power : Changing Patterns of Stratifications in a Tanjore Village' has shed light on the emerging elite structure in the village and consequently state and national level. This study has grown out of a field research conducted in a village called Sripuram of Tanjore district in South India. "The village in fact may be viewed as a point at which social, economic and political forces operating over a much wider field meet

and interact.”²⁸ The authors central concern here is with the phenomenon of caste, class and power (mainly it’s political aspect) and with the changing relations. He deals with the three phenomenon separately and than examines their inter-relationship in the context of the change.

In the Sripuram village, caste structure divided the population into sections of unequal ritual status and clearly segregated three primary segments, namely Brahmins, non-Brahmins and Adi-dravidas from one another. The class system comprises land owners tenants, agricultural labourers and their relations. While castes are communities, classes are categories of persons occupying a specific position in the system of production. Class system and caste structure overlap and cut across each other at a number of points. Power is located in formal structures such as panchayats, parties and also informal groupings, Power cuts across caste, class panchayat and party.

All three i.e. caste, class and power are hierarchial in structure. This study seeks to argue that in traditional structure the cleavages of caste, class and power tended much more than today to run across the same line. There are many areas of life which today are becoming caste free as neither land ownership, occupation nor education are dependent upon caste. Yet there is a deep feeling of identity amongst each segment of the village and certain political developments tend to heighten this feeling.

As opposed to the traditional elite, new elites depend for their power on many factors in addition to castes. These new bases are totally independent of caste and result in weakening of caste's role in politics. Changes in the social system of Sripuram are comparable to Robert Dahls analysis of New Haven. It changes from a system of cumulative in-equality to one of dispersed inequality. In Sripuram, wealth, power and social prestige were virtually enjoyed by the same set of people. Now economic advantages have dispersed and hence new social strata has come into power."Thus a relatively close system is transformed into one which is relatively open in the differentiation of structure."²⁹ Today both class and power position enjoy autonomy in relation to caste. Market forces play an important role in this by bringing about redistribution of property amongst different castes. Changes in the distribution of power is of broadly two types --

- (a) Shift from one set of dominant caste to another (Brahmins to non-Brahimins)
- (b) Shift from castes to other differentiated structures such as panchayats and political parties.³⁰

Politics is being increasingly used as an avenue of social mobility particularly by backward classes. Political processes are examined by the author mainly in relation to group structures such as panchayats, local parties and local elites.

“The manner in which power is distributed leads to a division of village communities into two categories i.e. those who have power and those who do not.”³¹ There is also a differentiation according to sources of power i.e. big land owning classes and popular leaders who have support of numerically large groups. Old basis of power such as birth and ritual status are being supplanted by new ones such as numerical support, party membership and contact with officials. Political parties have a two way relationship with local politics. On the one hand, parties tend to operate in terms of local idioms choosing for instance candidates from locally dominant class on the other hand, local conflicts tend to adjust themselves to fall in line with the wider conflicts between political parties. The conflicts between Brahmins and non-Brahmins at the village level acquires a political angle when the former align themselves with the Swatantra party and latter with the Congress or other party.

Andre Beteille feels that for analysing the social base out of which the parties and ideologies emerge we have to take three factors into account

- (a) There is a contradiction between sectional interests from which parties draw their strength and the universalistic idiom in which they are forced to appeal in a secular democratic system.
- (b) If one party mobilises powerful sectional interests other do the same, thus caste versus caste equation takes place.
- (c) General and abstract political ideology is

interpreted differently according to different local conditions.(32)

The author analyses the power structure in the village through the panchayat where there is domination and unequal participation. While upto 1940, the Brahmins enjoyed the greatest measure of power, after independence when the main factor became popular support the non-Brahmins came up, as the former choose to remain aloof from politics. The Adi- Dravidas on the other hand find themselves excluded because of their low economic, social and ritual position. Even among them, the younger lot are more militant and politically conscious. The new elite differs from the older elite even on the basis of educational qualifications which have come down. "Panchayat president today, commands a fairly large block of votes (as he is a popular leader), which gives him a certain position in the eyes of prospective M.L.A and local party bosses."³³ "Political power is also maintained in rural areas (or at a higher level) through role of organised violence by the president and power over the finance and appointment of officials. Political parties act upon villages mainly from outside but party membership, and support nevertheless throws an important light on cleavages in the structure of village.

Today, "Politics has become a paying business for those who have initiative, drive and popular support. Being a part of the elaborate political machinery gives to the individual a certain standing irrespective of his caste

or class positions.”³⁴ Thus there is a divergence between political and economic power in village. Beteille says :

Those in whom political power is vested are not big landowners, however in order to acquire a certain political power, it is necessary for a person to have some economic standing. Political power has just shifted from the class of rentier Mirasdars but has not gone into the hands of landless labourers.(35)

While a moderately secure economic position is important for acquisition of power, political power in turn brings certain economic advantages. The new powerholders work hand in hand with the old Mirasdars to keep control over the land and bypass any law against them. There are risks involved in challenging established economic interests. He concludes by saying that with the change from a static traditional society to a more dynamic one, the economic and political systems gradually detach themselves from caste and acquire a relatively autonomous character.

RUDOLPH AND RUDOLPH.

In their book “Modernity of Tradition : Political Development In India,”³⁶ the authors have dealt with the modernisation of traditional Indian society. Caste has responded to changes in political and economic environment by transforming itself from below and within and contributed to the success of political democracy by helping India’s mass electorate to participate meaningfully in it. Caste politics relationship can be understood in terms

of three types of mobilisation suggestive of different phases of political development-vertical, horizontal, and differential. Vertical mobilisation is marshalling of political support by traditional notables in local society, i.e., locally dominant actors. Horizontal mobilisation involves marshalling of popular political support by class or community leaders and their specialised organisations by direct ideological appeal to class or communities. In Europe this stage was marked by development of class interest, consciousness and organisation but in India it is a transformed version of caste. Differential mobilisation involves the marshalling of direct and indirect political support by political parties from viable, but internally differentiated, communities through parallel appeals to ideology, sentiment and interest. This can be starkly seen in the factors considered in the nomination of candidates. Direct appeals to individual voters stress ideology or issues on the one hand or community identification through caste on the other. These appeals may be contradictory or complementary dependent upon the size of the constituency and its homogeneity and cohesiveness.

“When an organized caste community is relatively homogeneous and cohesive and its common interests are still diffused and varied it is likely to form a partisan attachment to a particular political party and even to form and operate a political party of its own.”³⁸ But, “as it becomes differentiated by class interest and by differences in education, income, occupation and cultural style and as the range of its members common interests narrows

in consequence, it is likely to move from a strategy of partisan attachment to a non partisan strategy of relations with all parties in which political calculations that relate its interests to political possibilities predominate.”³⁹ “As liberal and democratic ideas penetrated to wider sections of the population, the aims of caste association began to shift from sacred to secular goals.”⁴⁰ Instead of demanding entry into temples, prestigious caste names and honourable occupations in census, the associations began to press for places in the new administrative and educational institutions and above all political representation. With the passage of time and internal differentiation loyalties of caste associations are diluted so that membership becomes amenable to political mobilisation from outside.

“Leadership in the caste association is no longer in the hands of those qualified by heredity.”⁴¹ “The leaders must be literate in the ways of modern administration and the new democratic politics.”⁴² At the organisational level, caste associations acquire the structure of voluntary associations with offices, membership, bureaucratisation etc. On the other hand, their shared sense of culture, character and status tends to create solidarity of a higher order than in other associations. The caste association - a crucial para community for Indian society is both levelling the sacred and hierarchical caste order and replacing it by homogenisation and democratisation.

The author feels that nationalist elites who tend to be deeply suspicious

of tribal, linguistic, regional, religious and caste loyalties and structure have to realise that the best way to achieve modernisation with stability is to let the natural association foster the interest of their group in a modern context like politics. "When castes come to mobilise themselves politically, they are concerned with the distribution of values, status and resources within a political system not with the realisation of nationhood..."⁴³ Thus caste is more likely to be subsumed and integrated by leadership and policies of parties rather than threaten established political communities and structures. Castes affect Indian political life more at the state and local levels than at the national level.

Political parties in their appeals - electoral support and candidates selections tend to be dependent on major ascriptive communities. Caste profiles are also region bound and change as one moves from north to south. The range of social distance between top and bottom of the caste structure is greater in the south than in the north. This is the reason for strong anti - Brahmin movement in the south. In the north e.g Uttar Pradesh - Brahmins and other castes generally share social status and political power and as such, there is no massive mobilisation of lower castes. Also in the north, there is a tendency for caste to spread over state boundaries so that political mobilisation is difficult.⁴⁴

The relative significance of dominant and subject castes in politics of

particular state affect their pattern of political stabilisation.⁴⁵ Vertical mobilisation by dominant caste and horizontal mobilisation by subject castes alter traditional power relationships, first when voting replaces obedience based on the traditional authority and dependence and second by enabling subject castes to be politically independent of their masters. Reddi dominance of Andhra Pradesh politics is a result of local and regional dominance based on vertical mobilisation by Reddi notables. Madras politics on the other hand has been characterised by horizontal mobilisation by subject castes.

At the state level effectiveness of caste in politics depends on the number and geographic distribution of caste members available for politicisation and mobilisation, levels of political consciousness, literacy, cohesiveness, able leadership, relative ritual rank, social status and economic independence. For example, the author cites the case of Rajasthan, where^h Jat community is most numerous and best mobilised but internal cleavages and countervailing interest groups have prevented them from gaining ascendancy over the Rajputs.

The above description of power holders indicates that the traditional basis of acquiring leadership position i.e caste still prevails. However, these are gradually being replaced by modern elements like popular support, economic backing, etc. It is also observed that there is a concentration of social, economic and political power among the same group of people.

We can thus conclude that the legislative elite in India generally comes

from the middle class. This view is held by B. B. Mishra who observed that “the bulk of the Indian middle classes come to consists of the intelligentsia, public servants, other salaried employees and members of the learned professions”.⁴⁷ By virtue of its social influence, this class also dominates the political scene. But as the Indian society is predominantly agricultural, because of their numerical strength in a system of free elections agriculturists constitute the largest block in the legislature. Further, before the introduction of adult franchise, the governing elite, came from the traditionally privileged dominant and entrenched castes, but now with the widening of the base governing elite is composed of ‘dormant dominant castes’. With the introduction of grass root democracy through Panchayati Raj, the rural based elite is coming to the legislature replacing urban based elite. According to Huntington, ‘ruralization elections’⁴⁸ is the principle mechanism responsible for the rise of rural local influentials. Elections under this system are characterised by the politicisation of rural notable, and defeat or displacement of an urban based modernising elite. The new elite is the product of a modern education often to a high level, mostly in cities. These modern elites play the role of ‘gap closers’ between modern and traditional society. They also work as a linkage between centre and the periphery.⁴⁹

In the next chapter Bharatiya Janata Party’s origin has been dealt with in detail.

FOOTNOTES : CHAPTER - I

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8. Edward Shils, "The Intellectuals in the Political Development of the New States", in J.L. Finkle and R.W. Gable (eds.), *Political Development and Social Change* (New York, N.Y., 1968), p.339.
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20. Ibid., p.5.
21. Ibid., p.13.
22. Ibid.
23. See Ibid., pp.14-15.
24. Ibid., p.16.
25. See Ibid., p.25.
26. Kothari, n. 17, p.166.
27. Ibid., p.166.
28. Beteille, n.15, p.1.
29. Ibid., p.6.
30. Ibid.

31. Ibid., p.143.
32. See Ibid., p.146.
33. Ibid., p.158.
34. Ibid., p.203.
35. Ibid., p.204.
36. L.I. Rudolph and Sussane H. Rudolph, *Modernity of Tradition* (Orient Longman , 1967).
37. Ibid., pp.24-26.
38. Ibid., p.27.
39. Ibid.
40. Ibid., p.32.
41. Ibid., p.34.
42. Ibid.
43. Ibid., p.68.
44. See Ibid., pp.76-87.
45. See Ibid., p.45. Also see Srinvas n.13, pp.1-16.
46. Betielle, n.15, p.167.
47. B. B. Mishra, *Indian Middle Class* (New Delhi, Oxford, 1966), pp.11-13.
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CHAPTER - II

ORIGIN OF THE B.J.P.

The Bharatiya Janata Party derives its roots from its political predecessor, namely Jana Sangh and its ideological predecessors, namely, Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh (RSS).

“The Bharatiya Jana Sangh was the scion of the parentage of Hindu Mahasabha and Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh.”¹ The RSS and Hindu Mahasabha in turn were close to each other with overlapping membership and close relationship among their leadership. Its members took part in joint activities, but nevertheless they were two separate organisations with different leaders, activities and allegiances. There were however, certain essential differences in their approach, while the Hindu Mahasabha was inclined towards political activity, RSS professed to be strictly a social and cultural organisation of Hindus.

According to Myron Weiner, “RSS was non political only in one sense- it did not take part in elections nor was it organised for electoral purposes.”² In fact it actively participated in the 1942 movement and staunchly opposed partition in the political arena. On January 30, 1948 Gandhiji was assassinated

by a fanatical Hindu communalist, who was a member of Hindu Mahasabha and formerly a member of RSS. As a result, from February 4th 1948 to June 12th 1949, a ban was imposed on RSS. This led to a serious thinking among the younger members towards entering active politics. The initiative for establishment of Jana Sangh came from the RSS leaders of the north mainly Vasant Rao Oak, Balasaheb Deoras and others like Deen Dayal Upadhyaya and Professor Malavia. The Jana Sangh was formed in 1951 with Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerji as its President. "With the formation of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh, RSS entered into the mainstream of Indian politics and is continuing upto now in its new incarnation as the Bharatiya Janata Party."³

The two predecessors of the Jana Sangh, the Hindu Mahasabha and the RSS were born in an atmosphere of Hindu-Muslim conflict. Another conflict was the struggle between modernism and traditionalism - between westernisation and sanskritisation.

While they are in favour of acceptance of some degree of westernisation in order to modernise the economic machinery of India but at the same time they also wish to see the new India rooted and unified in the national tradition of Bharatiya Sanskriti.(4)

THE HINDU MAHASABHA

It came into being on December 1913 as a reaction to the formation of Muslim League. The official historian of the Mahasabha traces the origin

of the organisation from two early movements in Bengal and Punjab. These two provinces and Maharashtra have provided much of the leadership of Mahasabha. Its members included prominent Congressmen like, Lala Lajpat Rai, Madan Mohan Malaviya and Veer Savarkar who was one of the president of Mahasabha.

Ideology

A “Hindu” according to the Mahasabha means”, a person who regards this land of Bharatvarsha from Indus to the seas as his fatherland as well as his holyland.”⁵ So according to this Philosophy, “Hindus not only form a religious community but also a nation, Hindu Rashtra,”⁶ Savarkar’s slogan was: “Hinduise all politics and militarise Hindutva.”⁷ As Shyama Prasad Mookerjee put it the Mahasabha was an organisation to defend the rights of Hindus and India as a whole. The membership of the Mahasabha was confined exclusively to the Hindus.

In the 1925 Calcutta Session of the Hindu Mahasabha in which Lala Lajpat Rai presided, he spelled out the future programme for the Mahasabha. This programme basically included organising Hindu Sabhas throughout the country, providing relief to riot affected Hindu men and women, reconverting Hindus forcibly converted to Islam, opening Hindu temples, organising gymnasiums for young Hindu men and women, popularising Hindi

and representing communal interests of the Hindus in all political controversies etc.⁹ All this emphasis gave the party a communal tinge.

Political role

Mahasabha's emphasis on Hindu Rashtra was undisputed but it also dabbled in electoral politics from pre-independence days. Veer Savarkar was its central personality from his first presidency at Allahabad in 1937 until his retirement from politics in 1948. Severe restrictions were imposed on the Mahasabha after Gandhiji's assassination and Savarkar was tried for the conspiracy. The Party became active six months later in May 1949 and Savarkar was also acquitted of the charges. In the aftermath, it lost an effective leader in the person of Dr. Mookerjee, who wanted the party to change its communal stance. He and many more members came together and formed Jana Sangh along with the RSS members. The successive elections led to a decline in the hardline Mahasabha.

“Thus the Mahasabha began as a protest against Muslim League grew as an adjunct of the Congress when it included many nationalist leaders, declined into a bigoted communalist party, an organisation which is all but dead.”¹⁰

RASHTRIYA SWAYAM SEVAK SANGH (RSS)

The Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh which was founded by Dr. Keshav

Bali Ram Hedgewar with his associates in 1925 at Nagpur, constituted the very life blood and nervous system of the Jana Sangh and it still constitutes the same of its new edition, the Bharatiya Janata Party. "The R.S.S. was established as an educational body whose objective was to train a group of Hindu men, who on the basis of their character building experience in the RSS would work to unite the Hindu community so that India could again become an independent country and a creative society."¹¹

Preamble of the RSS states that in the disintegrated condition of the country it was considered necessary to have an organisation:

- (a) To eradicate the fissiparous tendencies arising from diversities of sect, faith, caste and creed and from political, economic, linguistic and provincial differences amongst the Hindus;
- (b) To make the Hindus realise the greatness of their past;
- (c) To inculcate in them a spirit of service, sacrifice and selfless devotion to the Hindu Samaj as a whole;
- (d) To build up an organised and well disciplined corporate life; and
- (e) to bring about an all round regeneration of the Hindu Samaj.(12)

Ideology

The aims and objects of the Sangh are to wield together the diverse group within the Sangh Samaj and to revitalise and rejuvenate the same on the basis of its Dharma and Sanskriti, that it may achieve an all sided development of the Bharat Varsha.(13)

Its discipline and ideological framework were shaped almost entirely by Dr. Hedgewar. A major influence on his thinking was Savarkar's manuscript on 'Hindutva' which advanced the notion that Hindus were a nation. Dr. Hedgewar felt that to unite the Hindu community and bring independence and revitalisation, the Hindus have to be made psychologically and physically strong. For this end, a cadre of persons committed to national reconstruction was to be formed. Thus the RSS cadre came into being whose members were imparted military training and regular work out in gymnasiums. The role of the RSS under Hedgewar was purely cultural and educational. He permitted the RSS member to take part in political activities in their individual capacity but took care to keep the RSS aloof from them.

RSS draws liberally from the Hindu past to construct the belief system and recurrent theme in the belief systems is the identification of hostile forces which plot against the nation and are responsible for disruptive strain in the country. These are :-

- (a) Muslims and Christians and
- (b) the 'westernised elite' who propose capitalist, socialist and communist ideologies.¹⁴

The RSS ideologues argue that "these foreign philosophies, stimulate the quest for material gratification which results eventually in greed and class

antagonism, attitudes that lead to exploitation, social warfare and anarchy.”^{14a} The RSS offers a social blueprint that minimizes social conflict and functionally links, as they see, the social units together into an organic whole. “Life is considered a struggle against disorder and anarchy and it requires organization, calculation and systematic endeavour”¹⁵ according to the RSS belief system. “The RSS belief system is often described as conservative and reactionary and representing a form of militant Hinduism.”¹⁶ It also displays a marked distrust of political leadership.

Commenting on secularism the RSS states that there is no objection to any persons religion. Dina Nath Misra says “the objection is not to religion but politics of various religions.”¹⁷ He further says that “the concept of secularism enshrined in our constitution is not progressive in outlook as it unlike our cultural tradition divides us into religion of majority and minority”.¹⁸

ORGANISATION

The history of the development of the RSS comprises four stages. The initial stage was from 1925 - 40 when Dr. Hedgewar was its leader. In the second stage after his death in 1940, Madhav S. Golwalkar took over as Sarsanghachalak and made it an All India organisation. The Sangh was banned during this period for involvement in Gandhiji’s assassination. The third stage was between 1949 - 1973, in which the party registered multi

dimensional growth. The Swayam Sewaks fanned out in various directions social, cultural, labour and political. The fourth stage began in 1973 after Golwalkar's death when Shri Bala Saheb Deoras became the Sarsanghachalak. RSS members participated in the Jai Prakash Narayan movement during emergency and consequently RSS was banned for the second time. The ban was removed after the Janata Government took over. Most recently, it has been banned again on eleventh December, 1992 under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act 1967 for its part in the demolition of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya. Thus it has come a full circle now.

RSS was developed basically as a non-political organisation of youth aimed at revitalising the Hindu community. "By 1948 the actual membership of RSS was between 4,00,000 and 5,00,000 and it claimed 5,000,000 supporters."¹⁹ Just prior to the recent ban, (December 1992) "there were about 30,000 RSS Sakhas held in the country, in addition there were 10,000 biweekly gatherings."²⁰ "RSS has its networks throughout the country and has branches in about 15 lakh villages. Its active membership strength is around 12 lakhs, with branches abroad too."²¹

The RSS basically functions through the system of Sakhas and Pracharaks. In the RSS terminology a Sakha is a gathering of active volunteers at a particular place under a saffron flag. A person remains a Swayam Sewak

as long as he continues to attend the Sakhas and membership ceases when he stops attending. There are different Sakhas held for old (40 years and above), youth (14 to 40) and children (14 and below). The system of 'pracharaks' functions on a voluntary basis and they are supposed to be single. The Sarsanghachalak, the chief of the organisation acts as the head of the family.

Membership

The roots of the RSS are embedded in the soil of Maharashtra. Its membership and symbols were almost exclusively Maharashtrian. In the early 1930s RSS began to spread beyond this base. "RSS informants note that they recruited largely in urban areas and from high caste middle income group. It had success in recruiting middle level Government employees, teachers and professionals in Maharashtra, while the North Indian membership in the early period tended to come from small scale entrepreneurs."²²

The RSS was also more successful in attracting boys from the lower castes in Northern India where Brahmical orientation of the RSS did not arouse opposition of Non-Brahmins as in Maharashtra. The RSS membership was a possible route to an advanced status. The bulk of RSS membership in post independence period was made up of Punjabi and Sindhi refugees. "The top leadership of the Sangh comes from lower and middle classes."²³ Those who hold high position in the organisation include H.V. Sheshadri,

Prof. Rajindra Singh, K. S. Sudarshan and Moropant Pingle. All of them are University educated and are good organisers and eloquent speakers. In the political field, some of the prominent leaders of the Sangh are A.B. Vajpayee, L.K. Advani, S.S. Bhandari, Nanaji Deshmukh, Kushabhau Thakre and others.

Thus while RSS itself is a purely social and cultural organisation, its members may participate in political activity in their individual capacity. Earlier Sarganghachalaks (Shri Hedgewar and Shri Golwalkar) were very keen to maintain distance from politics but under Balasaheb Deoras leadership, RSS became actively involved in politics. This has led to big controversies in the political arena. The RSS role in politics would be tackled in detail in the following pages:

Jana Sangh

Craig Baxter says “The Jana Sangh resulted from a combination of partyless leader, Shyama Prasad Mookerjee and leaderless party the RSS.”²⁴ Baxter continues” the Jana Sangh is solely a political party but is closely connected with the Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh (RSS), a Hindu cultural organisation.”²⁵ To the opponents of party, Jana Sangh appears as the Indian equivalent of the Nazi Party and RSS of Hitler youth.

The Jana Sangh was formed in parts, that is, first state units were set up in Delhi, Calcutta, Punjab, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and so on.

Later, on October twenty first 1951 Jana Sangh was launched as a National Party under the over all leadership of Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee from a school in Delhi.

Organisation

Politicisation of RSS : In early 1951 there was an increasing demand within the RSS that it should change its policy and assume a political role in addition to a cultural one. There was a compromise between the traditionalists and the younger Swayam Sewaks. The politically inclined RSS workers were allowed to join the Jana Sangh though the RSS organisation remain politically aloof. Many pracharaks socialised in RSS discipline were loaned to the Jana Sangh.

In time, the RSS workers dominated the grass root structure of the organisation in many places. In the Jana Sangh's formative stages neither Dr. Mookerjee nor the RSS leadership looked at the Jana Sangh as the political affiliate of RSS. The higher level of party positions were given to prominent Hindu Mahasabha and Arya Samaj activist and dissident Congress men. But the organising secretaries who constitute the steel frame of the party were mostly former RSS Pracharaks. They supervised the day to day work of local units, were the major communication links between different levels of the party, played a major role in the choice of officers in the organisation

and of the candidates for party tickets. They enforced compliance to executive decisions. “Advancement in the Jana Sangh,” according to Anderson and Damle “ was directly related to the prior advancement in RSS.”²⁶ As RSS tightened its control over party organisation, there was overt hostility amongst RSS and non-RSS participants. Mauli Chandra Sharma who succeeded Dr. Mookerjee’s presidency, resigned protesting of interference by RSS in party affairs and policies. The RSS Jana Sangh link became stronger when, an RSS Pracharak Deen Dayal Upadhyaya became the president of Jana Sangh.

Jana Sangh’s Doctrinal Inheritance

Hindu Nationalism - Being the political extension of the Brahminical tradition in Hindu religious thought, Hindu Nationalism began from a restricted intellectual base and drew support mainly from upper caste Hindus familiar with its background and assured of its implicit acceptance of their status and privileges.”²⁷

Popular Hinduism resting on devotional sects had a broader base. Hindu nationalism was restricted geographically to the North as RSS and Jana Sangh periodicals, constantly referred to the Aryans and heroes like Shivaji and Maharana Pratap giving Northern view of Hindu origin. Jana Sangh thus from the very beginning ran the risk of being limited to Northern Hindu constituency. The Congress, on the other hand could appeal beyond the elites to a great majority of Hindus regardless of caste, sect or region.

Nevertheless, we cannot categorise RSS and Jana Sangh as advocating similar approach to communalism. RSS specifically excluded non Hindus while Jana Sangh followed open membership under Mookerjee's leadership. It accepted anyone who subscribed to its programme and had many Muslims and Christians on its rolls. Jana Sangh may be proclaimed communal in its usual meaning -

- (a) It is exclusively / predominantly Hindu in membership control and support;
- (b) Many of its tenets are anathema to Muslims and Christians.²⁸

But as far as degree of communalism was considered it was not rigidly Hindu according to Craig Baxter's analysis.

Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee took the Jana Sangh along the right path by appealing to the Hindu traditionalist earlier attached to the Congress party and middle classes likely to be alienated by Congress party's economic policies. In Parliament, its strategy involved building up a broad non-Congress front. The party was willing to offer its political stage to a wide variety of people and make friendly alliances with other opposition parties. However, Dr. Mookerjee died soon after. In the internal crisis of 1954, Deen Dayal Upadhyaya emerged victorious. He was for a cautious and defensive approach, which placed a high value on discipline and loyalty and was opposed to any compromise with other parties. " The Jana Sangh's remoteness enabled

it to maintain discipline and to preserve its privileged connection with RSS but left it beyond the reach of those interests which were beginning to break away from the Congress party in the second decade of independence.’’²⁹

Ideology and Party Policy

Deen Dayal Upadhyaya’s major contribution to Jana Sangh was in giving a philosophical and theoretical shape to its ideology by propounding the ideal of ‘integral humanism’. Integral humanism means the integrated development of the human personality. According to Deen Dayal Upadhyay, “ body, mind, intelligence and soul - these four make up an individual. But these are integrated. We cannot think of each part separately.”³⁰ Hence, “the progress of man means simultaneous progress of body, mind, intellect and soul of man.”³¹ This is integrated human development of the individual. The ideal of integrated development of all individuals is the ideal of integral humanism.

Upadhyay elaborates -

A nation is itself a big human society in a particular territory which has its own ‘soul’(32)...The soul known as ‘Chiti’ is the innate nature of the group(33)... the laws that help manifest and maintain Chiti of a nation are termed ‘Dharma’ of that nation (34)... If Dharma is destroyed the nation perishes.(35)

According to Upadhyaya, only a Dharma Rajya can produce an integrated life. He further says that Dharma Rajya ensures religious freedom but such a Rajya would not be a theocratic state. The objective of the economic system

of his philosophy is summed up as 'Swadeshi' and 'Decentralisation'. This is the philosophy which guided Jana Sangh but was later replaced by Gandhian socialism in the Bharatiya Janta Party. It has turned a full circle now with the BJP again taking up Integral humanism as its basic philosophy.

Jana Sangh's corner stones are listed by S.S.Bhandari as its pragmatic approach which is not tied to any ideology and is only concerned with the end result, the support of a hard core of loyal active workers and its drawing of inspiration from Nationalism and democracy.³⁶

K.R.Malkani in his article 'programme for a new political party' put his finger on the dichotomy within Jana Sangh as traditionalism versus modernism. "The good government of Bharat depends directly and fully on the formation of a nationwide party which is as much revivalist of ancient values as it will be futurist of its target."³⁷

Jana Sangh's manifesto stated its fundamentals as "one country, one nation, one culture and rule of law." Its manifesto proclaimed that "the object of Bharatiya Jana Sangh is the rebuilding of Bharat on the basis of Bharatiya Sanskriti and 'Maryada' as a political, social and economic democracy."³⁸

S.S. Bhandari reflecting Jana Sangh's point of view says that, "it is an incontrovertible fact that there are some people within our country who still nurture extra-territorial loyalties. Some owe their allegiance to China,

and Russia and others are loyal to Pakistan.”³⁹ These are clear reference to communist and Muslim. Jana Sangh gives a call for foremost loyalty towards motherland which is... called Indianisation.

On basic economic policy, the Jana Sangh said nothing different from mainstream political parties. It pointed out that the middle class is the worst hit from economic problem of the country and has to be saved to avoid a break down of the entire intellectual and cultural activity. The party gave support to land reforms but tried to couch it in such a way that it would not frighten away any landlord who might otherwise be inclined to join the Jana Sangh. The land and industrial policy tried to steer a middle course between conservatism and radicalism. The Jana Sangh “ will encourage private enterprise instead of talking vaguely about nationalization.”⁴⁰ However this should be under the general control of the state. It advocated that swadeshi industries should be given ‘subsidies’ and ‘tariff protection’ against unfair foreign competition. But it welcomed foreign capital as long as there were no political strings attached. Its economic objectives were to give a fair deal to the common man through abolition of sales tax and reduction in other direct taxes, decentralisation of economic power and fair field for the free enterprises. On the foreign policy, the party opposed partition and this dictated its approach to Pakistan. It also urged for the scrapping of Article 370 regarding Kashmir.

Electoral Base of the Party

The early leadership structure of the working committee of the party indicated its northern bias. The majority of members came from a solid block of territory coterminous with the Hindi speaking belt with an Eastward extension through Bihar to West Bengal and remainder of the country was represented by officers of two units - Berar in South West Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka in Mysore.⁴¹ It espoused causes like advancement of Hindi and use of Devangari script which gave it a strongly Northern bias. The party asked for the support in both funds and votes of the urban Hindu middle class. At the centre of the party's focus was a cluster of urban groups, chiefly small industrialists, traders and people on the lower rungs of the professional and administrative hierarchies, but it also saw itself as a party which could represent those sections of the working class employed in small enterprises and in the service industry.⁴² In the rural society besides speaking for small traders it was prepared to take the side of peasants against landlords and big farmers. One feature of the party was that it tended to offer the extension of states protective and regulatory framework to activities which it valued most highly within the economic structure- small industries, country trading and small scale peasants, agriculture and to ignore social groups on the margin. The party had very little to say about provision of economic security for poor peasants and agricultural

labour beside expressing support for ceiling legislation. It strongly opposed joint cooperative farming proposal for rural poor. Its economic approach was three pronged-growth in production, equity in distribution and restraint in consumption.

Elections

In the 1952 elections Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS) won three seats and polled 3.06% of Lok Sabha votes entitling it to be called a national party.⁴³ Its showing was confined to the Hindi heartland, mainly Delhi, Rajasthan, Madhya Bharat, Vindhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. In most places, BJS was part of urban Hindu, while in Bombay city it was largely captured by refugee Sindhis. In the 1957 elections, Jana Sangh's Lok Sabha representation increased to 4 and share of votes polled from 3.06% to 5.93%. Beyond seats, the party had developed good base notably in Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. In 1962 elections, the parties of the right i.e. Jana Sangh and Swatantra Party were major gainers. Jana Sangh picked up 10 seats this time. Share of popular vote was 6.44%. In 1967 elections, opposition reduced the Congress to minority in many states and reduced Congress majority elsewhere. Jana Sangh came out second among the opposition parties with 35 members in the Lok Sabha. These figures indicate that Jana Sangh went from strength to strength electorally. There are four presumed pattern in Jana Sangh voting:

- (a) The party is concentrated in Hindi speaking areas.
- (b) The party received more support in the areas in which Muslim population is relatively large.
- (c) The party scores primarily in urban areas and is weak in rural areas.
- (d) It stands a better chance to win against Congress when there is a straight contest.(44)

Craig Baxter, while contesting the above presumptions says that “the reason BJS performed badly outside the Hindi belt is because of its position on Hindi language and weakness of RSS in those places. Secondly while communal issues contribute to support from Hindus, there is no such discernible pattern.”⁴⁵

In essence, we can say that BJS was run by the politicised Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh. Balaraj Madhok, A.B. Vajpayee, L.K. Advani and Deen Dayal Upadhyaya were staunch RSS men. The formation of Jana Sangh in 1951 was looked at as the emergence of a communal party. Nehru said, “If there is any organisation in India which is really communal it is the Jana Sangh. It is a wholly reactionary organisation.”⁴⁶ “All the reactionary people in India princess and jagirdar,” according to Nehru “were financing the Jana Sangh.”⁴⁷

Jana Sangh's merger with the Janata Party?

When Jai Prakash Narayan gave a call for total revolution against the

existing system in which corruption, inefficiency etc. had gained upper hand. both the students and opposition parties joined the movement under his leadership. The BJS and the RSS members like other opposition parties took active part in it from the beginning. The Congress Government under Indira Gandhi eventually imposed 'Emergency' in the country on June, 25, 1975 and arrested all those who were active in the JP movement under Maintenance of Internal security Act (MISA). Even the democratic framework of the country under the constitution was threatened by the Indira Government during emergency. The BJS was also active in the struggle for restoration of democracy. Eventually when dates for Lok Sabha election of march 1977 was announced, all the non-communist parties decided to merge into the Janata Party under Jai Prakash Narain's leadership and fight elections under one symbol. Jana Sangh also merged with the Janata Party which formed the Government at the centre in which its leaders like A B Vajpayee, L.K. Advani and other became Ministers.

Dual Membership Controversy

Some Janata Party member demanded that all Janata members sever their ties with the RSS as a condition for membership of the party. They argued that "the Janta interim constitution had an exclusionary clause denying membership to any one belonging to another political party, communal or otherwise which has a separate membership constitution and programme."⁴⁸

The Jana Sangh group denied the validity of this argument on the grounds that RSS is not a political party. This controversy was one of the major causes for the break-up of the Janata Party in July, 1979 when Charan Singh and his Bharatiya Lok Dal group as well as others walked out of the party. "The issue reflected the fear that the relatively cohesive Jana Sangh group would use its organisational strength to take over the party,"⁴⁹ according to Anderson and Damle.

The leaders of the Jana Sangh group on the other hand could not accept an exclusion of RSS members and still expect to retain their strong bargaining position within the Janata. Their bargaining position was based on the size of Jana Sangh group and many Jana Sangh legislators if forced to choose between loyalty to the Janata and continued membership of RSS would have chosen the latter.⁵⁰ Besides, the dual membership issue other points of contention were the exclusively Hindu membership of the RSS, and its affiliates including the Jana Sangh. It was feared that the RSS members in the Janata would alienate the minority groups specially Muslims. Secondly, membership of RSS was sufficient to deny membership of the Janata as RSS was termed an exclusively communal organisation. The seventh general election held in early January 1980 was a great comedown for the Janta Party. "It won only 31 seats of which Jana Sangh group won 16 compared to 93 seats it had

won in 1977 but closer to the 22 it had won on its own in 1971 elections.”⁵¹ Janata leaders blamed the Party’s poor showing on a secret agreement between RSS Leaders and Congress Party.⁵⁰

VISHWA HINDU PARISHAD

The most vital role in reviving the Hindutva call in recent year has been played by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), a sister organisation of BJP. The VHP was born in 1964 When M.S. Golwalkar on behalf the RSS met a select group of sanyasis and heads of religious organisation in Bombay to start a new mass front which was supposed to unite all Hindu religious sects under a single umbrella.⁵² The sanyasis became the vehicle to articulate the Hindutva’s ambition of organising a Hindu identity and state.⁵³

Organisation

Legally the VHP was conceived as a trust with a 100 members Board of Trustees and a 51 strong governing council. “The latter body includes only one ‘Sanyasi’ at present Swami Chinmayanand an indication perhaps, that the ultimate controlling power rests not with traditional religious leaders, but with RSS cadres say the authors.”⁵⁴ VHP activists are called Hitchintaks. The trust has developed about 18 departments for example the dharma anusthan which organises bhajans in temples, another branch looks after missionary activities and deals with conversion of people from other religions. VHP

has 72 organisations in Delhi including Sanatanis, Aryasamaj and Sikh Sangh etc.⁵⁵ These branches are oriented towards mobilising and training high caste religious specialists. The VHP also has a service department which works mainly amongst Harijans and Tribals especially in forest areas, but at the bottom tribal and lower caste practices and beliefs are treated with brahminical contempt and suspicion. Another category of VHP work is agitational. There is for instance a department of cow protection which functions as a confrontationist body. The Bajrang Dal department looks after the training of young boys. Their centers are located at Hanuman Mandirs where they organise weekly satsangs. Bajrang Dal activists described their department as an organ for the protection of Hindus, that is by definition they always come alive only in times of conflict with the Muslims. They were largely responsible for recruiting urban youths for the Kar Seva at Ayodhya.⁵⁶

Political Role

VHP discourses sums up a highly stratified, rigidly hierarchised ideology of state and domestic sphere. While the Arthashastra describes a highly organised surveillance system, complete monarchical and bureaucratic control and monopolies, the Manusmriti advises on how best to rule over the subordinate spheres of sudras and women.⁵⁷

VHP has in recent times been identified with the phenomenon of

mass-communalism. The claim of today Hindutva to a immediate identity with the entire Hindu world, concedes and legitimises the operation of an intensive authoritarian political formation which defines not only Muslim but also Hindus solely in its own terms. VHP has brought in its wake a whole range of dynamic subsidiary fronts, each of which were used during the Ram Janam Bhoomi movement to represent women, youth and sadhus. The movement works through the innovative use of small icons derived from calendar art, the sticker, the slogan and bhagwa dhvaj. In a planned manner VHP created a self referential system of images and meaning, which is important since Hindutva works through several interrelated organisations and is engaged with changing political objectives over a fairly long period of time. During electioneering BJP makes use of these very stickers and develops the theme of Ram Mandir into a call for Ram Rajya. Since the early 1980's when VHP came into its own in north India, it has invented a series of political rituals which are universally relevant for the whole of India and their target Hindus. There have been a spate of yagnas and yatras to create mass following and hysteria. After the BJP assumed power in U.P. the latest skirmishes on Ayodhya issue featured Bajrang Dal activists directly while the BJP, RSS and even VHP shunned a public posture. A sub-affiliate can thus be deployed to keep an issue alive for future use while important fronts can remain relatively quiet so that the issue is not highlighted beyond

a point to create embarrassment for its own government. The fact that Bajrang Dal is known to recruit untrained volatile, semi lumpen elements in contrast to handpicked and thoroughly coached RSS cadres also absolves the larger front and core organisation from direct responsibility for reckless acts of indiscipline and violence. But there have been signs of strain among the constituents lately.

In the final analysis all these organisation are part of the same string. The VHP too derives all its pracharaks from the RSS. Its entire ideological and organisational apparatus therefore remains under RSS supervision. The RSS thus continues its model of cultural change and character formation in the protective cover of VHP. Thus VHP is an important part of the props on which BJP depends for its groundswell of support and its leaders don't mince words when they say that BJP has been brought to its glory by them (VHP) and if they are not given their due position, they may even bring down the BJP.

In the next chapter the emergence of Bharatiya Janta Party and its social, economic, and political ideology would be examined.

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41. See Graham , n.27, p.29.
42. See Graham, n.27, p.41.
43. Baxter, n.4, pp.93. All the figures are cited from this book.
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CHAPTER III

THE BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY.

ORIGIN :

On the 5th of April, 1980 over 3500 delegates (including 15 Janata members) representing the Jana Sangh group and others, who had walked out of the Janata Party, met to form a new party. The convenor portrayed Bharatiya Janata Party as the “real” representative of Jaya Prakash Narayan, as well as that of Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, a choice clearly intended to underscore the philosophic orientation of the new party. It was a party which aspired to a much broader following and was not simply a resurrection of the Jana Sangh. Vajpayee, as the President, had chosen, several non Jana Sangh figures to serve on his working committee.¹

The leaders of the BJP wanted the dual membership issue, which was one of the causes of break up of Janata Party, to be resolved once for all. They, therefore, made an explicit pronouncement in the BJP’s policy statement that “the members of all those social and cultural organisations which are not engaged in any political activity are welcome to join the BJP.”² In this way, they could retain their cadre belonging to RSS.

The BJP leadership retained Janata in the new party's name. It adopted Gandhian socialism' rather than Deen Dayal Upadhyaya's 'Integral Humanism' as the party's statement of first principle. It chose a different flag, a more secular green and saffron similar to that of the Janata Party and adopted a new symbol Lotus. It also adopted the loose organisational model of the Janata Party.(3)

The assembly elections which were held as soon as Mrs.Gandhi came to power were contested by the BJP at a very short notice. The results demonstrated that it was able to reclaim much of old Jana Sangh's support base. But while in 1980, they claimed to be the real heir to the Janta Party of Shri Jai Prakash Narain and not of the Jana Sangh, today they claim to be closer to the RSS than Jana Sangh was. To uncover this, we have to trace the different phases through which BJP passed during the period 1980-93 and the evolution of its ideology and programmatic concerns.

1980

The principles outlined by the BJP contained a sprinkling of the values of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh. The major thrust of the BJP ideology was to identify itself with the Gandhian economic ideas based on decentralised democracy. The BJP thus sought to give itself a more liberal, democratic, secular and egalitarian image which would attract political alliances too. The social vision of the BJP was inspired by the Gandhian ideology and Jai Prakash Narain's leadership.⁴

Vajpayee during his tenure at the helm, time and again rejected all suggestions that the BJP revert to the erstwhile Jana Sangh not so much in name as in content. Vajpayee knew of the stigma attached to Jana Sangh. His argument was that the Jana Sangh in its heyday could not get more than 9% of the total votes polled. With this very limited Hindu base it could never hope to assume power at the centre and the BJP should evolve itself in content and form so that it could join forces with non-Congress and non-left political parties.⁵ The result was the incorporation of Gandhian Socialism and Secularism in the policy statement adopted at its inaugural plenary session in 1980. The known hardliners were sidelined and the RSS connection was underplayed though RSS top bosses were consulted at the crucial National Council and National Executive meetings. Know leaders of the Janata Party who joined BJP were given prominent position in contrast to those with the RSS background. In this period, even RSS leadership in Nagpur played soft towards BJP liberals. Vajpayee leadership preferred to ignore the doubters. So critics inside the BJP too preferred to maintain a low profile.⁶

During the years 1980 - 82, the party's primary membership increased from 1.2 million to 3.5 million.⁷ During this period, BJP executed its three pronged programme of Sangathana, Sangarsha and Samrachna (organisation, struggle and constructive work).⁸ It won three by-election to the Lok Sabha

during this period. But Gandhian socialism and secularism remained an anathema to a section of the leadership as well as the RSS ranks who were hardliners and the backbone of the BJP. Vajpayee leadership was seriously questioned each time BJP suffered an electoral setback and much more stridently after the setbacks in Delhi metropolitan council, and Jammu elections in 1983.⁹ The BJP was deprived of some of the political support base which it had managed to acquire on the BJS platform with the help of RSS cadres and there followed total disillusionment with the leadership.¹⁰ In 1983, Mrs. Indira Gandhi dropped Nehruvian secular nationalism in favour of Hindu secular ethos, which benefitted the Congress at the cost of the Bharatiya Janata Party. Some of the BJP's high caste urban based Hindu votes were thus snatched away by the Congress.¹¹

1984

In the 1984 Parliamentary elections, the BJP secured only two seats. The BJP National Council examined the causes of the debacle and decided to accept 'Integral Humanism' a concept articulated by Deen Dayal Upadhyaya as the basic philosophy of the party. Gandhian socialism and secularism were duly put on the shelf.

The lid on the liberal phase was finally closed, when the plenary session of the BJP in New Delhi in 1986 elected L.K. Advani as the President of the party. The principle planks of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh like the

common civil code, abrogation of Article 370 giving special status to Jammu and Kashmir, status of Hindus in Pakistan, the abolition of cow slaughter, attacks on pseudo-secularism and 'minoritism' and nuclearisation of India was raised by Advani led BJP to placate the disillusioned BJS-RSS inspired rank and file of the party. The post 1984 scenario witnessed the powerful resurrection of the ideology of the Jana sangh. Advani also succeeded in persuasively a pervasively lending legitimacy to the concept of Hindutva, for the party's mass members and sympathisers.¹²

Advani had good relations with the liberals like Vajpyee as well as party hardliners and RSS bosses in Nagpur. Before taking over as president of the BJP he was Jana Sangh president from 1973 to 1977 when it merged in Janata party. Immediately after becoming the party President, Advani in the course of an interview said that the BJP was proud of its RSS/Jana Sangh past. He denounced the concept of composite culture and fully agreed with the writing of Donald Eugene Smith's quotation in the book "India as a Secular State", that "Hinduism has indeed provided the essential genius of Indian culture."¹³ In another interview, Advani argued that in India nationalism and patriotism divested of its Hindu element does not have any force or dynamism. As a party wedded to nationalism, Holism and integral humanism, it offers a complete, new and higher alternative to the current dismal scene. "As the party of Swadeshi and Swadharma,

it is wedded to our country, our people and our culture.”¹⁴

1989

In the 1989 elections, the BJP did some seat adjustments with the Janata Dal and the National Front. The BJP leadership projected two goals before itself:

- (a) defeat of the congress (I) and;
- (b) acquiring sizeable presence for itself in the Lok Sabha.¹⁵

The BJP leadership in its fight appropriated some of the leading lights of the National Movement like Lok Manya Tilak, Lajpat Rai, Sardar Patel, Purushottam Das Tandon, Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya, Dr. Sampurnanand and so on.¹⁶ Advani’s speech to a RSS gathering in Coimbatore was most revealing “While in the case of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh the linkage was only ideological in the case of the BJP, the linkage is both ideological as well as historical.”^{17a} He referred to “the sister organisations like the Viswa Hindu Parishad (VHP), AKhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS), Sevan Bharati and Kalyan Ashram which are all based on the inspirations from the RSS.”^{17b} Advani felt that the BJP had to project the view point of the RSS, so that it gets more acceptance not only in terms of votes, in terms of parliamentary seats, in terms of assembly seats and in government, but also in that they come to be respected. The so called liberal and secular ideology gave

way to a policy of aggressive nationalism and positive secularism. The BJP resented its isolation among all parties and yet prided itself on it.¹⁸

The BJP was able to dramatically increase its tally of Lok Sabha Seats to 86 in 1989 Lok Sabha Elections. Keeping in account the party's long term strategy and maintaining its continued policy of remaining aloof, the party decided not to participate in a coalition but give outside support to the National Front Government. Its support to the National Front Government spelt out in Advani's letter of November 29, 1989, was with specified reservations like Article 370, uniform Civil Code, Human Rights Commission and Ram Janma Bhoomi.¹⁹ A big controversy arose at the centre when V.P. Singh government decided to implement the Mandal commission report. The BJP perceived Mandal report as a threat to its strategy to unify the Hindu community on the plank of Hindutva and its bid for power at the centre. It is the RSS which decides BJP strategy which was amply demonstrated in this episode. The RSS top brass at a meeting in New Delhi decided to adopt a tough line on the Ayodhya issue even at the risk of rupturing the ties with the government. L.K. Advani ultimately announced the programme of Rath Yatra from Somnath to Ayodhya, so as to make Mandir rather than Mandal the central issue of the political agenda. The speeches which were defiant and communal claimed that the issue was not the construction of temple but the 'basis of nationalism in the country'.²⁰ He even called

it “the second phase of the nationalist renaissance after independence.”²¹

1991

Encouraged by the 1989 results, the BJP went alone in the 1991 elections. In the election, some two lakhs carefully selected RSS workers had spread out in the field canvassing support for the Hindu cause with a well oiled cohesiveness.²² The party message was ‘Ram Roti aur Insaf’ for this election. At the ground level, the party tried to keep the Ayodhya issue alive by supporting the VHP’s continuous drive to bring batches of Kar Sevaks to stage Satyagrahas in Ayodhya and once elections were announced, the Ayodhya issue was revived through the yatras organised by the party, which culminated in a massive boat club rally in Delhi on April 4, 1991. On the other hand, to woo the moderate Hindus who abhorred the political exploitation of Ram, they refined their pitch with the talk of social justice and stability. The party had an image of discipline and cohesiveness, unlike other political parties. The party banked on the labour of its cadres not just for the elections and organisational chores but also to produce votes based on their social work among Harijans and tribals.²³ The BJP made full use of the Vishva Hindu Parishad platform and its leaders rhetorics - mainly Sadhus and Sants to seek votes based on the Hindutva faith. All this paid rich dividend. They increased their tally of seats to 119 in 1991.

The BJP feels that the continuous reliance on Hindutva and anti - minoritism will prepare the grounds for ultimate capture of power at the centre.

Constitution of the Bharatiya Janata party²⁴

Article 2 - states that the party is pledged to build up India as a strong and prosperous nation, which is modern, progressive and enlightened in outlook and which proudly draws inspiration from India's ancient culture and values.

Article 3 - lays down that the basic philosophy of the party shall be integral humanism.

Article 4 - lists among the commitments - Nationalism, National Integration, Democracy, Gandhian Socialism, positive Secularism that is 'Sarva Dharma Sambhav' and value based politics. The party stands for decentralisation of economic and political power.

Article 7 - lays down the following organisational structure of the party:

I. NATIONAL LEVEL

- (a) The plenary or Special session of the party.
- (b) The National Council.
- (c) The National Executive.

II. STATE LEVEL

- (a) State Councils.
- (b) State Executives.

III. Regional Committees.

IV . District Committees.

V . Mandal Committees.

IV . Local Committees.

Article 18 - lays down that the National Council shall consist of -

- (a) members elected by the state council,
- (b) 10% of the party Members of Parliament, subject to maximum of 10.
- (c) all former National Presidents,
- (d) all State Presidents,
- (e) Leaders of the party in the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha,
- (f) Leaders of the party in state Assemblies, Councils and Metropolitan Councils,
- (g) Coopted members (not more than 40) as per rules made by the National Executive,
- (h) All members of the National Executive and;
- (i) All India Presidents of allied Morchas and Cells.

Article 19 - Election of the National President.

1. The National President shall be elected by an electoral college consisting of:
 - (a) Members of the National Councils.
 - (b) Members of the State Councils.

Article 20 - It says that the National Executive shall consist of the President and not more than 74 members, of whom at least 7 shall be women and 7 belonging to SCs/STs to be nominated by the President. It also provides that the President shall nominate from amongst these the Vice-President, General Secretary, Treasurer, etc.

Article 22 - It lays down that no member shall hold the post of President consecutively for more than two full terms.

Article 25 - It proclaims the National Council as the highest policy making body of the party and the decisions of the National Executive would be binding on all organs of the party.

Article 27 - It provides for setting up of Central Election Committee consisting of the members of the Parliamentary Board and eight other members elected by the National Executive. The committee is responsible for final selection of candidates for State Legislature and Parliament.

Article 28 - This article provides for the setting up of State Election Committee, which is responsible for final selection of candidates for various

local bodies, cooperative institutions etc. They are also responsible for proposing the names of candidates for Legislature and Parliament.

Article 30 - Mahila, Youth, Kisans, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes morchas will be constituted at all levels and cells formed at National and State levels for other fields according to rules framed by the National Executive.

Analysis of BJP Constitution

A noteworthy feature of BJP constitution is that it lays stress on the ancient culture of India, which is a continuation of basic approach of RSS and Jana Sangh. The Party proclaims its commitment to nationalism, democracy, Gandhian socialism and positive secularism. It also clearly lists its priorities as decentralisation of economic and political power. In the practical sphere, though the BJP has paid lip service to these concepts. The party has been making blatant use of religion as a vote catching device, while its constitution professes secularism. It has been generally known to be opposed to socialism of any kind yet its constitution talks of socialism. This is an apparent contradiction. The party leaders have publicly shown their inclination towards Presidential system of Government, which is clearly a move towards centralisation of power and a move away from Parliamentary democracy. Thus, the BJP constitution like any other party constitution does not seem to truly reflect its priorities in the practical sphere or it

does not find it practicable at this juncture to put emphasis on the high ideals enshrined in its constitution and is more interested in projecting those measure which would bring them more electoral gains.

BJP ELECTION MANIFESTOS

1984

The main theme of 1984 election manifesto²⁵ was 'towards a new polity'. In the aftermath of Mrs. Gandhi's assassination and the consequent disturbances, the party offered an alternative of value based politics, democracy, positive secularism and Gandhian economics. The party was of the view that secularism should not be allowed to become a euphemism for appeasement, alternatively for this community or that or a sordid political device to garner votes. It was committed to giving the States a fair share of the Central revenue and increasing the financial powers of the State. It wants to do away with Article 370 of the Constitution, which gives a special status to Jammu and Kashmir. The party favours public funding of elections as in the case of Germany, Japan and other democratic countries. The party is for rationalisation of tax structure. It promised to take effective steps to prevent further illegal migration, particularly in the North East. It is totally opposed to any compromise with the separatist elements whether in Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir or elsewhere. The parties goal in the field

of agriculture, industry, etc. was as given below :-

Agriculture - It proposed to implement the land laws, complete ongoing big irrigation projects, subsidise inputs, attain self sufficiency in food and so on. In short, they have reiterated what other parties also say.

Industry - It is more attuned to the Gandhian concept of reserving more consumer items to small scale and cottage sectors. It would also want the businessmen to act as trustees of the public good. It is in favour of minimum control on enterprise and cheaper credit facilities.

Finance - Bharatiya Janata Party promised not to impose new taxes, raise income tax exemption limit to Rs.30,000/-, abolish sales tax/octroi duty, rationalise and simplify the existing tax structure and exempt saving and investments in approved organisations from wealth tax and estate duty. It gives special importance to the salaried class which it feels is crushed between fixed income and higher taxes. For this group, they propose introduction of pension schemes, lowering life insurance premium, abolishing compulsory deposit schemes, etc.

Foreign Policy - BJP reiterates the same agenda as other political parties i.e. commitment to world peace, disarmament and new international economic order. It also reiterates faith in non-alignment and other traditional foreign policy measures.

Another major electoral issue addressed towards the Hindu rural populace

is banning of cow slaughter. BJP would also widen the scope of functioning of the minority commission and convert it into a Human Rights Commission.

1989

In addition to the issues raised in 1984 manifesto, many more topical and relevant issues were emphasised in 1989 manifesto²⁶ keeping in mind parties main target group i.e. Hindus. The manifesto claimed that by negativising the Supreme Court judgement in the Shah Bano case, the Government had put a premium on communalism and obscurantism, and by recognising Urdu as second official languages in Uttar Pradesh on election eve, it had shown more interest in Muslim votes than in Urdu language. Also by not allowing the rebuilding of Ram temple in Ayodhya on the lines of Som Nath temple built by the Government in 1948, it has allowed tensions to rise and gravely strained social harmony.

The manifesto says that the BJP is wedded to Desh and Dharma, Samta and Samanvaya. It stands for justice-social and economic, law and order, particular moral order. BJP rejects both exploitative capitalism and suppressive communism. Its approach to life and society as expounded by late Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya is integrative and holistic. It looks upon the farmers in the field and workers in the factories as two mighty wheels of our modern Rashtra Rath.

The party reiterated its position on positive secularism i.e. Sarva Dharma Samabhava. The BJP stands for the formation of smaller states which are economically and administratively viable keeping in view the regional imbalances that have developed in some states because of size. As a step for ensuring free and fair elections, the party would like to introduce compulsory voting for all citizens, arrange for public fundings of election and ban company donations among others. The BJP promised cleansing of public life and rooting out of corruption. It would enact a law to set up institutions of Lok Pal and Lok Ayukta. They would bring the Prime Minister and Chief Ministers also under the purview of these laws.

BJP blames the Central Government for the neglect of the North Eastern region and its un-satisfactory economic development and consequent exploitation by the foreign missionaries. It is in favour of sealing the Indo-Bangladesh border and issuing identity cards to all citizens of the border states. It is also for banning foreign contributions and repealing the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, whereby no private organization, either religious or social will be allowed to receive any foreign contributions in cash or kind.

BJP believes in decentralisation of power and strengthening of democracy at the grass-roots. This is in line with the policy formulated by the Jana Sangh under the leadership of Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya for giving constitutional status to panchayats and the municipal boards. The BJP has

a specific detailed programme on agriculture. In their opinion, the speedy development of the agricultural and rural sector is the key to India's prosperity. In order to woo the farmers, the BJP offered a package of seventeen points among which were measures like writing off debts of farmers, agricultural labourers and rural artisans, ensuring minimum wages to the farm labour, re-structuring agriculture cost and price commission to ensure two third participation of farmers, introducing crop insurance, maintain parity of prices between agriculture and the industrial produce and so on.

Its industrial policy is based on the principle of self reliance, decentralisation, modernisation and Daridra Narayan's Seva. Generation of employment will be a major component of BJP's industrial policy. It is opposed to introduction of multi-nationals in the consumer industry. The party had also made a special mention about their schemes for women and youth, reservation in certain categories of job for women (30%), making wife co-sharer in husband's income and wealth. The BJP stands for all such measures which will bring Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes at par with the rest of the society-not in terms of economic status alone but on broad spectrum of social life. They are also in favour of making reservations for other backward classes broadly on the basis of Mandal Commission's Report, with preference being given to the poor within these very classes. They

also want reservation to be provided for the other castes on the basis of some economic criteria.

The party is in favour of promoting the use of Hindi as a medium in all competitive examinations and research work and promoting the study of Sanskrit language as the storehouse of ancient Indian wisdom and restoring its position in the three language formula. Rest is a reiteration of the earlier manifestos.

1991

In this election, the BJP proclaimed²⁷ as its unequivocal goal “Ram Rajya”. It advocated clean political system, economic growth with social justice, vibrant social order and world fraternity. It will set up a commission to study and report whether Presidential system of Government will give a more stable Government than the present Parliamentary system. For ensuring fair elections, it slightly moved away from its 1989 manifesto and favoured company donations to parties till state funding is introduced, so as to reduce the dependence on black money.

It seeks the restoration of Ram Janma Bhoomi in Ayodhya only by a symbolic righting of historic wrong, so that the whole Hindu-Muslim acrimony could be ended and a grand national re-conciliation effected. The BJP further promises to de-bureaucratise the economy to maximise the production. They are in favour of throwing open the public sector

units to people's participation, as to make them productive and profitable.

While dwelling on its strategy for the other backward classes (OBCs), the manifesto talks of setting up a chain of first class residential schools for children of really poor families of all castes and communities to prepare them for open competitions. It also mentions about training and equipping of artisans, who mostly belong to other backward classes.

The BJP feels that non-aligned movement which was created against the backdrop of a bipolar world has lost its relevance. In this new global scenario, only economically healthy, militarily strong and progressive India can carve out a niche for itself. It calls for a wise and integrated domestic and foreign policy. The BJP stands for peace and international trade, and is in favour of strengthening the SAARC movement. On defence, BJP stands for giving nuclear teeth to defence forces. Rest was reiteration of the earlier manifesto.

ANALYSIS OF MANIFESTOS ²⁸

A close analysis of 1985, 1989 and 1991 manifestos indicates that the basic issues of the party have remained almost the same. But the guiding philosophy of the party has changed from Gandhian Socialism in 1984 to Integral Humanism in the later period.

The main issues addressed by the party include :-

- (a) rooting out political and administrative

corruption,

- (b) maintaining internal law and order by taking a tough approach towards secessionist activities,
- (c) study the viability of bifurcating states into smaller and democratically and economically viable units.
- (d) Examining the possibilities of introducing Presidential system of government with a strong centre.
- (e) on religious and related issues, the party speaks against pseudo-secularism. It is for building Ram temple in Ayodhya, a common civil code for all religions,
- (f) In the economic field, it wants the State to retreat from commercial activities and the core sector of the economy should be man. It seeks to allocate 60% of plan-money for rural development and has offered a new deal for farmers which include waiving loans, setting up a network of agro-industrial complexes etc.
- (g) Industrial policy of the party includes self-reliance, modernisation, and decentralisation. The party pledges to de-bureaucratise the industry, cut down on the controls and clear projects promptly. It seek to protect small scale industries, handicrafts and cottage industry. The party believes

in healthy trade unionism with workers participation in management.

- (h) It promises tax exemptions, lowering prices and other benefit schemes for the salaried segment,
- (i) On reservation policy, it wants to take into account the socio-economic ethos rather than caste as a criteria for reservation.
- (j) Regarding world affairs, it feels that non alignment has lost its relevance in a uni-polar world, and there is greater need for strengthening regional cooperation through institutions like SAARC. The party would strive to make India an autonomous power centre in the world, with a permanent seat in the UN Security Council. A sound foreign policy will provides a secure base for Defence policy. Unlike other parties, the BJP has from the beginning stood for India acquiring a nuclear teeth.

The party thus takes account of its constituency of new middle and traditional upper classes linked with industry, commerce, trade and business houses, professional and managerial elites in its electoral promises. It is also seeking new bases in the rural areas and among the backward and lower castes by emphasising on specific policy measures for them in the

1989 and 1991 manifestos. It has also sought religious identity by making sentimental appeal to the Hindus. “The classes and groups of BJP supporters identify with the party’s economic policies, welfarist approach and modernisation and are not averse to the Hinduisation of the Nation” according to Geeta Puri.²⁹

ECONOMIC POLICY OF BJP

It gives a call for humanistic approach to economic development (Swadeshi alternative). It says that “the party believes in a new social and economic order which is non-exploitative, cooperative and harmonious and which provides full play to individuals initiative and dignity.”³⁰ The spiritual, intellectual and social urges and aspirations of citizens is sought to be harmonised through this policy. “This approach,” they say, “flows from Indian National heritage, Gandhian concept of Ram Rajya and Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyay’s integral humanism.”³¹

The economic policy incorporates the spirit of ‘Swadeshi’. According to the party swadeshi means local resources and talent should be utilised to the maximum in national interest and the benefits therefrom should primarily flow to the people. Swadeshi is not insular in approach but seeks to build a self sustaining national economy.³²

The party feels that “the Nehruvian model has completely failed and it should be discarded in favour of the BJP model.” It further says that

the role of foreign capital should be limited and un-fettered entry of foreign capital and multi-national should be opposed, except in high technology areas which are yet to be developed. In the BJP model of economic development 'Antyodaya' shall be the guiding star and abiding national commitment.³³ Thus, according to the economic policy statement of the BJP, the main elements of its economic policies are rapid development through full development with the use of changing and growing technology on par with the international levels; self reliance to the maximum but not self sufficiency at any cost, optimum use of national resources, materials, man power but with due allowance for foreign capital in high technology industries, investment environment in which every enterprise public and private can thrive and where efficiency and productivity will be rewarded, special attention to lagging sectors like agriculture, cottage and small scale industries, weaker sections of society including women, Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes, Backward classes etc. to bring them up at par with the rest of the country in order to enable them to play their full part in national development.³⁴

The first priority of the BJP in economic policy according to Jay Dubhasi if they come to power would be to "move away from the high tax, high cost regime of Nehruvian model."³⁵ A BJP government would work for quicker development of agriculture and agro-based industries, rather than concentrate on industrial sector alone. The public sector has to be

overhauled completely because it has failed to deliver. The first task of a BJP government would be to set up a national social-security council which would draw up social security not only for organised industrial labour but also for other sections of the society.³⁶

CONCEPT OF HINDUTVA

Hindutva has come up at this moment as an ideologically and electorally viable alternative to Gandhi Nehru legacy of a democratic state professing adherence to social welfare and multi-culturalism.³⁷ The VHP-RSS combines hidden agenda of Hindutva is directed against socialism as well as capitalism. Its old assertion of integral humanism is that materialism is spiritually impoverishing. While integral humanism conceded that western science has something to teach us, RSS-VHP publications are more at pains to establish that western scientists are rediscovering the relevance of Hindu social, physical and human science.³⁸ In a move that suggest lineages in the path that National Socialism had set itself, is Hindutva's simplistic construct of a 'Hindu' order. While the core of the Hindu philosophy is made to be peace and tolerance, the ideal value of historical Hindu is taken to be military goal. The argument goes that Hindu Rashtra is a safe repose for all creeds and sects, Muslims are unanimously labelled as intolerant and driven with a desire to outnumber Hindus to control India eventually. These arguments have been extensively developed by VHP journals and

pamphlets and succeeded in influencing a large set of middle class, urban educated people. Thus the secular state which is part of the conspiracy must be replaced by a Hindu Rashtra to ensure real tolerance.³⁹

In short, the desired state of Hindutva concept can be deduced as Democracy and secularism are recommended but very occasionally and perfunctorily. Integral humanism identifies, democracy as a western notion which breeds problems. The BJP spokesmen like S.S.Bhandari has also expressed a firm commitment to an absolutist state within which the individual must learn to merge his/her identity. The big state and ancient king emperor and Chakravarty are glorified, which bears an uncanny resemblance with the BJP's call for a Presidential state with power concentrated at the centre.⁴⁰

BJP and Hindutva

BJP's definition of India is based on the nationalist manifestation of Hindutva which is also an elitist concept.⁴¹ This is a well accepted fact yet the BJP ideologue K. R. Malkani claims that the BJP has never referred to a Hindu Rashtra in its constitution or election manifesto. He contradicts himself in the same article by taking the BJP line-that "India with its 85% Hindu population is already a Hindu country."⁴²

Though the concept of Hindu Rashtra has not been supported by any official BJP document, it is the main goal being pursued by the BJP. Before every general elections, the BJP has been raising one slogan or

the other which has communal overtones. At one stage, the prohibition of cow slaughter was the clarion call, at a later stage gangajal went round and last but not the least Ram Janma Bhoomi issue has become the weapon to wage an electoral battle.⁴³

K.R.Malkani claims that the BJP is opposed to 'minoritism' and not 'minorities' and cites as evidence the fact that the BJP has two prominent Muslims and one Christian on its National Executive.⁴⁴ This is a pathetic show of the BJP's brand of secularism. Girilal Jain puts forth the view that "the westernised elite which rules the government and controls the media is totally distanced from the common man."⁴⁵ The author feels that "secularism debate is essentially an intra-Hindu affair. It is in a sense a replay of the controversies between modernisers and traditionalists beginning in the early 19th century."⁴⁶ Second point is a reiteration that Hindu Nationalism is rooted in the Hindu ethos. Another advocate of Hindutva, Swapan Das Gupta feels that "National resurgence is closely linked not only to independence and sovereignty but also to unresolved political and civilisational tussle between Islam and Sanatan Dharma."⁴⁷

As K.L. Mahendra claims, the real content of the BJP's language is out when instead of the Indian Muslim, it wants a Mohammadi Hindu.⁴⁸ The line of reasoning of RSS, BJP, VHP goes thus-"Whether Ram was born at the disputed site or not, we believe and have faith that he was

born there (Ayodhya, at Babri Masjid site) and hence it should be accepted. No court can decide.”⁴⁹ This is an illogical and undemocratic argument. Similarly, revivalist organs of BJP like ‘Organisers’ advocate that Muslims must accept Ram as their God and the communal problem would be over, which is too simplistic a solution.⁵⁰

The very claim of BJP’s propagation of Hindu Rashtra as opposed to that based on caste and class is disputed by some intellectuals. S.G.Sardesai gives his argument thus-“the BJP claims to speak for the majority but even among the Hindus, the Scheduled Castes and lower castes among the untouchables clearly constitute the majority. Despite all claims and tortuous efforts made by the BJP to win them over, they are suspicious of the BJP and consider it as a Brahmin-Baniya party.”⁵¹ Whenever the question of reservation comes up, the author finds that the BJP and RSS cadres are found in anti-reservation camps. So the author feels that the BJP does not represent the majority of Hindus. Also the BJP (formerly BJS) has been opposed to land reforms, according to him. In fact, “the BJP stands for ‘minoritism’ of the upper caste landholders, traders against the Hindu majority.”⁵² The masses of the Indian people, he claims belonging to various religions, castes, tribes and languages look upon Hindu Rashtra as an imposition of upper castes, class Hindu on all the rest.”⁵²

The struggle for Hindu Rashtra is bound to develop into a frightful civil war between upper and lower castes. Hindus and also between the Hindus the followers of all other religions.⁵³ The authors of "Khaki Shorts and Saffron Flags" agree with the fact that the BJP has no track record of involvement with class struggle for lower castes. According to them, the party "Preserves its ascendancy over lower caste without undertaking any meaningful reforms in their social status through a monopoly over ground level intellectual leadership and where there are no such direct base among lower castes, it exerts ideological influence through teachers and priests."⁵⁴

The newly triumphant Hindu right has been compared by many writers with the early National Socialism of Germany. The question which comes up regarding the BJP are-will not a party thrusting its way forward with a slogan of Hindutva press for a fascist polity sooner or later ? Will it not be detrimental to the minorities ? will it not break the class organisation of the poor and the working class ? Whose interest does it actually seek to serve ?⁵⁵

Jan Breman in his article has sought to draw
a comparative picture of Hindutva and early
national socialism --

- (a) Both the movements appeal to petty bourgeoisie a composite class which is growing in size and political weight.

- (b) In both the cases one particular community is singled out as an arch enemy of *dasvolk* (the people) that is of Hindu majority. (56)

The deviant creed like 'Jews' in the case of National Socialism is 'Muslims' in the case of BJP. This is a belated revenge for the political domination of the sub-continent by the Muslims in the pre-colonial era. According to conventional wisdom in Hindutva circles, the rape is still going on eventually to climax in the demographic and political subordination of the Hindus in their own land. This line of thinking explains the minority complex of the majority according to the author.

The Hindutva movement has a neo-orthodox style and substance and glorifies violence. The Ram Rajya that is projected has a strong corporatist identity. The individuals count for nothing and give way to the wishes of collectivity made manifest in 'people's will.' Its social order is not egalitarian but communitarian and strongly elitist orientation is played down by consensual politics. The worldly gestalt of a Fuehrer has been transcended into a warrior God. He is a Macho, aggressive but other worldly figure. The glorification of violence becomes an important part of Hindutva. Those who seek consensus run the risk of being branded as enemies. The author says that the Hindutva movement may ultimately take either of the following two courses :-

- (1) There may be purges within the Hindutva movement that is a fight between the moderate and the fundamentalists and who wins will determine

the nature of the movement.

(2) The Ram Rajya Doctrine, which has not been worked out as a coherent economic programme, might give rise to contradictions for example, rural vs. urban, capital against labour, small scale as opposed to large scale, self reliance underpinned by a xenophobic streak or compulsion to go for outside markets.⁵⁷ The movement which tries to please anti-socialists as well as anti capitalist would be torn in different directions.

This view has been criticised for tearing the Hindutva movement from the past history and judging it only on recent developments like the demolition of Babri Masjid.

BJP AND ELECTIONS (1952 to 1991) (BJS till 1971)

TABLE - I
BJP performance in Lok Sabha Elections

<u>Year</u>	<u>Seat contested</u>	<u>Seats won</u>	<u>%</u>
1952	94	3	3.1
1957	130	4	5.9
1962	196	14	6.4
1967	251	35	9.4
1971	160	22	7.4
1977	-	98	41.3
1980	-	11	19.0
1984	229	2	7.4
1989	225	85	11.4
1991	471	119	19.9

Source : C.P.Bhambri, *Political Process in India : 1947-91* (Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi, 1991) and Geeta Puri, "An exhilarating. Electoral Experience : The BJP over comes its identity crisis" in M. P. Singh ed., *Lok Sabha Elections 1989 : Indian Politics in 1990's* (New Delhi, Kalinga 1992).

The BJP's tally of seats contested and seats won has been showing continuous increase except in the year 1984 when it won two seats. In 1980, when BJP won 11 seats, it more or less succeeded in regaining the social base of Bharatiya Jana Sangh. But under the liberal leadership of A. B. Vajpayee, when it sought a more centrist character away from the Hindu moorings of the Jana Sangh, it went down disastrously. The main factor for the debacle were : -

- (a) the composite Indian nationalism that was once the Jana Sangh's exclusive monopoly became an indispensable feature of the Congress (I) platform. Official patronage and ruling party's wider social base lent it added force. Thus the BJP's strong urban support in Hindi heart land quietly drifted to the Congress (I).
- (b) Mrs. Gandhi's assassination and subsequent sympathy wave towards Congress (I) was largely responsible for the rout of all opposition parties.

The Vijayawada session of BJP constituted a landmark on its return journey to the original roots - which is RSS. The incorporation of Integral Humanism was another way of saying that it had reproclaimed its faith in the idelolgy of Hindu Rashtra.⁵⁸ The session was also marked by endorsement of Presidential form of goverment and clamour for smaller states. There was also an effort to project the party as champion of rural regeneration

with motivated emphasis on problems of peasants. In the rural area the rich kulaks and 'Kulak' elements belonging to the upper class and caste groupings play a key role for BJP.⁵⁹

In 1989 elections, the Party not only recovered its upper caste base which was eroded by the congress (I) in 1984 general elections, but also annexed several more upper caste votes of the latter. The BJP was in 1989 the exclusive and big beneficiary of the Hindu wave and anti-congress wave.⁶⁰ The BJP, therefore, repeated its aggressive campaigning in favour of Hindutva in the 1991 general elections and won 119 seats. If one goes through the chronology of temple movement, it is obvious that the decision to undertake the Rathayatra (Somnath to Ayodha) was patently contrived as a counterweight to Mandal issue by the BJP in the hope of politically advancing through the process of Hindu consolidation.^{60a}

The BJP has from its debacle in 1984 gone systematically to woo its target electorate in cohesion with the VHP and other socio-religious organisations and succeeded. Some of the important land marks in this regards were :-

- (a) Ekmata Yajna 1983,
- (b) Shri Ram Janma Bhoomi Yatra 1984,
- (C) Several other Yatra in 1985 - 89,
- (d) Shila Pujan and Shilanyas Ceremony at Ayodhya in 1989,

- (e) Advani's Rath Yatra in 1990 and;
- (f) Ekta Yatra of Murli Manohar Joshi, 1992.

While in 1989, the BJP captured power in 3 states namely; Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, it captured the biggest North Indian state of Uttar Pradesh in the 1991 elections. This indicates clearly that the BJP's presence is limited to North Indian States, more specifically the Hindi heartland. It has only a token organisational presence and a nominal record in the Southern States but as elsewhere its performance improved from 1989 to 1991 percentage wise.

Table II indicates the improvement in BJP position from 1989 to 1991. While in 1989, it was part of a broad National front it went mostly alone in 1991.

TABLE II

BJP'S COMPARATIVE PERFORMANCE. (1989 -1991)

YEAR	SEATS CONTESTED	SEATS WON	PERCENTAGE OF VOTES	SWING IN VOTES (in%)
1989	225	85	11.4	+4
1991	479	119	19.9	+8.5

Source : *India Today* , July 15, 1991 , General Election: What the Result means, p.40.

The party made impressive percentile gains in 1991 elections vis-a-vis 1989 elections, even where it received none or only a few seats in states

like Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal. This may also be a result of contesting more seats. The party had fielded candidates from 479 constituencies. Significantly the BJP candidates came second in about 119 constituencies making it a Congress VS. BJP election.

TABLE III

PERCENTAGE OF BJP VOTES IN LOK SABHA ELECTIONS IN STATES.

STATES	1989 (%)	1991 (%)
Andhra Pradesh	2	8.8
Assam	--	8.6
Bihar	11.7	17.0
Gujarat	30.5	51.4
Haryana	8.3	10.3
Karnataka	2.6	28.8
Kerala	4.5	4.7
Madhya Pradesh	39.7	42.0
Maharashtra	23.7	20.6
Orissa	1.3	9.7
Rajasthan	29.6	41.0
Uttar Pradesh	7.6	33.0
West Bengal	1.7	9.5
Delhi	26.2	40.1
All India	11.4	19.9

Source : *India-Today*, July 15, 1991, p.42.

The above table shows increase in percentage of votes in every state except Maharashtra though the margin is very small and insignificant in the southern states except Karnataka where increase was from 2.6% to 28.8%. Another interesting fact is that though there has been significant increase in percentage of votes in North Indian States, it has not translated into more seats in the states like Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh and Delhi where it came down from the 1989 position.

The following tables on specific state tally indicate that in those states where BJP was the ruling party, the voting trend was against the party. This means that the party's actual performance did not enthuse the voters.

BJP and Congress Party's Votes in key States in 1991 (in %)

TABLE IV

UTTAR - PRADESH

	Congress	BJP
Vote	18.1	33.0
Swings from 89 position	-12.2	+24.8
Seats	5	50

Table-VHIMACHAL PRADESH

	Congress	BJP
Vote	46.2	42.8
Swings	+4.2	-2.4
Seats	2	2

Table VIKARNATAKA

	Congress	BJP
Votes	41.9	28.8
Swings	-6.9	+26.2
Seats	21	4

The only other Southern state where the BJP got a seat was Andhra Pradesh securing 8.8% of votes. In other two states, namely, Tamil Nadu and Kerala, it drew a blank. In the East, the BJP secured 5 seats in Bihar and 2 seats in Assam. In others, namely, Orissa, West Bengal and North-East, it drew a blank.

Table VIIGUJARAT

	Congress	BJP
Vote	28.4	51.4
Swings	-4.4	+21.8
Seats	4	20

Table VIIIMADHYA PRADESH

	Congress	BJP
Vote	45.3%	42%
Swings	-7.6%	+ 2.3%
Seats	27	12

Table IXRAJASTHAN

	Congress	BJP
Vote	44.1	41.0
Swings	+7.1	+11.4
Seats	13	12

SOURCE : All Tables from IV to IX from *India Today*, July 15 1991, pp.44-48.

The above tables indicate that the BJP was affected this time by going all alone. A divided opposition benefitted Congress in all the states, except that BJP was the main beneficiary in Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat because of division of anti BJP votes. The states analysed in the above table have substantial BJP presence. In the rest of the states, BJP's strength is negligible.

SOCIAL BASE OF THE BJP

Marketing and Research Group (MARG) was commissioned by India Today to conduct a nationwide exit poll during the Lok Sabha elections. The poll was carried out in 72 constituencies all over the country. The results reported here are for a sample size of 72,630.⁶¹ This data was then analysed by a psephologist to show the voting behaviour of different groups, their caste, religious affiliations as well as their various reasons for voting for the Congress (I) or opposition and the position which emerged in respect of BJP was as given below :-

Table X

SUPPORT FOR THE BJP (AGE-WISE DISTRIBUTION in %)

New voters	Young voters	Middleage	Old age
(18-21)	(21-30)	(31-50)	(51+)
27.3%	22.4%	17.7%	16.3%

Table XISUPPORT FOR THE BJP (SEX WISE DISTRIBUTION in %)

Men	Women
20.9%	18.3%

Table XIISUPPORT BASE OF BJP (RURAL/ URBAN IN %)

Urban	Rural
27.7%	17.5%

Table XIIISUPPORT BASE OF BJP (CASTE-WISE IN %)

Upper Caste	Backward	SC/ST
36.4	20.8	11.4

Source : Table X to XIII from *India Today*, July 15, 1991. Exit Poll: *How India Voted*, pp.54-55.

The BJP vote base among different age groups is strikingly different from Congress (I). Younger voters supported the BJP, while the older voters supported the Congress (I). The BJP also emerged as a male and urban dominated party. Despite getting only half the vote percentage of Congress (I), the BJP was able to win more upper caste votes than the Congress(I). The BJP also

won considerable support among the backward castes but it did very poorly with Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes voters, who remained solidly behind the Congress(I) in almost every state.

An opinion poll conducted over 51 Lok Sabha constituencies by MARG group indicated the following projections:-

Table XIV

HIGHER/ LOWER THAN AVERAGE VOTE FOR-BJP

Brahmin	Kshatriya	Bania	SC/ST	OBC	Muslim
+15%	+9%	+12%	-9%	-10%	-25%

Source : *India Today*, May 31st 1991.

A significant feature of this poll is that far from being a ‘‘Bania Party’’ the BJP came across as a party of the forward castes. The BJP has become the party of the better educated, the trader, the white collar workers and the professional. It is also a male party, a young party and an urban party.

The socially cohesive coalition which supports the BJP is essentially lower middle and middle classes of Urban Hindu Upper Castes. The BJP has in recent times tried to make inroads into such segments as lower castes, backwards, farmers, particularly landless and small landholders too but has not been successful so far. The support of these sectors is central to the realisation of BJP’s electoral dream of capturing power as they comprise

the majority of the electorate.⁶² The exhilarating electoral experience of 1989 and 1991 were the result of reinforcement of homogenised social base of the party. Local level leaders and voters of the BJP, VHP and RSS admit that their organisation depends on upper castes. The Mandal Commission proposal accelerated the process of upper caste consolidation and some BJP activists visibly participated in anti Mandal demonstration to show their basic loyalty to the former.⁶³ The apparent organisational strength based on primarily urban middle class/upper caste led Hindutva homogeneity may not produce enough electoral dividends. Its support structure is ... bereft of social pluralism required for formation of government on its own.⁶⁴

The Bharatiya Janta Party had a well thought out strategy during the 1989 and 1991 elections according to which they targeted diverse segments of supporters by emphasising particular facets of the party. For the urban professionals and youth, the party projected itself as a distinct party. Their motif was staunch Nationalism, while referring to Kashmir, Punjab or Assam. One of their slogan was 'while others use caste to divide, BJP uses culture to unite. Let us go for Ram Rajya.'⁶⁵ The party also tried to shed its conservative image, as an important vote bank targeted was youth.⁶⁶ Among those attracted to the party are journalists, intellectuals and lawyers etc. Among them Arun Shourie, Swapan Das Gupta, Girilal Jain, Arun Jaitley, Jay Dubhashi, Russi Karanjia are prominent. Some of these supporters feel for the Hindutva

cause and think the minorities should not be appeased. Others feel that Hindutva angle is largely a political stunt and will be abandoned once the BJP comes to power. Keeping this in mind, the BJP refined its pitch to counter the advocates of social justice and stability, i.e. Janata Dal and Congress(I). The party also highlighted its image of discipline and cohesiveness which comes with a cadre based party.⁶⁷

This image of BJP was an attraction to voters-Youths and professionals who related to its leadership so called committed and non corrupt character after being disillusioned by other parties. For the rural folks, there was the populist appeal of construction of temple in Ayodhya. The popular idol Ram was exploited to tap the emotional appeal among the religious Hindu populace. The hardline stance on issues like Article 370, minorities Commission, Ayodhya shrine etc appealed to its traditional vote banks as it portrayed an aggressive Hindutva posture. An RSS leader said that even if backward classes do not come with them, the upper caste Hindus can swing the elections if they vote together. Thus the party's poll strategy was :-

- (a) consolidate Hindu militant votes through VHP's Hindutva programme.
- (b) Wean away moderate Hindu voters from Congress(I) with cry of Hindu Nationalism and project itself as a unifying alternative to pseudo secularism;
- (c) Grab the stability card from the Congress(I).⁽⁶⁸⁾

Another segment which is BJP's traditional vote bank is the Urban trading classes to which it offers various protective measures like abolition of sales tax, no restrictions on trade of goods within the country and so on. This segment has always helped BJP financially. The rural landlords and big farmers have also to a certain extent been BJP's vote bank, which is one of the reason it is alienated from the rural poor and backward classes.

In the South, the BJP is a non entity as issue wise and cadre-wise, it is considered a North Indian Party. The support it got in the 1991 elections in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh was limited to urban Hindu areas, where a communal divide existed and Ayodhya issue aroused passion. Elsewhere in rural south, BJP has no base.

CANDIDATES OF THE BJP IN 1991 ELECTIONS

Every fourth candidate in Madhya Pradesh was a lawyer. Uttar Pradesh had three retired DIG's in fray, S.C.Dixit, B.P.Singhal and Shyam Lal. Former Comptroller and Auditor General, T.N. Chaturvedi was a candidate from Brahmin dominated Kannauj. There were also half a dozen Sadhus in the fray. Erstwhile royal scions have been nominated in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh. The party has also selected actors and actresses like Shatrughan Sinha, Arvind Trivedi etc. mainly because of their sale- ability in terms of votes. The party fielded OBCs and Muslims too to prove its secular and casteless image.⁶⁹

ORGANISATION AND LEADERSHIP

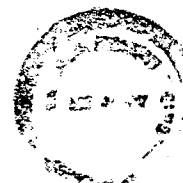
In the 1991 elections, some two lakh carefully selected RSS workers had spread out in the field and canvassed support for the Hindu cause with clock work efficiency. The BJP feels that it has a strong organisational set up which gives it an edge over other parties, particularly for the following reasons:-

- (a) a low turn out can be exploited by committed cadres, who know how to get the vote out.
- (b) BJP unlike other parties does not revolve around one personality.⁷⁰

In these recent elections, 15 prominent members of the BJP's 'front galaxy' covered every nook and corner of the country with the party's message of 'Ram, Roti and Insaf'.

THE ORGANISATION (LINE OF COMMAND)⁷¹

At the topmost level, there are the old guards like Atal Behari Vajpayee, Lal Krishna Advani and Vijaya Raje Scindia. Each has over 30 years of association with the party or RSS. Vajpayee is the liberal face of the party, while Vijaya Raje Scindia symbolises the uncompromising Hindutva stand. L.K.Advani who is midway between them, is the mass leader who has revived the Hindu Nationalist image of the BJP. He is a staunch RSS man and this gives him clout within the party. These leaders are responsible for the party line.



Below them, the coordinating committee consists of former party chief Dr.Murli Manohar Joshi, Kushabhau Thakre, S.S.Bhandari and Govindacharya. Barring Joshi, rest are still RSS prackharaks (full time unmarried leaders) on deputation to the party. Three of them except S.S.Bhandari belong to the Brahmin community.

Below them there is a sub group whose members work according to well defined portfolios -

- (a) Vice-President, K.L.Sharma represents the party's urban refugee face and is an RSS pracharak too.
- (b) K.R.Malkani- edits the party paper, "Organiser" and generally portrays the BJP ideology.
- (c) O.Rajgopal- party General Secretary is a former RSS leader and backbone of BJP in South India.
- (d) Ved Prakash Goel- a small scale industrialist from Bombay is the treasurer of the BJP.
- (e) Dev Das Apte-deputed from RSS is the Maharastrian infra-structure man in charge of logistic coordination like the distribution of publicity material.
- (f) Kedar Nath Sahni- is a link with the traditional urban trading community vote bank.

The publicity and campaign committee is headed by K.R.Malkani, Arun Jaitley former Additional Solicitor General and ABVP leader, Narendra Modi a committed RSS man, Promod Mahajan, an RSS activist and all India Secretary of the BJP and finally Jagdish Prashad Mathur, a practising pracharak who deals with regional media.

The nexus between the RSS, BJP and VHP is close and elaborate with the Sangh acting as a coordinator. The above description of BJP organisation shows clearly that every second office bearer of the party at both central and state level is or has been either a full time RSS pracharak or member.

SELECTION PROCESS

Local RSS leaders are involved in the selection of candidates for election at the district level. The senior RSS leaders are deputed for coordinating the selection. Once the district unit recommends a panel of names, it is sent to the state Parliamentary Board. Invariably the state level RSS leaders participate in the screening and the list is then forwarded to the Central Parliamentary Board.⁷³ As BJP General Secretary, Govindacharya claims, “we don’t believe in imposing people from above unless absolutely necessary.”⁷⁴ The RSS cadres are entrusted with important jobs like handling finances, distributing the publicity material, managing polling booths and pulling out voters from their houses.⁷⁵ In effect the BJP still functions as a party, where really crucial decisions are taken at RSS headquarters in Nagpur.

In recent times, the BJP has started pushing the second line of leaders into the front ranks. In the recent organisational elections it has made a deliberate effort to project those leaders who can carry forward the Hindutva crusade with aggressiveness. The former party President M.M.Joshi is fiercely committed to Hindutva ideology and is an authority on integral humanism. In the states too, new generation of leaders who were initiated into politics on campus have been anointed. They are more outspoken in projecting the party's aims and policies. Former activists of Akhil Bharatiya Vidhyarthi Parishad (ABVP) are now holding significant party positions. Joshi while commenting about the political goal of BJP philosophy, goes further than the terminology 'pseudo Secularism' in emphasising the futility of the Nehruvian model of Democracy.⁷⁶

BJP'S CHANGE OF FACE-MODERATE TO MILITANT

The dilemma which BJP faced after coming to power in a strong manner in 1989 and then in 1991 was whether it should sacrifice the security of its grass roots for the benefits of centrist appeal. The common argument regarding BJP was that once the party gains a foothold at the centre-stage, its essentially liberal national leadership will edge out the more radical majority. The current scenario-refutes this theory. The moderate talk of BJP leadership was effectively shut down by the Vishva Hindu Parishad and Rastriya Swayam Sevak Sangh. Unable to deal with their fundamentalist pulls, the BJP's

image of the parochial party has been reinforced.⁷⁷

Some of the major differences, which have cropped up in the recent past between BJP and VHP are :-

- (a) On Ayodhya issue, while the BJP favoured negotiations, the VHP completely abjured any judicial decision.
- (b) The BJP preferred to shy away from claiming Krishna Janmabhoomi and Kashi Vishwanath temple, while VHP and Bajrang Dal continued to campaign for the same.
- (c) Another issue was choice of electoral candidates, RSS pracharaks were unhappy with the BJP for giving tickets to new entrants like Shatrughan Sinha, Dipika Chiklia at the cost of long standing grass-root workers as it would lead to diffusion of party's ideological purity. BJP felt that electoral candidates and organisational work are two different things.⁷⁸

“But despite this the BJP and its sister organisations are bound by common ideology”⁷⁹ said party ideologue J.P.Mathur, “Most leaders of both the BJP and the VHP belong to Sangh parivar, the RSS, so basically we all think alike,”⁸⁰ said Surya Kishan, Secretary of the VHP. But the fact was that the BJP was increasingly over whelmed by the stridency and militant postures of the cadres of the VHP and its youth wings Bajrang Dal and Durga Vahini. The beatific smile of Ram in VHP posters was replaced by

a war like image, bow at the ready. The slogans too have changed from ‘Saugandh Ram Ki Khate Hain Hum Mandir Vahee Banayenge’ (we swear by Lord Ram, we will build the temple at the site) to the fanatic slogan, ‘Jis Hindü Ka Khoon na Khaule, Khoon Nahin Woh Pani Hain, Janmabhoomi ke kaam na aye vo bekar jawanee hai’ (The Hindu whose blood does not boil for the temple cause is wimp, and those who don’t sacrifice their life for the cause of temple are not worth living).⁸¹ These two slogans indicate how much militant the movement has become. These organisations cited the dithering by government on Shah Bano case, Ayodhya controversy and brinksmanship of Muslim leaders as the reason for its militancy. More recently, the ‘places of worship’ bill became the bone of contention.

The clout of VHP men can be gauged from the fair number of BJP tickets given to them in last elections. Besides political and financial clout, its muscle power in the form of Bajrang Dal could not be ignored as they were the most prominent Kar Sevaks in Ayodhya. The BJP could not ignore the fact that much of its grass root support is actually the VHP and the Bajrang Dal followers. According to Giriraj Kishore “VHP has over one crore members now.”⁸² Yet the uniting factor is the RSS which has contributed a bulk of leadership in both VHP and the BJP.

The point which was repeatedly made by the BJP was “that Sadhus under the VHP could be brought under control by the BJP.”⁸³ The

massive rally of three lakh organised by VHP on 4th April, 1992 demonstrated that the VHP had the upper hand. Similarly the militant youth wing of VHP, Bajrang Dal consisting of over five lakh members was portrayed by B. P. Singhal, a BJP member as “nothing more than aberrant children who can be taught self restraint.”⁸⁴ it is a moot point whether the RSS can restrain the electoral ambitions of Sants and Bajrang Dal. The Sadhus do not mince words while saying “we can defeat this party just as we can bring it to power.”⁸⁵

With the arrival of these new militant wings in the BJP Parliamentary contingent, the much touted discipline has taken a back seat and there is a rise in physical violence by the new M.Ps. The more rabid section of the BJP is in favour of an eye to eye policy and they associate restraint with insult. Religion is the major grouse of the BJP MPs against other parties. As socialist leader, Madhu Limaye puts it “their only point is the Ram Temple, poverty, illiteracy etc. mean nothing.”⁸⁶ This indicates a fall of standard of the BJP M.Ps from educated majority to religious fundamentalists. Ultimately, the BJP lost control over its militant units when after assuring the government that it would abide by court orders on Ayodhya issue, it could not prevent the demolition of Babri Masjid on 6th December, 1992. While the immediate reaction of the BJP leadership was of shock, a week after Ayodhya incident there was no trace of remorse in the BJP in a sudden shift of tactics. Party

Vice - President K.R. Malkani said thus “ the demolition of the disputed structure in the Ayodhya though unfortunate is going to help us politically - the BJP can only move forward and upward from here”⁸⁷ The BJP are now on the offensive and determined to exploit the demand for Krishna Janmabhoomi and Mathura and Kashi Temple in Varanasi in a total reversal of its earlier policy of not raising the issue.⁸⁸

Liberals like Atal Behari Vajpayee, J.P.Mathur (General Secretary), Arif Baig (Chairman of the BJP minority cell), General Jacob, business groups in the party like S.K. Modi, J.K.Jain who were apprehensive about Ayodhya went along with the aggressive line.⁸⁹ Thus, the final lid seems to have closed on the BJP’s moderate phase and leaders. The party has now become one with its banned units namely; the VHP, Bajrang Dal, and the RSS (its ban was revoked recently) by adopting a belligerent posture.

The party will as its leaders say “ strive hard to be seen as a party worthy of governance by ensuring that all programmes include known democratic forms of protest in a peaceful manner.” The BJP is happy with its isolation in the political spectrum, after the Babri Masjid demolition. As Govindacharya put it “the internal conflicts within The Congress as well as other non-Congress opposition parties will further concretise the BJP vs. non - BJP battle line.”⁹⁰ But the real test would be in the party leadership succeeding in keeping the militant cadres in check during its future programmes. The

BJP leaders still consider discipline as the main strength of their party. Jay Dubhashi says that the recent incidents of indiscipline can be “attributed to the fact that the support for the party has increased manifold in a matter of month.”⁹¹ He, however, considers it as a temporary phase.

Praful Bidwai in his article puts forth the view that “the BJP today, is devoid of a political agenda and has nothing to say on important issues of the day and is in -thrall of its extreme right wing composed of self styled mahants and Sadhus and assorted hardliners, who are ready to proclaim a Hindu Rashtra, Party’s parliamentary wing too shows signs of demoralisation and incoherence and there is no agreement in the party on issues of policy or strategy.”⁹² The party’s base has been greatly polarised and its hardline segment has definitely been consolidated. But its more numerous softer segments are likely to move away from the party that easily attracts stigma, is so close to illegality and in confrontation with a State. According to the author, the BJP is not a normal political party or parliamentary organisation any more.⁹³

Only the next elections will tell whether the party will go full throat on the militant Hindu path with the VHP, Bajrang Dal activists or would try to tread the safer path of a democratic and moderate approach. There can be no better reflection of the party’s approach than the choice of electoral candidates and how the electioneering is carried out by the party. The next chapter deals with the analysis of socio economic background of BJP legislators.

FOOTNOTES : CHAPTER - III

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CHAPTER IV

STUDY OF THE SOCIO - ECONOMIC BACKGROUND OF BJP MPs IN THE LOK SABHA.

Social scientists have been analysing political behaviour and conducting field studies of political decision makers and these studies now form literature of political sociology. According to Myron Weiner “to understand modern India, one must understand its leadership, the social background from which it has emerged, the group with which it is associated and whose interest it articulates, value and ideology it propagates and influence which it wields.”¹

David Easton and Jack Dennis define the concept of “political socialisation as those development processes through which persons acquire political orientations and pattern of behavior.”² The agents of socialisation which pass on the political norms from generation to generation are family, peer groups, school or educational institutions, social groupings such as class, race and caste, secondary groups such as political organisations and occupational associations, experience within the political world etc.³ Thus an analysis in the context of political socialisation would include elite identification,

social formations from which elite comes, circulation and composition of elite, attitude and behavioral patterns, process of acquiring these attitudes and behaviour pattern, agents of politicisation and socialisation and its impact in terms of maintenance or change in policy.

In any politicised society, political parties act as instrument of articulation and canalisation of diverse and confused demands of multiple and competing social groups. The task of such articulation is performed by the party's organisational and legislative leadership. It is, therefore, worthwhile to find out the socio-economic background of the party activists and the leaders, as it helps in our understanding of inside functioning of the party.

In this context, this paper seeks to analyse the socio economic and political background of the BJP legislative leadership in Parliament since its formation in 1980 by a study of the bio-datas of 224 MPs, who were members of the different Lok Sabha from 1980 to 1991, as shown below:

	No. of MPs
7th Lok Sabha (1980)	16
8th Lok Sabha (1985)	3 (including one from byelection)
9th Lok Sabha (1989)	86
10th Lok Sabha (1991)	119
Total	224

Out of 224 MPs mentioned above, 4 MPs had served in three Lok Sabha, while 42 had served in two Lok Sabha. The actual number of MPs involved in this study thus works out to 174.

The main contrast or change in the background of MPs can be drawn between 1989 and 1991, particularly because of their larger numbers. On the other hand membership of 1980 Lok Sabha is also very important, as a new party with a new ideology had just arrived to mark its place in the political arena. 1985 was the watershed in the BJP's young life. It would, therefore, be interesting to contrast the change that occurred when BJP abandoned its centrist secular image in favour of a populist Hindu nationalist image after the 1984 debacle.

The popular conception of the social, political and economic base of the party has already been mentioned in detail in the last chapter. It is conceived as a North Indian party representing the Hindi belt. It is also called a brahmin-bania party with an urban bias. The economic policy of the party is supposed to target the small traders, businessmen and salaried class, who generally represent the upper and middle class. The BJP is also considered to draw support from rural land holders and former zamindars, though the party vociferously denies this. From our data of Lok Sabha members of the BJP, we will seek to examine these points.

In recent years, the party has become more militant and this has to reflect somewhere in the composition of BJP MPs and their association with socio-cultural and religious organisation which preach such ideology. Education and schooling of MPs would also reflect their economic and social status in addition to their rural or urban background. The study of the criteria adopted by the party for distribution of tickets for election to Lok Sabha. e.g. previous legislative experience, relation with other associations and the most important of these, their position in the party set up whether at central, state or district level also gives an idea about the preferences of the organisational leadership. Another vital analysis would be the percentage of MPs with different occupational background in the party organisation and how it reflects in the economic policy of the party. It would also be interesting to look at the age-wise composition of MPs and to examine whether there is a perceptible change in the MPs socio-economic background in different age group and what it portends for the future. In totality, this is an attempt to look at the leadership, party organisation, political set - up and electoral motives of the Bharatiya Janta party and how the party policies have emerged as also socio economic forces behind them. The functioning of the party and the background of its MPs provides a possible indicator of the direction in which BJP would go in future. The purpose of this study would be to add the weight of concrete data

to support the various assertions made in the previous chapter regarding the socio-political aims of the party by focussing on the decision makers of the party.

TABLE - I

REGION WISE REPRESENTATION OF BJP M.P'S - 1980 - 91

REGION	<u>IN %</u>				Total
	1980	1985	1989	1991	
HINDI	87.5	33.3	75.6	73.1	74.5
NON-HINDI	12.5	66.7	24.4	26.9	25.5
TOTAL (N)	16	3	86	119	244

Source: *Lok Sabha, Who's Who* 1980, 1985, 1989, 1991 All the tables given in this chapter are tabulated by the author.⁴

It will be observed from the above table that 74.5% MPs came from the Hindi belt, which comprises all the Northern States in addition to Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. Predictably, the BJP is seen to have a small presence in the non - Hindi belt which comprises besides the South, the States of Maharashtra and Gujarat. Another important trend observed is that the percentage of Hindi belt MPs is lowering and the percentage of non - Hindi belt MPs is showing a steady upswing e.q. in 1980 Hindi belt MPs were 87.5% which has come down marginally

to 73.1% in 1991. In 1980, 12.5% of MPs came from the non - Hindi belt, while in 1991, their percentage had increased to 26.9 %. Still BJP is overwhelmingly a party representing the Hindi belt with 167 members from Hindi belt and only 57 from the non-Hindi belt.

TABLE - II

ZONE WISE REPRESENTATION OF BJP MP'S - 1980 - 91

(IN %)

ZONES	1980	1985	1989	1991	Total
NORTH	75.0	33.3	65.1	68.9	67.4
WEST	12.5	33.3	24.4	21	21.9
EAST	12.5	--	10.5	5.9	8.0
SOUTH	--	33.3	--	4.2	2.7
TOTAL(N)	16	3	86	119	224

Looking at the representation of the party M.P.s zone wise, it will be observed that the highest concentration is in the Northern zone (67.4%) followed by west zone (21.9%) The share of the East and South is a negligible 8% (18 seats) and 2.7% (6 seats) respectively. While in 1980 Lok Sabha, the share of North in BJP's total seats was 75% it came down drastically in 1985 (33.3%) but has picked up steadily in 1989 (65.1%)

and 1991(68.9%). The share of West has shown an increase from 12.5% in 1980 to about 24.4% in 1989. East zone representation has been on a decline from 12.5% in 1980 to 5.9% in 1991.

The popularity of BJP is thus mainly confined to Northern States and to some extent West. The party's presence in the East and South is virtually non-existent. This is a major drawback of the BJP which, while it negates its all India character, may possibly prove vital in preventing the party from coming to power at the centre. In the Eastern belt, the BJP is confined to Bihar, where also in the recent elections, the Janata Dal with its strong caste based approach, arising mainly from the Mandal Report on reservation from back ward classes, has cut into BJP's combined Hindu votes. This is another grey area for the party which presents a hobsons choice i.e. if they support the report, their forward castes supporters might desert them and if they oppose it, they will loose the support of backward castes. The party has, therefore, been trying to a soft pedal the issue.

TABLE - III
AGE WISE REPRESENTATION OF BJP MP'S 1980-91 (IN %)

AGE GROUPS	1980	1985	1989	1991	TOTAL
25 - 45	25.0	-	28.0	32.8	30.0
46 - 60	75.0	100	52.3	45.4	50.9
61 and above	-	-	19.7	21.8	19.1
Total(N)	16	3	86	119	224

Age -wise 50.9% BJP MP's are in the age group of 46-60 years, followed by 30% in the age group of 25-45 years and 19.1% in the age of 61 and above. The number of MP in the younger age group has increased from 25% in 1980 to 32.8% in 1991, whereas those in the middle group i.e. 46-60 years has come down from 75% in 1980 to 45.4% in 1991. The number of MPs in the age group of 61 and above has marginally increased from 19.7% in 1989 to 21.8% in 1991. This increase is explained by the fact that many of the MPs who were among the founders of the party and form the core of the party have over the years moved to the older age group but are still active in the party.

A distinct trend observed is that the representation of younger MPs is increasing, while the older MPs share of seats is on the decline. The

younger MPs have made their own niche in the party in successive Lok Sabha, as their representation has increased from 25% in 1980 to 32.8% in 1991. With the increase in the number of younger MPs, the party has been adopting more and more confrontationist and aggressive posture. This is borne out by the events of the last few years, with the activists of Bajrang Dal and other militant youth outfits being given greater representation. The youth have become a vital pressure group within the party who lead the way over and above the moderates of older age group. Still the MPs belonging to the middle age group, along with older MPs, who constitute almost half of the total MPs, have succeeded in maintaining continuity in the policy and programme of the party and to a certain extent in restraining the younger MPs. This may not be the case for long if the above stated trend of greater representation to younger age group continues.

TABLE - IV

PERMANENT RESIDENCE OF BJP MP'S (IN %)

AREA OF RESIDENCE	1980	1985	1989	1991	TOTAL
RURAL	37.5	100	46.5	47.1	46.9
URBAN	62.5	--	53.5	52.9	53.1
TOTAL (N)	16	3	86	119	224

53.1% of the MPs surveyed in all the Lok Sabha belonged to the Urban areas, while 46.9% belonged to the rural areas. In 1980, 37.5% of MPs belonged to the rural areas. Their number increased to 47.1% in 1991. The percentage of the MPs from urban areas has come down from 62.5% in 1980 to 52.9% in 1991. This shows that the number of MPs from the rural background has been increasing slightly but steadily, with each Lok Sabha. It also indicates an expansion of BJP's rural base, and a marginal decline in its representation from the urban areas. Still, the urban social-political base of BJP continues to be very significant. "It is, however, relevant to mention that almost 79.5% of MPs were born in rural areas, while 20.5% in the urban areas."⁵ The contrast with their areas of permanent residence shows that many of the MPs have made a shift from their place of birth to urban townships and other housing colonies. The number of MPs whose permanent address is outside their constituency is miniscule. We can thus conclude that the party was and is basically composed of MPs grounded in urban culture, who give weightage to urban segment in the party policies. It is only in recent times that the party has focussed on rural voters and the result is an increase in the representation of MPs from these areas.

TABLE - VEDUCATION-WISE REPRESENTATION OF BJP MP'S (IN %)

LEVEL OF EDUCATION	1980	1985	1989	1991	Total
PRIMARY-MIDDLE	--	--	2.3	4.2	3.1
INTER-MEDIATE	25	66.7	16.3	18.5	18.8
GRADUATE & ABOVE	75	33.3	79.1	75.6	76.3
NOT-MENTIONED	--	--	2.3	1.7	1.8
TOTAL (N)	16	3	86	119	224

The above analysis of the educational background indicate that 76.3% of MPs were graduates and above, while 18.8% had done intermediate. It is also relevant to mention that a good number of MPs have post-graduate qualifications. The party has thus been having a highly educated group of MPs. The percentage of graduates have remained significantly high in all the Lok Sabhas, except in 1985 when the total number of MPs was just three.

TABLE - VIEDUCATION LEVEL OF MP'S IN DIFFERENT AGE-GROUPS

LEVEL OF EDUCATION	(IN %)			Total
	25-45	46-60	61 above	
PRIMARY-MIDDLE	3	3.5	2.3	3.1
INTERMEDIATE	11.9	21.1	23.2	18.8
GRADUATE & ABOVE	85.1	73.7	69.8	76.3
NOT MENTIONED	--	1.7	4.7	1.8
TOTAL	67	114	43	224

Above table shows that in the younger age group, there is a larger percentage (85.1%) of graduates and above. The percentage of graduates and above in older age groups are marginally lower i.e. 73.7% in 46 to 60 years age group and 69.8% in 61 and above age group. The educational level of the BJP MPs is therefore quite high; the younger MPs of the party being more highly educated.

TABLE - VII

PLACE OF EDUCATION OF BJP MP'S (IN %)

Place of Education	1980	1985	1989	1991	Total
Village	12.6	25	5.8	6.7	7.6
Town & City	43.7	-	58.1	54.6	54.4
State Capital	43.7	25	34.9	37.8	37.1
Foreign Metro Politian					
Not Mentioned -	-	-	1.2	0.9	0.9
TOTAL (N)	16	3	86	119	224

The place of education and schooling of individuals also reflects their economic and social status, i.e. were the MPs able to afford good education in a city or more important metropolitan or capital city. An overwhelming number of MPs had their education and schooling done in urban areas. Thus the social environment of these MPs was essentially urban, particularly of those who had studied in metros and state capital. In all the Lok Sabha, 54.4% of the MPs have studied in towns and cities. Those educated in village were just 7.6%. It should be mentioned here that many MPs who have studied in towns and cities have been educated in prestigious privates institutions. An interesting trend noted here is that from 1980 to 1991, the percentage of MPs with education in capital and

metropolitan cities has come down from 43.7% to 37.83% respectively, while the number of these educated in towns and cities has increased from 43.7% in 1980 to 58.1% in 1989 and gone down slightly to 54.6% in 1991. 'In 1991, 66.7% of 25-45 age group MPs had studied in towns and cities.'⁶

This shift from state capital and metropolitan cities to town and cities in the case of younger MPs is presumably due to expansion of educational facilities. Nevertheless, the younger MPs would seem to have small town background, as compared to older MPs, who had their education in metropolitan cities and were socialised in that environment. Their individual outlook would be more reflective of the place where they had their education and socialisation.

TABLE - VIII
PREVIOUS LEGISLATIVE EXPERIENCE OF MP'S (IN %)

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE	1980	1985	1989	1991	Total
MP's	31.25	-	7.0	20.2	15.6
MLA and MP	31.25	-	23.3	24.4	24.1
MLA only	25	66.7	40.7	11.8	24.6
Fresh	12.5	33.3	26.7	43.7	34.8
Rajya Sabha	-	-	2.3	-	0.9
Total (N)	16	3	86	119	224

The above table shows that 34.8% of the MPs have been fresh entrants to Lok Sabha without any previous legislative experience. Those who were earlier MLAs account for 24.6% and those who were earlier MLAs and MPs both constitute 24.6% of total strength. The percentage of those who were earlier MPs was 15.6%. 39.7% MPs have thus been Lok Sabha members earlier, while 48.7% have had legislative experience at the State level. The total percentage of MPs with previous legislative experience would thus work out of 65.2%. This indicates that the party prefers to give tickets to candidates with previous legislative experience. Some of the fresh MPs have previous experience of work at municipal or district level. Some also have wide administrative or judicial experience. There are also few MPs who had previous legislative experience on the tickets of other parties, which have not been included in the above table.

It is, however, noticed that there has been a progressive increase in the percentage of ^{MPs} without previous legislative experience being elected to the Lok Sabha on the party ticket, as shown below :-

	1980	1989	1991
With previous legislative experience	87.5	72.3	56.4
Without any previous legislative experience	12.5	26.7	43.7

The rowdy face of BJP parliamentary party in 1989 and 1991 Lok Sabha can be explained by the increase in the number of MPs, who had no legislative experience. This also shows that as the party expands

and number of MPs become larger, the party tries to widen the net for selection of candidates and gives tickets to those who are likely to win election. In the last election, the party had fielded candidates from diverse fields like filmdom, cricket, retired army and civil officers ignoring the claims of experienced party men. This trend might alienate the grass root party workers in the long run and might adversely effect the party prospects in future elections. In this way, the internal democracy in the party also gets muffled as the selection of candidates get more and more centralised at the hands of party high command.

TABLE - IX

AGE WISE DISTRIBUTION OF BJP MP'S AND THEIR
LEGISLATIVE EXPERIENCE (IN %)

Previous experience	25-45	46-60	61 & above	Total
MP	9.0	19.3	16.3	15.7
MP or MLA	15.0	24.6	37.2	24.1
MLA only	22.3	28.1	18.6	24.5
Fresh	53.7	26.3	27.9	34.8
MP Rajya Sabha	-	1.7	-	0.9
Total (N)	67	114	43	224

53.7% of the fresh MPs belong to the 25-45 age group. The percentage of fresh MPs in the age group 46-60 and 61 and above is 26.3% and 27.9% respectively. The largest number of MPs with previous legislative experience at the central level belong to 46-60 age group (19.3) and 61 and above age group(16.3%). The majority of those having experience both at the central and state level also belong to the age group 46 to 60 (24.6%) and 61 above (37.2%). Thus MPs in the older age group have more legislative experience. There is nothing unusual about this.

TABLE - X

PROFESSION WISE DISTRIBUTION OF BJP MP'S IN (IN %)

Profession	1980	1985	1989	1991	Total
Agriculture	6.0	6.6	25.5	23.6	23.6
Business & Industrial	25.0	-	16.3	21.0	19.2
Services & Professional	50.0	33.3	41.9	42.0	42.4
Social Worker	19.0	-	14.0	6.7	10.3
Religious Missionaries	-	-	2.3	6.7	4.5
Total (N)	16	3	86	119	224

In all the Lok Sabha's, professionals and services group comprising doctors, lawyers, civil servants, teachers etc. comprise the highest percentage of MP's (42.4%), followed by agricultural group (23.6%). Many who are professional have given 'agriculturists' as their profession, which is indicative of their agricultural roots. The business and Industrial group (19.2%) which represent the BJP's main vote bank in the urban areas, are at the third place. These data support the hypothesis that BJP mainly represents service and professional class and business and industrial class, who together account for 61.6% of MPs. The above table also shows progressive increase in the representation of MPs coming from agricultural profession from 6% in 1980 to 23.5% in 1991. Another interesting fact that crops up is the emergence of a new group within the BJP which is of religious missionaries. These were absent in earlier Lok Sabha but in 1989 comprised 2.3% of members and in 1991 6.7% of the total members. This is indicative of the growing clout of organisations like the VHP.

TABLE - XIAGE-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF BJP MP'S PROFESSION (IN %)

PROFESSION	25-45	46-60	61 & above	Total
Agriculture	28.4	23.6	16.3	23.6
Business & Industries	20.9	22.8	7	19.2
Services & Professional	31.3	43	58.1	42.4
Social Worker	7.5	10.5	13.9	10.3
Religious Missionaries	11.9	-	4.7	4.5
Total (N)	67	114	43	224

An interesting trend noticed from the above table is that the lowest age group of 25-45 has the highest representation of agriculturists (28.4%), while the representation of the agriculturists goes down progressively in the higher age groups. This shows gradual entry of the party to the rural areas in the recent past. Another interesting fact which emerges from this study is that the representation of service and professional groups is higher in the higher age groups. This is indicative of the fact the persons belonging to service and professional group enter the parliament at a comparatively older age after establishing themselves in their respective fields. It is also

noted that 25-45 age group MPs comprise 11.9% of religious missionaries, while 61 and above age group includes just 4.7% missionaries. This is again indicative of the growing clout of VHP in the party. The change in the occupational background of BJP MPs should gradually bring about policy change in the party. The MPs from the younger age group will be more receptive to new ideas, as compared to MPs from the older age group who are generally for maintaining status-quo. This augurs well for the party.

TABLE - XII
ORGANISATIONAL POSITION OCCUPIED BY BJP MP'S
IN THE PARTY (IN %)

POSITION IN ORGNS	1980	1985	1989	1991	TOTAL
Central	18.75	-	1.2	2.5	3.1
State & Central	12.5	33.3	18.6	10.9	14.3
Only State	12.5	-	41.9	21.8	28.6
District	12.5	-	9.3	16.8	13.4
Fresh	43.75	66.7	29.0	47.9	40.6
Not given					
Total (N)	16	3	86	119	224

The above table shows that 40.6% of MPs did not enjoy any position at any level in the party organisation, while 59.4% MPs were from the organisation and they had been party functionaries either at the Central, State or District level. This is clearly indicative of the fact while giving party ticket for the Lok Sabha, candidates from the organisation are preferred. This is also indicative of the close relationship between the party organisation and the legislature.

The representation of MPs with organisational background has, however, come down appreciably from 71% in 1989 to 52% in 1991. On the other hand, the number of MPs with no organisational experience has gone up from 29% in 1989 to about 48% in 1991. This also clearly shows that the party is widening the field of selection of candidates and giving tickets to large number of outsiders, who stand a better chance of winning the election. It is also possible that the party is under pressure from other sister organisation like VHP for accommodating their candidates in the election. It is good for the party to open up like this and to inject fresh blood in the legislature. However, its long term implication may be grave unless the party is in a position to extend its iron grip on the newcomers as well. If this is not done, party may face factionalism. It will also lead to greater indiscipline. In order to avoid a situation like this, the organisational set up of the party, including its parliamentary wing,

is likely to close rank and concentrate all power in the hands of few elites. If this happens, the first victim will be 'internal democracy' in the party. The party has to draw a balance and to avoid the extreme of both the situation.

TABLE - XIII
AGE-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF BJP MP'S IN THE PARTY
ORGANISATION (IN %)

POSITION IN ORGNS	25-45	46-60	61 &above	TOTAL
Central	-	3.5	7.0	3.1
Central & State	9.0	15.8	18.6	14.3
State	31.3	29.0	23.2	28.6
District	17.9	11.4	11.6	13.4
Fresh/not Given	41.8	40.3	39.6	40.6
Total (N)	67	114	43	224

In the 25-45 age group only 9% enjoy a position at the central party organisation, while in 46-60 age group 19.3% and 61 and above age group 25.6% do so. At the state level all age groups have almost equal representation while at the district level younger age group are more in number. Thus,

the 46 and above age group dominates the party set up at the central level which is where ultimate decision regarding party policies are taken.

TABLE - XIV
BJP MPS LINKS WITH OTHER SOCIO-POLITICAL AND
RELIGIOUS ORGANISATION (IN %)

SOCIO-POL. ORGNS	1980	1985	1989	1991	Total
(a) BJS	43.75	33.3	24.4	14.3	20.5
(b) VHP, RSS etc	-	33.3	5.8	14.3	10.3
ABVP	-	-	5.8	5.9	5.3
a & b	18.75	-	11.7	6.7	9.4
None	37.5	33.3	52.3	58.8	54.5
Total (N)	16	3	86	119	224

45.5% of BJP MPs in Lok Sabha have had links with political organizations like Jan Sangh which is widely considered as its predecessor or religious organisation like VHP and RSS or youth organizations like ABVP and Bharatiya Janta Yuva Morcha or all of them. 54.5% had either no such association or have not mentioned it in their profile. There has been a

progressive decline in such links from 1980 (62.50%) to 1989 (47.7%) to 1991 (41.2%).

While 20.5% of MPs were related to BJS, 10.3% have long associations with socio-religious organisation. Here it may be mentioned that many MPs, related to Ramlila Samiti and other such religious activities have not been taken into account, in this study but their staunch Hindu proclivities can be clearly felt. The share of MPs with BJS background has come down over different Lok Sabha from 43.75% in 1980 to 14.3% in 1991, as the party attracted good number of fresh MPs. MPs with religious and social links have moved from 18.75% in 1980 to 17.5 in 1989 to 21% in 1991. There has been an increase in such MPs from 1989 to 1991 which can be observed by the number of MPs added in the last two Lok Sabha, who are religious missionirse. In the last election many, VHP candidates, Sadhus and Mahants were given the party tickets, as also heads of militant organisation like Bajrang Dal. It is thus observed that a small but a vital segment of the MPs of the party belong to the organisations like VHP, RSS etc. The presence of such persons is bound to effect party polices and programmes, as such persons are known to enjoy tremendous clout.

TABLE - XV

AGE-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF BJP MP'S HAVING LINKS WITH
OTHER SOCIO-POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS
ORGANISATION (IN%)

SOCIO-POL ORGNS	25-45	46-60	61 & above	Total
(a) BJS	7.5	30.7	14.0	20.5
(b) VHP, RSS etc.	15.0	6.1	14.0	10.3
ABVP	18.0	-	-	5.3
a & b	4.5	7.9	21.0	9.4
None	55	55.3	51	54.5
Total (N)	67	114	43	224

It is observed from the above table that almost 55% MPs of all age groups had no association with any particular organisation as per their profile. Among the rest, 35% in the age group of 61 and above, 14% in 46-60 age group and 19.5% in 25-45 age group are associated with socio-religious group like RSS, VHP etc. This means that while percentage of MPs of such background is declining in the middle age group, it is slightly picking up in the younger age group.

If this trend continues, the voice of moderates in the party is bound to be muffled by the more rowdy and religious segment comprising Sadhus, Mahants Bajrang Dal activists etc.

TABLE - XVI
PREVIOUS LEGISLATIVE EXPERIENCE OF BJP MPS VS
ORGANISATIONAL POSITION OCCUPIED (IN %)

LEGIS EXP.	CENTRAL	CENTRAL STATE STATE	STATE	DISTRICT	NONE	TOTAL
MP	11.4	14.4	31.4	11.4	31.4	35
MP MLA &	3.7	31.5	29.6	11.1	24.1	54
MP MLA only	-	12.7	4.18	14.5	32.0	55
FRESH	1.25	3.75	17.5	15.0	61.3	80
Total (N)	7	32	64	30	91	224

* 2 MPs from Rajya Sabha included in Fresh

It is observed that 11.4% of MPs, with previous legislative experience as MPs, occupy organisational position at the central level, 14.4% at central and State level 31.4% at the State level, 11.4% at the district level and the remaining 31.4% did not hold any position in the organisation. Among the MPs, with previous experience as MP and MLA, 3.7% occupy central

level position, 31.5% occupy central and state level position, 29.6% state level, 11.1% district level and 24.1% and no position in the organisation. Similarly, amongst the MPs, with previous experience as MLA, 32% did not have any position in the organisation. Among the fresh MPs, 61.3% did not have any position in the organisation. These data clearly indicate that majority of MPs with previous legislative experience have been holding some position in the organisation. The organisation is, therefore, bound to have effective control on the MPs, which would ensure proper implementation of party policies and programmes. This would also help attract good people to the organisation in the hope of securing party nomination for election to the Lok Sabha.

TABLE XVII

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF BJP MPS VS ORGANISATIONAL

POSITION OCCUPIED (IN %)

LEVEL OF EDUC.	CENTRAL	CENTRAL & STATE	STATE	DISTRICT	NONE	TOTAL
Primary- Intermediate	-	14.3	28.5	-	57.1	7(100)
8th - 12th	2.4	2.4	28.6	11.8	54.8	42(100)
above Graduate	3.5	17.5	28.7	14.0	36.3	171(100)
Not Mentioned	-	-	25.0	25.0	50.0	4(100)
Total(N)%	3.1	14.3	28.6	13.4	40.6	224

The above table shows that 57.1% of the MPs who have studied upto primary level, 54.8% have studied upto intermediate level, 36.3% MPs who have graduate or above qualification do not have any position in the party organisation. This clearly shows that MPs with higher education have better representation in the organisation. At the same time, MPs with lower educational qualifications are fairly represented at the central and state level in the organisation. This further shows that besides education, the party also takes into account other factors like experience and work done by the individual while giving organisational position.

TABLE XVIII

OCCUPATION WISE DISTRIBUTION OF BJP MP'S IN PARTY

OCCU PATION	<u>ORGANISATION (IN%)</u>					TOTAL
	CENTRAL	CENTRAL STATE STATE	DISTRICT	NONE		
Agriculture	-	15	37.7	11.3	35.8	53
Industrial & Business	-	4.7	27.9	13.9	53.5	43
Service & Professional	3.1	17.9	25.3	17.9	35.8	95
Social Worker	17.5	21.7	26.1	4.3	30.4	23
Religious						
Missionary	-	-	20	-	80	10
Total	3.1	14.3	28.6	13.4	40.6	224

The above table shows that the social workers have the largest representation in the party organisation, followed by service and professional and agricultural group. The social workers representation at the central level is as high as 17.5%, while that of service and professional is 3.1%. The representation of social workers at the central and state level is 21.7%, followed by 17.9% of professional. Agriculture comes next with 15%. It can be observed from this data that social workers, who are mainly ex-rulers and senior party leaders occupy the pride of place in the organisation. The professional, agriculturists and business class legislators also have a significant representation in the organisation. The party policies are determined by these diverse groups, which mostly represent the middle class.

FOOTNOTE CHAPTER - IV

1. Myron Weiner, Party Politics in India: The Development of a Multi Party System. (Princeton, N.J) 1957.
2. Cited in P.D. Sharma, Legislative Elite in India: A Study in Political Socialisation, (Kurukshetra), 1984, p.12.
3. Ibid.
4. Lok Sabha who's who 1980, Lok Sabha Secretariat
 - 1984
 - 1989
 - 1991
5. A detailed table on Place of Birth of MP's in all Lok Sabha's is as follows

Place of Birth	1980	1985	1989	1991	Total
Rural	62.5	100	84.9	77.3	79.5
Urban	37.5	-	15.1	22.7	20.5
Total	16	3	86	119	224

Source : Author's own.

6. Place of Education in 1991

Place of Education	25-45	46-60	61 above	Total
Village	5.1	5.5	11.5	6.7
Town & city	66.7	51.9	42.3	54.6
Capital of State & Metro	28.2	40.8	46.2	37.8
Not Mentioned	-	1.8	-	0.99
Total	39	54	26	119

CONCLUSION

Bharatiya Janata Party, in its short history 1980-91, has seen many ups and downs which were a direct concomitant of its ideological and policy shifts. The party since 1989 has been on the warpath with its slogan of aggressive Hindu Nationalism and has gained much in the form of electoral expansion. But the point to be noted is that the change in total percentage of votes secured by the party has not been that significant, as indicated in the figures given below :-

1980 - 19% votes and 11 seats.

1984 - 7.4% votes and 2 seats.

1989 - 11.4% votes and 85 seats.

1991 - 19.9% votes and 119 seats.¹

It will be noted from the above data that the party had secured 11 seats with 19% votes in 1980 and 119 seats with 19.9% of votes in 1991. The party has thus added to its tally 108 additional seats with just 0.9% of increase in its votes. This was mainly due to split in the votes between different parties. The party has, however, cleverly made use of the particular peculiarities of each elections to garner seats namely, opposition unity in 1989 and anti-Congress, anti-opposition wave (which

excluded the BJP) and pro-Hindu votes in 1991. This indicates a carefully thought out and planned strategy to elicit votes rather than a spontaneous groundswell of opinion in favour of the BJP. In this context, it becomes imperative to study the BJP strategy, its representatives and leaders i.e. the party elites, the social base it has mobilised and most importantly the party organisation.

My hypothesis is that there are specific traits in the socio-economic and political background of the BJP representative which explains the functioning of the party it stands on various socio-economic issue, its electoral strategy and so on. This paper seeks to make a detailed analysis of all these aspects, with particular reference to the issue focussed by elite leadership studies of foreign, as well as Indian authors such as, Robert Michels, Robert Dahl, C.Wright Mills and Rajni Kothari, Andre Beteille, Rudolph & Rudolph.

One of the principle elements of the study is the party's ideological base and the particular segment of the electorate it seeks to mobilise. Myron Weiner has identified three conflicting groups in the Indian political system.² On his scale, the BJP can probably be situated as a party whose elites stand between the anti-western Hindu minded who have strong reservation about change in the traditional social structure and the western minded who, in principle, accept the goals of modernisation, industrialisation

and programmes to change the Hindu social structure and a unified National state. In fact, the BJP's unwritten policy of revival of Hindutva and Dharmic (religious)order indicates its lip service to westernisation and the strong roots in traditional Hindu social structure.

Some concrete examples of BJP leadership propogation of traditional Hindu social structure can be found in - Vinay Katiyar's claim that the western influences are destroying Hinduism and should be stamped out, Swami Vamdev who believes that a woman's place is in home, Mrs. Mridula Sinha, President of BJP's women's cell who openly oppose women's liberation, attacks equal rights for sexes, condones domestic violence against women and even dowry.³ The BJP's position in favour of Sati during the infamous Deorala case is also well known. They claim Hinduism to be the state religion and people like Sadhvi Rithambara clearly consider minorities especially Muslims as a deviant creed, who should at the very least be tolerated.

These people seek to become the torch bearers of Hinduism and Hindu morality just like another communal organisation Shiv Sena. The latest example of this is the moral code, the BJP has sought to impose on film personalities by declaring that the films should not denigrate the Hindu faith, for example, showing Hindu priests in a denigrating way. This is a dictatorial trend aimed at showing only the good face

of Hindu social order and protecting it from critical scrutiny and resulting reformation. The party is now conniving with assorted Sadhus and mendicants in the framing of policy. These Sadhus and mendicants have a vital stake in taking India to its old traditionalism, where these people who have become peripheral in the current scheme of things will again occupy centre stage now through politics.

The number of BJP MPs with a linkage with other socio-political organisation like the BJS, VHP, RSS and ABVP or either of them is around 45.5%. The number of MPs with no such background has increased over the years from 37.5% in 1980 to 58.8% in 1991. Half of the 25-45 age group MPs do not have any such linkage.⁴ But nevertheless there is a significant number of MPs in the party with linkages to guide the Hindutva thrust of the party in addition to the organisations themselves applying pressure on the party. 1991 has also seen an increase in direct recruitment of Sadhus and Mahants belonging to VHP etc.

Another area of focus is the social position of the leadership, i.e., the particular strata to which it belongs and the class interest it seeks to serve through the party forum. On examining the BJP party policy, the conclusion reached is that it caters to the upper and middle class electorate. Its economic policy gives lip service to land-reforms and the lower classes, mainly very small farmers and labourers, but has never

taken any concrete steps in their favour for fear of alienating big farmers and landlords. The Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh's (BMS) a Trade Union outfit of the BJP has as its motto 'Rashtrahit' first 'Mazdoorhit' second. Vishva Hindu Parishad, which is another sister organisation, considers strikes as a sign of communist treachery against the nation. The BJP has always shown preference to privatisation of companies and giving concessions to small traders and businessmen by way of giving relief in taxes etc. It has also stood behind the salaried middle class by supporting their demand for increase in the tax exemption limit.

The basis of the above trend can be found in the class composition and occupational background of the MPs. It is very difficult to classify the MPs into different classes such as; middle, upper or lower on the basis of their bio-data. For the purpose of this study, however, the MPs with service, professional or agricultural background have been classified as those belonging to middle class, while ex-rulers and party leaders who generally call themselves social workers, industrialists etc have been classified as those belonging to upper class. The representation of the middle and upper classes amongst the MPs is broadly in the ratio 2:1 respectively. It is, however, clear that the BJP Parliamentarians overwhelmingly belong to upper and middle classes. This is concededly not a foolproof method of determining class composition, as MPs with service and professional

background could belong to upper class and similarly social workers can also be from the middle class. Andre Beteiile says that to attain power a moderately secure economic position is needed and power in turn brings economic advantage. The new and old power holders work together to bypass any laws against them.⁵ His assertion seems to fit the BJP, where the upper class represents the old power holders, while the middle class represents the new power holders.

The occupational background of legislative elite, as also their respective numerical and economic strength, have an important bearing on the party policies. Occupation wise, MPs belonging to services and professional background form the largest group of party MPs (42.4%), followed by agricultural class (23.6%) and business and Industrial class (19.2%).⁶ The BJP's policy orientation is dictated by these three important groups of people. The professional class which includes civil servants, doctors, lawyers, teachers and journalist has always been an important part of the BJP. These are the opinion makers of society i.e intellectuals. The business class on the other hand, which comes third numerically in the party, more than makes up for it by its financial clout. The party policies and programmes have, therefore, been generally tilted towards these two classes; sometimes to the detriment of the agricultural class. This study, however, indicates that the percentage of MPs belonging to professionals

and service class has been showing a decreasing trend in younger age groups, while the number belonging to business and agricultural class has been gradually increasing. This possibly accounts for the recent efforts of the BJP to extend its hold to the rural areas.

Another area of focus in the Indian political context is the social strata which the party mobilises in terms of caste structure. In this context, it is worth analysing whether the caste composition of the party is getting diffused because of modernisation. A rough estimate of caste-wise distribution would indicate that there were roughly 12% of Brahmin MPs in 1989 and 21% in 1991.⁷ MPs from reserved constituencies belonging to Scheduled Caste or Tribe communities were around 20% in 1989 as well as 1991. Of the rest, an overwhelming number belongs to upper class. Thus, it shows that the BJP is predominantly an upper caste party. It is also observed that upper caste is generally synonymous with upper and middle class. An interesting aspect of the matter is that the BJP leadership in the party hierarchy is dominated by the upper caste Brahmins and ex-rulers. The BJP has made strong verbal exhortation against the practice of untouchability and includes it as a matter of policy, but there have been only vague strictures against the caste system and concrete absence of any involvement in Dalit struggles. Mandal proposal accelerated the process of upper caste consolidation and perforce, the BJP had to take

sides on the issue. According to some writers, there was a upper caste complexion noticeable in the Ram Janmabhoomi movement too.

Studies in India find nothing wrong in the use of caste associations as a political plank. The caste structure make available to the leadership structural and ideological base for political mobilisation. The BJP sought to under cut this traditional base by seeking a larger electorate on the basis of religion. Thus the BJP prefers to be known as a party of Hindus, rather than upper caste or lower caste Hindus as an electoral strategy. While the recent communal groundswell were restricted largely to urban, predominantly high caste and middle class milieu but at the same time a new phenomenon seen was that the kar Sewakas were mobilised from traditionally most conservative families from urban as well as rural areas. The BJP has located women, along with SC/ST as a primary target area for future elections and it is to be seen whether they succeed or not in this endeavour.

The change in the party composition from urban to rural or from dominant to upwardly mobile lower class is also worth noting. Rajni Kothari claims that modernisation is taking place when composition of legislative elite changes from Brahminical leadership to commercial and peasant class. The phenomenon noticeable through the different Lok Sabha is that the percentage of MPs with permanent residence in urban area

is showing a declining trend, while the number of MPs who have permanent residence in rural areas is increasing. The same phenomenon is noticed when we look at the rural-urban background of MPs according to age group. More and more young and fresh MPs are now coming from the rural areas. This vindicates the studies on elite leadership (Indian) that new innovators of politics are more rural based and populist.

Another significant aspect is that a large majority of MPs, out of 79.5% who were born in rural areas had shifted their base to urban areas or nearby urban residential suburbs at a later stage. This may explain the reason why the BJP despite its changing profile from urban to rural retains a tilt towards urban areas. The rural elite after socialisation in urban ethos identify with their demands much more than their own electorates.

According to elite theorists, educational levels would progressively come down with the replacement of Brahminical elite. The present educational level of the BJP MPs indicate that its legislators are an educated lot, with two third of the MPs who are graduates and quite a large percentage of them possess higher degrees.⁸ From 1980 to 1991, the educational level of MPs has shown a stable trend. In fact higher percentage of fresh MPs are graduates as compared to the older age groups where the percentage of graduates is less. This contradicts the claim that with

the modernisation and replacement of old elites, the new entrants would be less educated. Alternately, it may mean that profile of the BJP MPs has not yet acquired a rural lower class face. Also more than half of the BJP MPs have been educated in town and cities, while a significant 37.1% of MPs had their education in state capital or metropolitan and foreign cities.⁹ This fact gives credence to urban socialisation of the BJP MPs as well as it indicates that a significant number come from economically prosperous families and could afford higher education in good institutions. Yet another area of focus is the criterion adopted by the party for entry into its elite group which controls the party organisation as also the legislative wing and whether they follow a closed or opened door policy. According to Beteille, with modernisation, the old basis of power such as, birth and ritual status are supplanted by new ones such as, numerical support enjoyed by the individual, his party membership, contact with higher ups within and outside the party.¹⁰ The previous legislative experience of MPs as well as their organisational experience is one of the vital criteria adopted for giving entry into elite group. It also indicates the inter linkage between party's organisational and legislative units. The percentage of the BJP MPs with previous legislative experience in central or state level is 65.2%.¹¹ This clearly shows the preference of party leadership for the old guards, which could be construed as a step towards developing

a close system. The percentage of fresh MPs, has, however, shown an increase over different Lok Sabha but this does not necessarily indicate an open system. The party had in its efforts to increase its tally of seats given tickets to a large number of like-minded elites from different streams like bureaucrats, actors, religious leaders etc. This vindicates the assertion of C Wright Mills, who has said that, “there is a kind of reciprocal attraction amongst the fraternity of successful... not between each and every member of the circle of high and mighty, but between enough of them to ensure a certain unity.”¹² The influx of outsiders in the recent elections has, however, alienated the grassroot party members, who came up the hard way by working for the party organisation for many years. Further, the outsiders who have been given ticket at the instance of central leadership, have marginalised the role of the district and State leaders, who are normally involved in the selection of party candidates, along with the RSS leaders who supervise them. This indicates the clear tendency towards centralisation of authority and bureaucratisation of the party. This is in conformity with the assertion of Michels regarding unavoidable emergence of elite rule or oligarchy’ at the top created by the structure of modern organisations.

Another related area is the party organisation’s linkage with its legislative organs. This study shows that 59.4% of the BJP MPs come from the

organisational wing of the party, while 40.6% are fresh entrants.¹³ From 1989 to 1991, there has been a decrease in the number of MPs coming from the organisational side and the number of fresh MPs has increased by 18.1% during this period. This may indicate an attempt by the party to infuse fresh blood into the legislative wing. However, a closer look shows that the bulk of new members represent other sister organisations of the BJP which have a close link with the RSS. There are other elites like actors, bureaucrats etc., whose social background are similar to those of the elites in BJP. It is also noted that the organisation at the central level is generally dominated by legislators from the older age group. This indicates that experienced men are preferred at the policy making level, which is a closed unit. Normally, those who prove successful at organisational level are given tickets in preference to outsiders as also greater legislative experience opens the door to the higher echelons of the organisational setup of the party.

The next area of focus is the party organisation. According to Michels, as the party becomes bigger and more entrenched, the party's fervour dampens that is, it changes from revolutionary to a bureaucratic one. There is a detachment from the masses and cartels or intimate groups emerge within the party. Over the years, the BJP has also been bureaucratised and hegemonised. In sharp contrast to the cohesive and upbeat image

the party had in its initial years, it has in recent years, particularly after the Ayodhya incident, found itself riddled with internecine intrigue, dissent and factionalism. The ever swelling ranks of the BJP have brought all the attendant problems like indiscipline, rowdyism etc.¹⁴ In the recent organisational elections, L.K.Advani was unanimously elected as party President, with the blessings of RSS, although certain section of the party was opposed to him. There are different intimate groups within the party led by senior leaders like L.K. Advani and Murli Manohar Joshi, which are pitted against each other for power. The same factionalism is rampant in state units too, with rival factions owing allegiance to respective central leaders. “Is this rift an inevitable outcome of burgeoning of the party or symptomatic of a larger malaise within the party or a combination of both ?”¹⁵ K.R.Malkani points out that in a growing party such as the BJP, there are many people who want to hold power and claims this is not factionalism but healthy internal democracy of the party.¹⁶ The above statement seems ironical in the context of a party in which the RSS bosses dictate, to the leadership. The individual whose equations are good with the RSS takes over the mantle of the party. A.B.Vajpayee found it out at his cost in 1984 and now Murli Manohar Joshi has been removed from the coveted post of party president, as his RSS bosses are reportedly unhappy with his style of functioning.

The BJP has thus joined the rank of other political parties, which are also marred by indiscipline and dissidence, shattering its claim of being different from them.

Another assertion of Michels is that the party after a period of time diverts from democratic functioning and starts making use of fascist propaganda and indulges in fascist activities. Analysis of BJP shows that it is already showing a sign of degeneration as a political party by adopting unconstitutional and undemocratic postures on various sensitive issue, flouting the judiciary and creating a fear complex among the minorities. In fact, writers have already started comparing it to Hitler's Nazi party in its method and activities. This comparison seems to be far fetched for the present. However, the way in which the moderates in the party are being gradually isolated, the day may not be far off when the entire party (organisation as well as legislative wing) is taken over by persons with radical view of Hindu nationalism. The manner in which the BJP has changed identity since 1985 bears out this interpretation. It stood up as a party for secularism against fundamentalism (Muslim fundamentalism) in the context of Shah Bano case judgement but by 1987, the attack was on secularism itself as it became the party of Ayodhya. But even then it swore by the rule of law, while systematically flouting it by Rath Yatra and deliberately inciting communal violence. The party slightly

altered its position immediately after the demolition of Babri Masjid (disputed structure according to the BJP) in December, 1992, which they had initially termed as unfortunate but after some soul searching and keeping long term electoral strategy in mind, the whole incident was termed as "God's will."

The extremist Hindu element in the party seem to be gradually isolating the moderate leadership, with the result, the views projected by the extremist elements on various important issues within the party and even outside the party, are being adopted by the party as its own policy after a suitable time lag. Now that the temple issue has somewhat receded to the background, for the time being, the BJP is seeking to exploit other issues like deportation of illegal migrants from Bangladesh, who are mostly Muslims, scrapping of Article 370 of the Constitution which gives a special position to Jammu and Kashmir, which again involves minority segment. All this smacks of Hindu fundamentalism. The BJP white paper on Ayodhya defends the demolition of Babri Masjid as 'the greatest mass movement and' a watershed in Indian history.' L.K. Advani in his foreword to the document writes that "They (Kar Sewaks) did not just erase a symbol of our subjugation. They did not just begin building a symbol of resurgence. They showed us as if in a flash, how far we have to travel."¹⁷

Pluralists like Dahl feel that the elite in the party are accountable to the electorate which sets the agenda. This hypothesis is worth examining in the context of BJP. The agenda for BJP or for that matter any other party in India is generally dictated by the party elites and not by the electorate. Vinay Katiyar one of the rabidly communal member of the party argues for an Ayodhya like solution to Kashi, Mathura and other disputed temples, whose total number according to him is about 2000. The moderates in the party and their sympathisers hope that such men and women would be sidelined once the party comes to power. But the moot point is whether a party which seeks to arouse the masses and gain vote on the basis of fascist and communal slogans, would later simply shed of this persona ? Can a small political elite within the BJP withstand other extremist elite and the groundswell of its mass membership ? It should not be forgotten that the party leadership has to take account of the opinion of its brotherhood namely, RSS, VHP etc., which act as pressure groups. Robert Dahl too says that the agenda with which the party has come to power (Hindutva in BJP's case) would inevitably be enforced by the electorate in a democracy. Any deviation would lead to a dilution of support base and consequent fall. Thus the BJP has to take a progressively pro-Hindu stand whether willingly or unwillingly and there is no going back for fear of adverse result.

Another vital area of analysis is the linkage of political parties and the media which in this electronic age has been instrumental in winning many electoral battles. In modern democracies, C. Wright Mills has mentioned, elites control media to brainwash and hegemonize the masses. Michels has also talked of fascist propaganda method used by the parties to maintain their control. In the last two elections the BJP made effective use of television, audio video tapes and print media to brainwash the common man with Hindutva ideology.¹⁸ They cleverly played on the subconscious of the Hindu electorate by using the concept of Ram Rajya through the Ramayana epic in the 1989 election and Chanakya in the 1991 election. The print media played a biased role especially the Hindi press which have been acting as the mouthpieces of communal propaganda and mobilisation. The English language press with its more cosmopolitan readership and liberal image was also biased in its reporting. They sought to give intellectual legitimacy to an aggressive Hindutva brigade and its Rath Yatra. There was thus a wide inter linkage between the media and the party. The BJP also made use of various Hindu symbols which were marketed aggressively (e.g. sarees inscribed with Ram, posters of Lord Ram etc.). Videos were taken out on the death of Kar Sevaks in Ayodhya in 1990 and such other events, which gave an exaggerated picture of sacrifice of Hindus and repression by the government. Thus the media has played an important

role in the rise of BJP.

Lasswell and Michels have emphasised the importance of the particular skills that the elite leadership possesses. On this count the BJP is unique in the Indian political set up, in that its leaders possess oratorical skill of a very high order. The party has also made use of good orators from organisation like VHP (e.g. Sadhvi Rithambara) whose speeches have been extremely provocative. It is particularly worth mentioning that many such speeches were taped and played in temples during election time to mobilise support. This is also an advantage in the sense that the party does not depend on one important speaker to tour the whole nation, as is the case with most of the other parties.

To sum up, it can be said that the political elite of the BJP have a predominantly homogeneous background. They generally belong to the upper caste, are English educated and constitute one class like the political elites of the other parties. "Secular involvement in the modern period has exposed caste and communal ties as inadequate and prejudicial for building stable support",¹⁹ says Rajni Kothari. Political parties can gain stability only by involving all major section of the community. This is the dilemma which the BJP faces because its support base of upper caste, middle class and lower middle class though now dispersed in different areas of the country constitutes a minority of the total electorate and

can not on their own give the party a majority to capture power at the centre. Whether the BJP can further expand its electoral base, through its aggressive campaign for Hindutva or it will have to look for some new idiom to widen its support base and to fulfill its cherished goal of forming government at the centre is a matter to which no clear cut answer can be given at this stage. Yet the deliberations of the June 1993 National Executive meeting of the Party in Bangalore under L.K. Advani's leadership indicates a softening of its Hindu stance and seeking of a broader base. The issue which would be raised to convince the electorate of BJP's image of a governing party includes making society riot free, the administration corruption free, economy debt free and elections violence free. It is also seeking to dispell its image of an upper caste party by including backward caste leaders like Kalyan Singh in the party heirarchy. Thus, from all accounts BJP seems to have taken up the second option of searching for a new idiom, though without giving up its Hindutva ideology.

FOOTNOTES : CONCLUSION

1. Source as mentioned in Chapter III, Table 1.
2. Myron Weiners whole argument is mentioned in detail in Chapter 1, n.6
3. Praful Bidwai, "Social Reforms in Reverse : Bigotry's Toll on Indian Society," *Times of India*, April 29, 1993.
4. See for details Chapter IV, Table XIV and XV.
5. Andre Beteille, *Caste, Class and Power : Changing Patterns of Stratification in a Tanjore Village*, (California, 1966), p.204.
6. See for details Chapter IV, Table X and XI.
7. Caste wise categorisation of MPs is based on an analysis of their surnames. S.C. & S.T., MPs have been categorised on the basis of their representing Reserved Constituencies.
8. See for details Chapter IV, Table VI.
9. See for details Chapter IV, Table VII.
10. Beteille, n.5, p.200.
11. See for details Chapter IV Table VIII and IX.
12. C. Wright Mills, *Power Elite* (Oxford, 1959), p. 239.
13. See for details Chapter IV, Table XII
14. Sabina Sehgal, " The Fading of Saffron", *Times of India*, April 25, 1991.
15. Ibid.

16. Ibid.
17. L.K. Advani's Foreword in *BJP Today*, May 1 - 15, 1993, Volume 2, no. 9.
18. See Tapan Basu et al, *Khaki Shorts and Saffron Flags* (New Delhi, 1993), pp. 92 -109.
19. Rajni Kothari, *Politics in India* (New Delhi, 1989), p. 281.

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