

DEMOCRACY-MAJORITY SYSTEM :
AN IMPEDIMENT----?

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This dissertation entitled: "Democracy — Majority System : An Impediment...?" submitted by Mr. V. Mohan Reddy for the Degree of Master of Philosophy has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this or any other University. We recommend that this dissertation should be placed before the examiners for their consideration for the award of M.Phil. degree.


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PREFACE

It is widely acknowledged that the congress party under the leadership of Indira Gandhi is a party of one person. The chief of the party is the leader of the government at centre-state. Thus, the present parliamentary form of democracy resembles the presidential system in all its aspects except in the form.

The voters vote after the name of the party chief. The final authority over the distribution of party tickets for desirous contestants to Lok Sabha and state assemblies rests with the party chief. The return of the prospective candidates as Members of Parliament and Legislative Assemblies is dependent not on their individual merits but on the popularity of the party chief among the electorate. Even the chief ministers of the states under the congress (Indira) rule are nominated by the party chief. So far as this aspect is concerned, it turns out to be, though apparent differences not withstanding, much the same as under the presidential systems

where the president is voted to power directly by all the electorate concerned.

This phenomena is not to be seen as confined to only Congress(I). The fact that the elections held to Lok Sabha, last time, looked more like a direct contest between personalities aspiring for prime ministership shows, beyond doubt, that the phenomena has become a part of the system as such. The pre-election propaganda has, mainly, been centred around three personalities. There is a visible tendency, in the recent past that new parties come in existence with each prominent political personality building a party around him.

When a party comes to power depending solely on the popularity of its top leader; it is but natural on the part of the latter to expect an absolute loyalty from the former. Popularity and loyalty are found linked in direct proportion to each other. The recurring economic crises turn the popular

leader in to exactly the opposite within no time of the party assuming office. An unpopular leader faced with disloyalty, fetches uncertainty to his or her own power position. Therefore, the attempts to secure one's own power position. An easy way out in securing the power position of the top leader lies in the replacement of the majority system with that of presidential.

However, there is another alternative which, ofcourse, is difficult to pursue. This is to alleviate the economy out of the recurring crises. But the particular class policies followed by the ruling party itself give rise to such crises is known. It can't be said that the ruling party is unaware of this fact. Neither any radical orientation in its policies concerning economic matters is in sight. Therefore, it logically follows that the top leader of the party is left with no option except to go for the replacement of the present parliamentary form of democracy with some sort of presidential system.

The extent of the prevailing economic crises and the vigour with which the particular class policies pursued by the ruling parties varies from time to time. These are the two factors which ultimately go to determine the fate of the majority system. Precisely for this reason and, also, for the fact that the ruling party, with its large majority in Lok Sabha and its likely attainment of the requisite percentage of vote in Rajya Sabha in near future, faces no constitutional hindrances whatsoever to switch over to presidential system should it feel the urgency at anytime in future; the present study avoids any worthwhile discussion on legal aspects rather prefers to concentrate on the socio, economic and political compulsions.

In a class society, the election system does not operate in isolation to the prevalent socio, economic and political systems. On this ground, we hold that all the attempts made earlier to segregate the election processes for the purposes of

study, from the existing socio, economic and political realities, as essentially misleading. The studies of this nature, made either for academic purposes or otherwise, ineffect serve to strengthen the status quo. Ironically, such studies are found utterly useless and incapable in meeting the demands borne out by the system, viewed in its long term interests. Dealt more in general, the second and third chapters bring forth this reality.

The fourth chapter deals with that how the majority system came to be recognized by the ruling party as an impediment in view of the furtherance of its own interests. The study explicitly holds the opposition as equally responsible for the present state of affairs.

The fifth chapter constitutes the core of the study. An attempt is made to trace the objective basis of the present thinking on the switch over to presidential system back in the history. It is made out that the present thinking is no sudden

development. Instead, its roots lay in the rise of the phenomena of powerful individual as far back as in the mid-term poll held to Lok Sabha in the first quarter of 1971. The conditions which facilitated the origin of the phenomena are to be traced further back beginning with the results of the fourth general elections held in 1967. Thus originated once, the phenomena has got further strengthened with the course of the developments in the subsequent period only to be ingrained into the system at large. The present thinking on the switch over to presidential system characterises the irrepressible urge found on the part of the phenomena of powerful individual to get a constitutional recognition so as to guarantee its sustenance in future. A modest attempt is made to trace the origin, development of the phenomena in the changing socio, economic and political setting over a period of time beginning with the mid sixties.

It is to be noted that my attempt to trace the origin and development of the phenomena of the powerful

individual, placed in a larger theoretical framework, should not mar the significance and relative independent standing of the phenomena as such. One may have disagreements over certain basic conceptual categories used in the study. One such instance is that the Congress party claiming allegiance to Nehru tradition is considered as synonymous to national bourgeoisie. The entrepreneurial class particularly the big among them is referred to as monopoly bourgeoisie without, of course, mentioning whether it is national in its character or not. But, this should cause no confusion. The study, by implication, gives an unmistakable impression that the leaders of the private corporate factor in general had never been of any major consequence as far as the framing of the economic policies are concerned. Indeed, the entrepreneurial class is a big failure in manoeuvring the political apparatus and thus setting economic policy framework for the country. Instead, it is the political authorities, particularly Nehru who dominated the scene and set the guiding principles.

The concluding chapter makes an attempt in broadly dealing the economic and political developments in the recent past and tries to show the significance of these developments in making the presidential system a real possibility in near future.

I am aware of certain inaccuracies in the study and these follow mainly from the inadequate grasp of the economic as well as political processes. To understand the economic processes requires a lot of spade work in the subject proper and it is by no means within my reach. A part of the responsibility for the lapses is to be attributed to the fact that no studies have ever been made earlier on the lines attempted here, in the study. This is a fact as far as the election studies are concerned.

I wish to place on record my deep sense of gratitude to my supervisor-professor Kandari Seshadri. Despite my repeated falterings; his unlimited tolerance and encouragement helped me to complete the study.

V. MOHAN REDDY

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Chapter - I

INTRODUCING THE METHADOLOGICAL PROBLEMS

The subject of electoral reforms, which constitutes the vital part of the field of election studies, remains dwarf even to the day, much to the surprise of all. An overview of the state of the subject during the last 27 years, beginning with the first general elections held for Lok Sabha and state assemblies bring forth the fact that there existed three main trends each having fundamental differences with the other in terms of both understanding the phenomena and rendering suggestions accordingly. These can be broadly categorised as follows:

- (a) Idealist
- (b) Behaviouralist
- (c) Marxist

Though the former remains devoid of any concrete method developed for the ready use by academics, unlike the latter two, the trend cannot be overlooked simply because it could not make place in the academic writings.

The idealist perception has been the source for the formation of certain voluntary organisations spread over the country in the event of the last general elections held for Lok Sabha in the early days of 1980. Voters'

councils formed under the aegis of the 'coordination committee for the strengthening of democracy' stands in the line. At least one prominent public figure, V.M. Tarkunde who happens to be one of the members of the Committee appointed by late Jayaprakash Narain, in August 1974, to prepare a report on electoral reforms as a part of the latter's campaign for the same, in the aftermath period becomes one of the protagonists of the voters council's. And many more of the like were found to have been actively associated themselves with the coordination committee. The very fact that the formation of the voter's councils has its logical beginning in the popular movement led by late Jayaprakash Narain as early as in 1974 wherein the demand for electoral reforms, though of unspecified nature, has been declared as one of its stated aims, compels the studies on electoral reforms to go in depth in to the process and examine it. The studies on electoral reforms as it stands today is no more a matter of intellectual exercise as the popular demand would show. The popular movements, also, make it imperative on the part of the students of election studies, for a fuller exploration of the functioning of the parliamentary democracy, in all its

aspects with special reference to the election system.

While the idealist perception had been the dominant trend in the seventies by virtue of its popular appeal, the behaviouralist method dominated the election studies in the period preceding the fifth mid term poll held for Lok Sabha in the first quarter of 1971, although limited to the academic circles. The idealist perception necessarily precedes the materialist perception in the sequential growth of the cognitory process. But the fact that the idealist perception raising to a dominant position following that of the materialist of which behaviouralism had been in the dominant position for a significant period shows that the behavioural studies failed to exercise any of its impact. As a result, the history repeats itself with the idealist perception making a fresh start. A self-conscious behaviouralism dissolving itself in the later half of sixties makes it evident that the behaviouralism remained as a non-entity as far as its positive contribution in reflecting the reality is concerned. But the negative effects of it in hampering the growth of the studies cannot be ignored. Indeed, the major chunk

of responsibility for the sorry figure cut by the studies goes to behaviouralist method for it established falacious tradition shadowing down the spread of genuine methods. The dominant position occupied by behaviouralist method is not because of any inherent correctness of it but because of some other factors which will be ^{touch} elsewhere.

Though there had never been concerted efforts in drawing a marxist method as such, there are attempts in applying certain methods closely resembling the marxian, particularly in the period following the 5th general elections held for Lok Sabha. The negligence of the election studies by Marxist scholars may be probably because the subject has not been considered as a problem of much importance given the Marxian scheme of things. But the fact that it is only the marxist methodology which truly reflects the reality and the objective pressures working for a fuller exploration of the Parliamentary democracy as it evolved, in all its aspects, over the years, makes it imperative to make efforts in developing a suitable method on marxian lines.

Convergence:- Oflate, going by the writings¹ and public appeals made by the representatives of the various trends, it appears that there emerged a convergence between the three trends. As the objective course of the history would necessitate, the meeting point is knowingly the Marxian method. Yet, it has to go a long way to the satisfaction of the objective needs. At this juncture, it is necessary to make a review of the existent dominant trends as it would help in arriving at a correct method in studying the phenomena.

1. See Rajni Kothari, "Agenda for India", Times of India, March 15, 1980.

Chapter - II

THE IDEALIST TREND

The 'Coordination Committee for Strengthening Democracy' in a pamphlet issued under the title "Appeal to Voters" identifies authoritarianism, communalism, cult of personality, corruption, defections etc, as some of the major distortions of the body politic in particular and the parliamentary democracy in general. To put it in its own words:

"We are firmly opposed to

- authoritarianism, the cult of personality, and extra constitutional tendencies;
- communalism, casteism and all other forms of narrow sectarianism;
- the unprincipled politics of defection for personal gain;
- corruption in whatever guise"

To reproduce the 'correctives' which help the reader's comprehension in attaining an integral view on the state and character of the perception, the pamphlet would present —

"We believe in

- morality in politics and integrity in public life;

- human rights and individual dignity with equal emphasis on self-discipline, adherence to accepted social obligations, and common good;
- The avoidance of arrogance and ostentation and abuse of privilege;
- community action and the organization of people's power;
- service before self ;
- a participatory democracy through decentralised structures."

The impression given by the pamphlet may be read as follows :

- (a) The distortions of the body politic are off-short of the social consciousness in the bad sense of the term.
- (b) It is that kind of social consciousness possessed by certain individuals involved in the body politic which brings about distortions to the body politic.
- (c) Further, it is given to assume, that the kind of the consciousness is found in certain individuals who occupied the country's top most

powerful position for a period of time. It should be added that the type of the consciousness played a key role either for sticking to the power position or as a means in attaining it.

- (d) Last but not least is the concern that it is, these individual by way of their 'wrongful' consciousness and the deeds that follow from it, establish a bad tradition inflicting distortions in to the parliamentary system of democracy by dragging the entire body politic in their direction and thus cause misery to the whole nation at the end of its logical process.

Understood in the sense, it is only to be expected that the releasers of the pamphlet would find the rescue in pleading for a change from bad to good, in the given social consciousness of the individuals whom it implicitly refers.

The individual members of the respective parties are only to be presumed to have the same behavioural pattern as it is found in the case of their leaders. Since at least a major chunk of the body politic thus presents a distorted picture of it, the C.C.S.D. probably thought it necessary to initiate a programme of action among the people to bring about a change i.e., a 'cleansing measure', in the given body politic. Obviously, the programme of action to be carried through the voters' councils formed under

its aegis is conceived against the background of an assumption that people equipped with sufficient social awareness would by virtue of their voting right, bring about a desired change in the body politic. But the facts speak to the contrary. The outcome of the last general elections debases the C.C.S.D. of its comprehension bringing the powerful under current historical processes into open. The C.C.S.D. cannot but introspect itself.

Reality and the Idealism :

Ever since the emergence of slave system as a part of the historical development, the power remains to be concentrated in the hands of a few and in most cases in a single person. The modern societies make no exception to it. When the power is concentrated in a single hand, it may indeed be justifiably felt that the fate of the people in particular and the nation in general, at least to an extent, is dependent on the 'rational' of the person in power. As Plekhanov would correctly explain it:

"Influential individuals can change the individual features of events and some of their particular consequences, but they can

not change their general trend, which is determined by other forces."¹

Though the rational part of it may not be explicable to all, the life experience and a little empirical knowledge of the historical events would be sufficient to provide a fillip to the thought that the events, though in their form only, under a particular person need not be the same if a different person happens to be in the same power position. If the C.C.S.D.'s appreciation of the phenomena limits to these grounds as is defined, it will be justifiable. But it does not appear to be the same as is evident in the following extract from its pamphlet. While proceeding to the presentation of its prescription, the C.C.S.D. having had identified the distortions of the body politic observes:

"We are no longer prepared to tolerate exploitation and discrimination on grounds of community, class, sex, or region." (emphasis added).

A statement of this kind unrelated to the prescription immediately followed by it may be taken to mean more

1. G.V. Plekhanov, The Role of the Individual in History, (Moscow, 1946), p.41.

in general. But in relation to the prescription, the statement gets an added meaning. The 'correctives' suggested by it categorically urge for a change in the mind, i.e., the attitude of the individuals, involved in the body politic, from bad to good. Needless to repeat, it implies that a change in the attitudes of the individuals from bad to good, follows a change in the body politic and the nation at large with the result of setting harmony and prosperity. To further cite an extract which immediately follows the 'correctives' --

"We further affirm that democracy must inspire the nation's economic and social life as much as its conduct of political affairs, with equality of status and opportunity and assurance of the minimum decencies of life for all."

(emphasis added).

In the light of all this, the general perspective underlying may be traced as follows :

1. The society is a passive and lifeless entity.
2. It is the subjective elements who act on the former, meaning the later as an active entity.

Understood in the sense, any interaction between the two

is ruled out. Further more, it stresses one acting on the other as the latter being always on the receiving end. If the society is taken to be an objective reality and the parties to subjective forces, the C.C.S.D. may be charged to have gone one sided since it disregards the objective reality. Only the dialectical relationship between the subjective forces and the objective reality can explain the reality. The mere exploitative character of the subjective elements, assuming it to be true, does not explain the reality in its totality. There should be a corresponding objective situation, at a particular given point of time, which not only necessitates the exploitation but can be successfully exploited. If the objective reality does not match the subjective demands, no amount of will and wish on the part of the subjective elements will bring the latter a success and the vice-a-versa is true. The real strength of the subjective elements lie in the favourable objective situation.

Again it is all the more important to note that the subjective forces also form a part of the objective reality. In sharp contrast to this, C.C.S.D. superimposes the sub-

jective forces on the objective reality.

Socio-Economic Formation and the Rise of Social Forces:

In a class divided society various social forces representing different class and sectional interests arise, as a rule, in order to protect and further their respective interests. Every party, in the first instance, is necessarily a social force representing the interests of a particular section. In the second instance, appropriate to its sectional interests the party finds allies in the other sections of the society. However, it retains the predominance of its sectional interests to which the interests of its allies are closely linked. The class character of a party is to be understood in respect of the class that antagonises its interests. However, it is possible that a party representing ^a class interest may penetrate the other class, the interests of which, it won't represent in reality. Precisely here, the question of exploitation arises irrespective of the fact whether the C.C.S.D. exactly means this or not when it makes the statement. A party representing the interests of a certain section in particular and a class in general do not, in reality represent the interests

of the other class. Yet it benefits in the name of representing the interests of the other class and therefore the party may be said to have been exploiting the latter.

"The first and most elementary of these is the economic-corporate level: tradesman feels obliged to stand by another tradesman, a manufacturer by another manufacturer etc.; A second moment is that in which consciousness is reached of the solidarity of interests among all the members of social class - but still in the purely economic field. Already at this juncture the problem of the state is posed, A third moment is that in which one becomes aware that one's own corporate interests, in their present and future development, transcend the corporate limits of the purely economic class, and can and must become the interests of other subordinate groups too. This is the most purely political phase, and marks the decisive passage from the structure to the sphere of the complex superstructures; it is the phase in which previously germinated ideologies become "party", come into confrontation and conflict, until only one

of them, or at least a single combination of them, tends to prevail, to gain the upper hand, to propagate itself throughout society — bringing about not only a unison of economic and political aims, but also intellectual and moral unity, posing all the questions around which the struggle rages on a corporate but on a "universal" plane, and thus creating the hegemony of a fundamental social groups over a series of subordinate groups."²

Different parties representing one class interest may exist for the sectional interests differ and therefore a contradiction and separate existence. Within each party the same contradictions reflect but still maintain a unity for the fact that the other sections accept the predominance of a particular section. It does not mean to suggest that the contradictions cease to exist. The relation between the various sections will be of the acceptance of the predominance of a particular section, the others being sub-ordinate. It should be mentioned here that whichever section has an historical advantage over the other sections is bound to get a predominant

2. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith ed., Selections From the Prison Note Books of Antonio Gramsci (New York, 1978), pp. 181-82.

position even if the particular section under consideration is relegated to background for a period. Again, a party or the parties representing certain sectional interests predominantly which do not have any historical advantage are bound to meet failure even when these are found on a temporary rise at a particular point of time. The same is true with either of the classes.

The oppressed class may have an historical advantage over that of the established, but the mere fact that it has an advantage does not provide a necessary condition for its success. Though the division in a class society is horizontal giving material identity for the two classes, considering the different degrees of the intensity of stratification in different societies, either the absence or the inadequacy of the subjective forces representing the class which is ruled and which in turn is supposed to acquire the class consciousness without which it does not attain the status of a class in its fullest sense with the help of a party, will wipe out the dividing line, making the society stand vertical as one.

"Think of American working class. It is only a Cog of capital, a part of the capitalist mechanism. More strictly speaking, it is not even a 'class' (It does not have conscious of being a class). It is an agglomeration of 'categories': car workers, chemical workers, textile workers, etc."

"The working class is not a given factor, it is not a product of nature. It is the destination point; the product of historical action, i.e., not only of material conditions but also of political consciousness. In short, the class becomes a class when, going beyond economic spontaneism, it develops the consciousness of being the protagonist of a revolution and which emancipates not only the workers but the whole society. This consciousness through which the class constitutes itself in political organisation and takes its place at the head of its allies, cannot be derived from anywhere but capital. It is in this sense, that Lenin said, that building the party also requires something from without."³

The failure of the subjective forces may be because of a variety of reasons. But, fundamental to all

3. Lucio Colletti, From Rousseau to Lenin— Studies in Ideology and Society, (Delhi, 1978), pp. 235-6.

is the repression they face from the side of the established classes. Indeed, revisionism in a final analysis, is the breed of repression. Often, parliamentarism is understood as revisionism with the result ultimately even the election prospects of these parties found dwindling. Also providing the material basis for a successful penetration into the ruled by a party which do not really represents the formers interests is that there exists not only the one aspect of opposed interest but the aspect of unity of interests.

"It is true that the state is seen as the organ of one particular group, destined to create favourable conditions for the others maximum expansion. But the development and expansion of the particular group are conceived of, and presented, as being the motor force of a universal expansion of a development of all the "national" energies. In otherwords, the dominant group is coordinated concretely with the general interests of the subordinate groups, and the life of the state is conceived of as a continuous process of formation and superseding of unstable equilibria between the interests of the fundamental group and those of the subordinate groups --

equilibria in which the interests of the dominant group prevail, but only up to a certain point, i.e., stopping short of narrowly corporate economic interest."⁴

Though the unity is temporary and of a superficial nature, the ruling class is likely to get dominance over the ruled which is absolute in real terms at a particular point of time or a period due to specific conditions prevalent varying from one nation to the other. When the aspect of the unity gets predominance over the other, the ruled may identify its interests with that of the other. The western societies with their existing structure of body politic provides ample evidence of it.

In a predominantly agrarian society like India, the party representing the interests of entrepreneurial class in the main does get the support of the rural labour since in its scheme of things, there are many opportunities opened to the latter unlike the parties representing the feudal interests.

To sum up :

(a) The parties are the social forces arising out of

4. Quintin Hoare and Geobrey Nowell Smith, n.2, p.181.

a society divided into sectional and class interests.

- (b) The sectional or the class interest is the hall-mark of the character of a social force.
- (c) The social forces generally recognised as political parties necessarily arise out of their respective basic economic interests only to further protect and promote the same. Therefore, the consciousness of a party will not be other than the basic economic interests which it represents.
- (d) In a society where different sectional interests class each other, it is the correlation of the different social forces which is of utmost importance for a study to assess the dialectical movement of the society. Thus, the parties should be viewed as involved in an actual struggle against each other in a bid to capture the state power, an instrument through which a party representing the interests of a section in particular and a class in general may subordinate the interests of other sections or the class to ones own.

Though the right of ownership over the means of production by a class predominantly by one section or the

other divides the society horizontally into classes, the production mechanism remains to be, always, as one organic unit. In the whole set of a particular type of production relations at a given stage of the historical development of the societies, different sections are found to be intrinsically linked with each other. Therefore, an attempt in furthering the interests of one section necessarily involves a process of influencing the interests of other sections. It is this process which facilitates a party representing mainly the interests of one section in claiming, though falsely, that it represents the interests of all sections or the society in general.

Social Being Determines Social Consciousness:

"It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness."⁵

Social being determines the social consciousness of the individuals, sections of society or the classes at large. The social being of an individual is to be identified with

5. A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy, (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1977), p.220.



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the place one finds in the given chain of the relations of production at a particular point of time. The relations of production are definite and material with which an individual is linked with the other members of the society, irrespective of the fact whether one likes it or not. Moreover, the production relations established between people are not only not determined by people's social consciousness; they are not even completely grasped by them.

"The fact that you live and conduct your business, beget children, produce products and exchange them, gives rise to an objectively necessary chain of events, a chain of development, which is independent of your social consciousness, and is never grasped by the latter completely."⁶

Further, it is this social intercourse of the individual which is objective and material and which determines his consciousness. The will, aims, desires and aspirations of people are conditioned by their social or personal interests.

6. Fundamentals of Marxist-Leninist Philosophy, (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1974), pp. 283-84.

In this context an observation made by Girilal Jain, writing on a specific case in one of his recent articles is worth demonstrating. Contrasting the personalities of Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi, he observes:

"Mrs. Gandhi is, of course, different from Mr. Nehru by temperament, training and experience. He was deeply influenced by the British value system (liberalism and socialism) and he grew up in the independence struggle. Many of his cabinet colleagues had been his close comrades in the fight for freedom. Mrs. Gandhi grew up as an aide to the prime minister. Her responses are more instinctive than intellectual and therefore more rooted in the Indian tradition which is rather raw by virtue of being the product of a subsistence economy and cruel struggle for bare survival." (emphasis added).

The Reality Made to Stand Upside Down : Understood in the sense as is demonstrated above, the C.C.S.D.'s efforts to bring about a change in the social consciousness of the

7. Girilal Jain, "Party System in Decay : Implications for Indian Polity", Tides of India, (New Delhi), March 25, 1966.

individuals necessarily proves futile for the total personality, consciousness being the external manifestation is rooted in the social existence. To hold that it is the social consciousness which is primary to the individual, as is implicit in the C.C.S.D's line of thinking, is to perceive the phenomena as standing upside down, metaphysical and false.

The C.C.S.D's contention referred to in this context is characteristic of the specific comprehension of the social phenomena of all idealists in particular and the bourgeoisie ideologies in general.

Going by the idealist position, the society is an aggregation of individuals. The social development takes place at the behest of a talented few. In the present context, as is shown earlier, the leading elements of the society indulge in 'wrongful' activities bringing about a disaster to the whole society. Therefore, the prescription of C.C.S.D. aimed at bringing back the leading elements to their good services.

Thus, the idealist position either negates the existence of the material basis in total or recognise it as subordinate or secondary to the social consciousness. In doing so, it inverts the reality.

"The death sentence pronounced on the old philosophy applies at the same time to its object too. Marx does not only want to see the end of the Hegelian philosophy of the state. He wants to see the actual 'dissolution' of the state. This again is because he understands that not only is the philosophical representation of reality false, metaphysical and 'standing on its head' — but so is reality itself, that is to say, the particular type of social regime which takes the form of modern representative state or parliamentary government."⁸

Thus, if the idealism perceives the reality as standing on its head which inturn is, already, upside down so as not to straighten it up and make it stand on its feet but only to legitimise it; the structural-functionalists

8. Lucio Colletti, n.4, p.232.

theorise the reality as what it is legitimising its standing on its head. The behaviouralists, though not strangely, stands parallel to idealists, approaching the reality seemingly from a different angle, but essentially doing the same job i.e. legitimising the capitalist reality.

Chapter - III

BEHAVIORALISM

'Avoiding that dangerous subject politics' but still working in the field of political studies presumes an area chosen by behaviouralists which will be, reasonably safe. Limiting to the studies of behavioural pattern in voting with a view to predict the results and with which the behaviouralists started their activity in the field of political studies proves, beyond doubt, the observation made by Alfred Cobban to be true. Obviously, it does not make any science rather it is more a technical job. Following from their basic conception, as a necessary development in realising the end set forth, is the discovery of the means namely the empirical method invented for the purposes of collecting data and to further analyse it which inturn stands approving the contention held earlier.

But the area of activity of behaviouralists is much more wider. The scope and objective of behaviouralism stops nothing short of theory building as the ultimate goal. The studies conducted on the voting pattern constitutes only the beginning of the entire venture. The behaviour-

list topography, seemingly, presents election studies and the political studies at large in terms of the metaphor of an edifice whose upper floors (theory) rest, as the logic of an edifice would have it, on its foundation (studies on voting pattern).

"Theory, according to them, does not consist of speculation and introspection but of analysis, explanation and prediction. It is on the basis of a well-organised, logically inter-related structure of concepts and propositions that hypothesis has to be advanced; the hypothesis in their own turn, have to be capable of undergoing rigorous testing, and then alone, should form the basis of new theories. The theory to begin with may be:

- i) low level, consisting of singular generalisations;
- ii) middle level, synthetic or narrow gauge or
- iii) 'general' broad gauge, systematic or overarching;

but the ultimate objective of behaviouralist research is the overarching 'generalisations' — in other words, to discover laws for describing and interrelating political phenomena with as great accuracy as laws of

mechanics or physics."¹
 (emphasis added).

Going by this line, it is only to be expected that the behaviouralists would claim, though wrongly that their entire approach is value-neutral. Secondly, it should be noted that the theory building involves a process of creating something positive, irrespective of the fact whether it reflects the reality truly or not, unlike the technical services rendered by it at the first instance. The sole interest of behaviouralist, as they claim is to strictly adhere to the objectivity in order to project the reality as it is in existence. Therefore, it becomes necessary to find out 'what in reality is the reality'.

The Question of Reality:

The reality is always one. There can not be two or more realities. Labour generating capital is the sole reality. But the capital appearing to have been producing the labour and the capital ruling over the labour does mean that the reality, namely the labour generating the capital,

1. S.P. Verma, Modern Political Theory, (New Delhi, 1975), pp.88-

which inturn is unchangeable; is standing on its head. When the reality, thus, stands on its head, it can not be referred to as reality. At best, it can be identified as 'capitalist reality'.

Here, it should be mentioned since capitalism emerged as a part of the natural historical process, it appears for many that it is the actual reality. It is only the scientific discovery on the genesis of capital which would bringout the really real in to light holding the reality such as the capital ruling over the labour as capitalist reality.

"I would say that there are two realities in capitalism; the reality expressed by Marx, and the reality expressed by the authors he criticises."

① Capital is produced by labour, labour is the cause, capital the effect; the one the origin, the other the outcome. And yet not only in the accounting of the enterprise but in the real mechanism, the working class appears only as 'variable capital' and as the wages fund. On the whole, such is the reality on its head already mentioned, the reality which

Marx rejects as a criterion and yard stick
but which he wants to overthrow and invert."²

Real is Rational :- The behaviouralists work within the framework of capitalist reality, as is known, and maintain that their approach is basically value-neutral. The method when applied does necessarily yield in rationalising the capitalist reality, irrespective of the fact whether one is aware of it or not. It does not, of course, mean to imply that the same method holds good for application in a socialist society. For a socialist society is generally supposed to be the resultant of the inversion of the capitalist reality i.e., the reality is made to stand on its feet. The behaviouralist method does not reproduce the real, be it standing on its head or feet, for the method itself stands inverted. The process of rationalising the real which follows from the inner logic of the method, in itself is expressive of the fact, that the behaviouralists visualise the reality always in its inverted image.

Starting from Foot on the Reality :- In any social organisation, as the hitherto history is evident, it is

2. Lucio Colletti, n.3, chapter II, pp.234-5.

the social forces which act as vehicles of either social conservation or social change, the mass of the people being led. Every social force consists of the subjective elements, who inturn are knowingly raised out of the masses themselves. The subjective elements joined in a group become a social force. The social force may be in the form of a political party or a voluntary organisation formed against a specific purpose. The members of a party are generally considered as subjective elements. Therefore, a study of a party inturns of its ideological beliefs and the section or a class, it represents, forms the main core of the study.

Subjective forces and Mass of the People :

For instance, the Bolshevik party or the Chinese Communist Party, to start with, had certain enlightened people who inturn raised membership in their respective parties only to become social forces which subsequently carried on internal social revolutions. These parties with all their membership are to be considered as subjective forces in the first instance possessing a definite ideology. If it is not for the support of the mass of the people to

their respective parties, the social revolutions would have not been effected. The character and the level of the subjective consciousness of these parties play a determining role on the nature and state of the social revolutions. Often, it is observed that with a change in the leadership at the top ranks of the Party, the policies pursued by these countries both internally and externally underwent a change. Most significant is the fact that the death of a single top most leader brought about sea changes. Therefore, the parties that carried a social revolution and the leadership which started the parties or the leadership that follows the first generation of leadership are known to have been playing a determining role in the character of social progress. The history of the mankind has not yet advanced to such a stage, due to the historical reasons again, where all members of the society take active participation in the social organisation which inturn needs an higher level of social consciousness equivalent to that of the leadership. The cultural revolution, tried in China in mid-sixties, was intended, it is argued, mainly to

raise participatory level of the mass of the people in social organisation, simultaneously upgrading the theoretical awareness of the people on the social phenomena. Thousands of cultural revolutions, as Mao-Tsetung has been attributed of asserting, need in the direction.

Therefore, it is known that the vast mass of the people remain outside the domain of active participation in the social organisation.

The same is the cause as do the Communist Parties mentioned earlier with the social democrat and reactionary parties elsewhere except for the fact that these parties work for the social conservation. The mass of the people are kept under certain controlled conditions. In a democratic polity the parties representing the interest of the ruled are found at disadvantageous position as far as the electoral prospects are concerned, since the elections are held under certain controlled conditions. These may be

broadly identified as follows:

- i) Since the means of production is in the hands of propertied classes, the parties representing their interests will have a natural advantage over that of its rival.
- ii) The parties representing the working people have to build up afresh against the establishment.
- iii) The state by its inherent nature works as an hurdle in the day to day work of the parties of working people, preventing their expansion. The same state facilitates the widening of the opportunities of the parties of establishment. In the developing countries, it is a common phenomena that the parties representing the interests of broad masses have had been not allowed to operate freely not only in their day to day work but at the time of elections and in some cases, the people suspected to vote for these parties are found to have been disallowed with the exercise of physical force. The beauracracy and the police force at the same time help the parties of the ruling classes in many ways in securing majority.

- iv) The press and the mass media in general being controlled by the ruling classes enable the parties representing the interests in more than one way in propagating its ideology persistently with the ultimate aim of moulding the mind of the people in the desired direction.
- v) Last but not least is the fact that all the factors together, mentioned earlier, may exercise a negative impact on the subjective forces representing the interests of the broad masses blunting its class consciousness which in turn blurs the distinction, in the eyes of the people, between the parties representing the ruling class interests and the ruled. Revisionism is, thus, a breed of the repression exercised by the ruling classes. The sharpeners of the class consciousness on the part of the parties representing the interests of the working people plays a critical role for it alone is capable of drawing a dividing line between the ruling classes and that of the ruled.

The very fact that a class society is divided into conflicting interests demarcating the two classes horizontally providing a concrete material basis for the class of the

oppressed does not provide it a sufficient condition enabling them to form into a class of their own though it constitutes a necessary condition. Therefore a party fulfilling the sufficient condition becomes a must.

Political Democracy and People's Will :- It is generally believed that the equality in the sphere of political life would bring about the same in the sphere of economic life though the process, it is sometimes argued, may be tardy and cumbersome. It is ~~sometimes~~ argued that in the democracies where each man is given a vote of an unit value - a possibility of majority prevailing over minority exists. The experience of the democracies does not justify the argument - on the contrary, in almost all the democracies, the gap between the rich and poor continues to have been widening. Therefore, it appears, even for an overt view, to call these governments in the democracies as popular formed on the basis of the people's will. It should also be added that it is unlikely that the bulk of the poor wants to be poor and willingly allow the gap between them and the rich to grow instead of seeking

to prevail over the rich by voting to a party which claims to represent its interests. But, it is an observed fact that the parties representing the ruling class interests continue to get votes from the poor while the parties willing to represent their interests are either rarely in existence to the day or found with not much support.

Many tried to explain the anomaly. Some attribute it to illiteracy and ignorance of the people which lies behind their failure in identifying the parties representing their interests. Some others identify it to the failure on the part of the concerned parties themselves in successfully handling the political situation in their favour. But most of the authors on the election studies failed to identify the critical and determining cause, the exposition of which explains the entire anomaly in its totality.

For instance, the historic Telangana peasant revolt led by the Communist Party of India, during the later half of forties was subsequently suppressed by the then party in power at centre with the effect the former had been

not only forced to give up its struggle but was indeed, reduced in strength. Given due consideration to the developments that took place both at the national and international level, once when the united communist party abiding by the parliamentary system, which again is because of the revisionism that crept into the party as an aftermath effect of the suppression of Telengana peasant revolt, formed a State Government in Kerala, it was dissolved by the Centre in 1959. The dissolution of the left-front government of West Bengal in 1967 once again and the physical disallowance of the voters of left parties on the occasion of the polling day in the assembly elections held in 1971, apart from the general repression of the State met by the left parties in their day to day work in organising broad masses on their immediate demands knowingly checks the expansion of the parties under consideration. When the subjective forces representing the broad masses are persistently kept under check disabling them to expand, the field is knowingly left open for the parties representing the ruling class interests. The

broad mass of the people, obviously are left with no option but to choose a party of alien class interests.

Going back to the original point made earlier that the behaviouralist method itself stand inverted; in actual reality a certain behavioural pattern is imposed on the broad masses by the subjective forces, be it a socialist society or a mixture of feudal and capitalist or the capitalist in pure form; and the behaviouralists making a start from the imposed to the imposer - from the effect to the cause are to visualise the phenomena in its inverted image. The behaviouralists rationalise the reality by creating an impression that it is the masses who willingly bring about the regimes into existence and indeed the creators of the regimes. The behaviouralists working on a capitalist reality which inturn is a reality standing on its head legitimise it by starting their studies from its foot.

The Post-Behavioural Revolution and After :

The behaviouralism by inverting itself, so as to stand on its foot becomes, post-behaviouralism. Had it not been for the force of the rapid developments elsewhere

in the world - which in turn brought open the futility of the behaviouralist method compelling self-realisation on the part of the founder-fathers of behaviouralists; the post-behavioural revolution would have not been a possibility.

The realisation on the part of the authors in behavioural studies in India in particular may be assumed to have started consequent to the self-realisation attained by the behaviouralists at international level. For the students in behavioural studies engaged in the election studies particularly, there are certain objective and compelling reasons in the changing political situation within the country itself which obviously reinforces the self-realisation imparted from without. The mid-term poll held for fifth Lok Sabha in the first quarter of 1971 carries with it a qualitative break with the past interms correlation of the class forces. Following from the major changes, it is only to be expected that it reflects on every aspect of electoral

politics including the altogether different expression the election system gets in the changed conditions. The following instances are indicative of the dramatic changes reflecting on different aspects:

- (i) The power position of a single person as the powerful head of the state in the centre state, the objective basis for which has been laid through constitution gets its fullest expression.
- (ii) The powerful position of the representatives of the rural elite got relegated to clearly a secondary position. The representatives of the urban elite subjugates the rural elite to its own interests.
- (iii) The vote banks considered to be the potential reserves in the hands of a prospective candidate deciding the outcome of the election results, which in fact played a decisive role till the end of the fourth general elections, had been broken with the fifth general elections. The important point to be noted in this context

is that without the slightest intervention of the administrative machinery, a change of a considerable nature took place. In the subsequent elections held to Lok Sabha and assemblies, it is acknowledged the down trodden have not been allowed to exercise their voting right at several places by the same who earlier held them in their vote banks.

It has been found that many authors on the electoral studies used to suggest administrative measures in such cases and the changing phenomena brings forth the futility of such suggestions. It should be mentioned here that the reform measures suggested of the category may not be taken as isolated and unrelated but as following from a definite kind of perception of the phenomena which is known as mechanical and static. The behaviouralist method by its inner logic of rationalising the real is perceptually mechanical. There are countless reform measures of this kind suggested by scholars of high reputation, the extracts from the writings of which indeed, is exhausting.

However, the essential point to be noted is that the entire edifice built up by behaviouralists in the period preceeding the fifth general elections remains deserving to be kept in museum, for the old edifice has hardly any relevance in the new context. Of late, the self-realisation among the students belonging to the behaviouralist school seems to have attained completion bringing forth the post-behaviouralist revolution into full use. A contrast of the writings before and after the fifth general elections taken from the same source may help in understanding the visible change.

Iqbal Narain and others while reviewing a collection of articles written by authors located at the centre for study of developing societies which ~~is~~ is known for its behaviouralist orientation observes:

"An effort has been made to analyse the political system in terms of elite dominance only. The political parties

which are expected to ensure people's meaningful participation have only worked as instruments in the hands of dominant groups to penetrate down to the local level and legitimise their rule. The book at times gives the impression that it is an effort in rationalising the real.*³

A more revealing extract on the behaviouralist method covering the edifice it created, taken from the same book goes to say:

"Without examining the contents of electoral processes in a realistic manner and interpreting them in the light of value-premisses of constitution of India, the Indian scholars, by and large, just tied themselves to the approaches and perspectives of western scholars, whose interest was primarily combined to the institutionalization of political processes as an index of political development. Incidentally they also looked for stabilization of political choices. Finally, they highlighted more the cultural

3. Election Studies in India -- An Evaluation of 1967 and 1969; Election Studies, pp. 49-4

cleavages than the basic factors of unity underlying the phenomena of cultural cleavages and the historic and newly emerging cementing factors. Thus their favourite analytic categories tended to be caste rather than class." (emphasis added).⁴

Rajni Kothari whose interest in the stability of the system was made explicit in his book "Party Politics and Political Development", goes to the extent of suggesting : "need for firmness in the face of challenge and a resolute suppression of all forms of anomic behaviour".⁵

The same author, Rajni Kothari who once prophesied institutionalisation of the processes, of late, advocates for a change and development giving a positive approach.

"In the fifties we have an inert and relatively docile population that was easy to govern. But we had a fragile national unity and a dependent political economy which posed the main challenge.

4. Ibid., pp. 44-43.

5. Rajni Kothari, Party Politics and Political Development, p.21.

The situation has now been reversed. Today we have a conscious populace in an otherwise secure and self-reliant nation, potentially able to deliver the goods but in practice unable to do so, thanks to an archaic system of governance. The grounds of performance have drastically changed in the process. A centralized system is unable to deal with the challenges of this new stage in our development as a nation." (emphasis added).⁶

The graphic idea presented by Rajni Kothari picturising the post-independent India which is inclusive of a suggestive opinion on the desired future developments contains the mention of both the basic economic factors and the superstructural elements and an attempt to draw the changes occurring in both of them in due course. It all indicates a fundamental change in the analytical categories used by him as a student of behavioural method.

6. Rajani Kothari, "Strong Vs. Weak Centre : A False and Dangerous Choice", Times of India, March 23, 1980.

Chapter - IV

MAJORITY SYSTEM — AN IMPEDIMENT...?

Of late, the controversy over abandoning the majority system and switch over to that of presidential as a substitute became a subject of nation-wide debate. The recent All-India lawyers meet to discuss the issue, the sponsorers of the meeting explicitly advocating a change to the presidential system and the prime minister under-pinning the need for a continued debate on the issue in her inaugural address marks the beginning of the country-wide debate.

The opposition's charge that the All India lawyer's meet had, indeed, been a defacto officially sponsored one under the direct supervision of the ruling party and its head and therefore the argument that it reflects the official thinking is notable; when seen in the context that atleast one chief minister of a Congress (I) ruled state is known for his strong advocacy of the presidential system. What lends added significance to the opposition's charge is that it is not the first time the opposition charged the ruling party for its alleged

deliberate attempts to replace the present majority system with that of presidential. As early as in 1976 during the emergency rule, it is said and written that the then ruling party under the effective control of Mrs. Indira Gandhi as the Prime Minister of nation issued a circular within the party suggesting switch over to the presidential system. But subsequently as a section of the party thought to the contrary, it could not be materialised.

The critiques across the country argue that the ruling party would have already 'imposed' presidential system but for the lack of requisite majority in the Rajya Sabha. The Supreme Court's verdict in the Keshavananda Bharati Case is conceived as another constraint.

As if validating the apprehensions of the opposition and the critiques of the ruling party in general and further introducing a sense of urgency and the seriousness with which the ruling party contemplates the switch over is an interview given by the Maharashtra Chief Minister Antulay to Blitz.

To a question that 'the Keshava Nanda Bhaerati Judgement of the Supreme Court upheld the right of Parliament to amend any part of the Constitution under article 368, but subject to the condition that the basic features would not be altered', Antulay responds --

"They might have given their opinion...but their opinion cannot be incorporated as an amendment to the Constitution. I don't think there is any prohibition to what parliament can do". To an another question that when do you expect this change? When would you like this change? Antulay says:

"To my mind, we don't have much time to loose. This is the last opportunity given by the people of India for this system or any other system whatsoever if democracies and independence are to survive. It will have to be done within about a years' time, so that for the remaining four years you can work for the system and instill confidence in the peoples mind, that you can change the fate and destiny of the country democratically. But now people have begin to loose faith in democracy."¹
(emphasis added).

1. "Antulay Opens Great Debate", Blitz (Republic Day Special), January 26, 1981.

It follows from above that while it is too early that nothing positive can be ascertained on the question that whether the government will go for the introduction of the presidential system in the place of existing one, it may be said for certain that the ruling party seriously contemplates it. Again, it is to be stressed that should the situation warrant, i.e., the social, economic and political which prompt the ruling party for a switch over remaining the same with no significant changes of whatsoever either in any one of them or in the whole resulting in the automatic defusion of the issue, the possibility of the idea presently floated by the ruling party getting translated into actuality in future cannot be refuted, notwithstanding the complications judicial and constitutional etc. The factors behind the idea are much more powerful than anything the complications would prevent.

It is enlightening to note that the urge for electoral reforms of some form or other has a long

history, as old as the operation of the majority system. A careful study of the history reveals that the urge for the electoral reforms both in terms of character and dimension gained momentum over the years. In the period before the midterm poll held for fifth Lok Sabha in the first quarter of 1971, the debate on the electoral reforms remained much of an academic interest. One possible exception can be made, though not much of significance to a brief period following the fourth general elections which signalled an element of instability for the first time in the history of the political system of free India. It naturally evoked some interest of considerable measure among political circles and outside as well. Suspicions arose over the suitability of the majority system to the changing conditions. Consequent to the doubts raised were the alternatives made out. While, it is known since long that the two communist parties had been pleading for the introduction of proportional representation system with a degree of difference amongst them as far as the emphasis is concerned, the Communist Party of India being the most vocal, it is

interesting to note that the well-known industrialist Tata plead for the replacement of the majority system with that of presidential. However, with no noticeable interest found on the part of either the ruling party or of the opposition, for the reasons known well, the deliberations could not sustain. While the ruling party notably under the leadership of Indira Gandhi sought to compensate for the credibility lost under the undivided Congress regime and a further loss caused by the split in the party through promises of reforms of the nature of a wide range, followed by the actual implementation of some with a clear objective of obtaining a majority in the mid-term poll held in 1971, the opposition, encouraged by the gains scored in the general elections held in 1967 was in no way interested as it was expecting further gains. It would seem probable when seen in the context of the split that took place in the undivided Congress Party.

Indeed, it is the reemergence of the single party domination only with an added vigour and the near total

rout of the opposition which fought the election jointly in the mid-term poll held in 1971, contrary to the predictions held by many, which marks the beginning of the history of politics of electoral reform.

Relegating the existent election process to the background the mid-term poll sets in motion a new election process. It could be none other than this which can explain the causes behind the poor performance of the opposition in the election. The new election process characteristic of its political vote alters the total functioning of the majority system lending it an entirely different meaning. The single member, single constituency system functioning under the old election process, with no political vote as its basis but every thing other than that, could not be expected to raise the questions such as vote-seat ratio as it had come to preoccupy the minds of political analysts as a central theme concerning the functioning of the majority system in the following years of 1971.

Here, a mention is to be made to the theorists of the two party system. It is true, given the experience of all the general elections held till 1967, a single largest party with its influence evenly spread to a large extent among different regions of the country, though with a minority vote secured to it, will emerge with absolute majority. Therefore, the greater the unity among opposition the lesser the incidence of the disproportionately in vote-seat ratio. Hence, stretching a little farther, unity among opposition is the basis for the emergence of two party system. Though the unity among the opposition is necessary but it cannot by itself constitute a sufficient condition as shown with the qualitative turn taken by the fifth Lok Sabha elections. The 'theory' was apparently drawn from the way the majority system functioned, given the limitations of a particular election process existent at the time. The new election process at work, since the 1971 mid term poll makes the theory invalid. It is remembered that the election processes are subject to the changes in

the larger political processes which in turn are to be studied in reference to the country's political economy. It is necessary to mention here that the theorists of two party system draw their sources of inspiration from the working of the system in Britain. Does the same repeat here in India with its under-developed economy and stagflation being the universal characteristic of the entire capitalist world including India — is to be seen.

However, the chief problem confronting the political system is not one of a single party domination or the inability on the part of opposition to come closer eventually when the occasion arises or the lack of an effective and outstanding leader who can keep different currents together tied in unity or to the least the failure of the majority system giving rise to the problem such as the insufficient majority in Lok Sabha and state assemblies. Though paradoxical it may appear, within a year of coming to power with two-third majority

at centre and in most of the states, the ruling party itself started expressing the fear of instability. The forces causing the instability are not entirely external to it i.e., the opposition but internal too is known by its own admission. Should the internal quarrels among rival groups continue to exist and the opposition bring about a large scale agitation, the leadership of the ruling party fears that the government will have to resign due to the possibility of a section of its legislature party shifting its loyalty. The fear is not rather entirely unfounded is known from the Janata experience. Antulay's interview to Blitz confirming the same is interesting to note. In his contention, the system i.e., Parliamentary Democracy has failed. For a suggestion — "if you ban defections, the term of the government will be fixed and nobody will be able to remove a ruling party between of terms" and so long as the party is in power, the party men will have to stick together, Antulay, citing the case of Morarji's downfall says — "But you don't have to ban

defections to other parties. Today, our own party can change the leadership every six months. Suppose there are 300 MPs, of whom 160 say we don't want this or that person, what happens? Stability is not just there."²

In this context, a repeated change made by the ruling party on opposition that the behaviour of the latter is irresponsible and it wants to topple a lawfully elected government by resorting to large scale agitations is noteworthy. An observation to the contrary supported by facts, made by any number of writers during the recent past, is equally interesting to note. Many feel that the mass agitations erupting in parts of the country are being led independent to the political parties and to the extent the opposition is held responsible as having failed to articulate the demands of the people. It all implies a growing mistrust among people over the political parties, be whether one is in the government or in opposition. It is argued that it may have a dangerous potential of far reaching conse-

2. Ibid.

quences to the very existence of democracy. The Assam agitation and the peasant agitations led in parts of the country and the respective leaderships keeping political parties away stands to the fact that the latter are increasingly becoming irrelevant. As a measure of regaining the confidence of the mass of the people, if the opposition takes up the agitations on its own, it may eventually lead for the destabilisation of the government. If not, as the situation stands today, people may take recourse to the agitational approach disregarding the political parties. Either way politics of confrontation seem to have come to stay. There are enough indications to show that the ruling party, in its bid to further isolate the opposition from the people, is encouraging the trend of movements lead by independents with no political affiliation. It may have dangerous potentials of far reaching consequences to the very survival of democracy.

The ruling party's offer of the presidential system as a way out to the present impasse is to be discussed

keeping in view the total situation described above. In brief, the existing body politic appears to have failed to meet adequately the challenges posed by the system. It is to be noted that the genesis of the problems affecting the body politic in particular and the democratic set up in general lies not in the suitability or otherwise of an election system or the form of governments as such. The problems confronting the nation are to be located in its political economy. In a final analysis, it appears that a wide gulf between the functioning of the economic system and that of the political has been getting accumulated over the years. As a result the decade 70's witnessed tensions originating out of the growing conflicts between the two. As a logical corollary to it, either of the two have to get adjusted to the other. It is a necessary and unavoidable process - the seventees observed such a process of adjustment to have been already taking place. The declaration of internal emergency may be taken as one such adjustment. The talk of the introduction of presidential system is to be

taken as the logical extension of the general adjustment process that has already begun. Therefore, a debate on the merits and demerits of the form of governments by themselves amounts to irrelevance if it is not accompanied by a discussion on the developments in the country's political economy.

It is necessary to elaborate a point made earlier as a passing reference discussing the misleading conclusion drawn by the theorists of two party system.

The likely distortions of the vote-seat ratio is not difficult to be appreciated. The mechanism of the distortion of the vote-seat ratio puts an in-built tendency into the functioning of majority system forcing the divided opposition to come in terms and fight the election unitedly against the domination of a single party is beyond any controversy. It has got reflected in any number of election alliances made by the divided opposition. But the dispute arises when it is emphasised that mere unity among the opposition ensures either victory to the opposition or to the least it prevents the

dominant party obtaining absolute majority bringing down the scale of disproportion, ultimately, emerging itself as the single largest opposition. At the logical end, it implies that it is a sufficient condition for the emergence of two party system.

The contention namely any such generalisation is mistaken is reinforced from the experience of the past history. It is true that the unity among the opposition constitutes a necessary condition, and to the extent the majority system has been successful, time and again, in forcing election alliances among the divided opposition. But that itself does not constitute a sufficient condition in evolving a two party system. The fact that it has been better appreciated by the political strategists, particularly of the opposition during the pre-emergency period comes to light when it is seen that the report on election reforms^{*} suggests the correction of the distortion caused by the majority system in its vote-seat ratio by adopting certain changes to the system.

* REPORT SUBMITTED BY THE COMMITTEE APPOINTED BY LATE JAYA PRAKASH NARAIN IN 1974.

In effect the proposal, if implemented, takes out the very basis i.e., the necessary condition itself for the evolution of the two party system. Therefore, it can be held for certain that the committee, given the total situation prevalent by the time of the preparation of the report, did not perceive the possibility of the emergence of two party system. The perception of the committee is prone for different interpretations. However, it cannot be said that the committee visualised any insurmountable difference among the then major opposition parties, so as to resist the temptation of coming together, a pressure exerted from upon by the inner mechanism of the majority system, in the event of a future election to form into an election alliance. Moreover, it is to be pointed out that the proposal made by committee if comes to implementation which the committee must have been aware may bring about a negative tendency keeping the opposition divided. If so, a question that naturally follows from it is that what made the committee to offer such a proposal which neither promotes unity among opposition parties nor

is likely to improve the prospects of opposition to any considerable extent. Possibly the answer can be found if the entire question is viewed from an another angle.

Though the proposal is not likely to bring about any considerable change for its increased standing in terms of election prospects, it can greatly erode the sources of the absolute majority, bringing an end to the dominant position enjoyed by a single party. On the otherhand, the majority system left unchanged, though it brings about unity among opposition may not possibly end the single party domination.. Ending the single party domination, the majority system remaining the same needs something more besides the mere unity which the opposition is somehow deemed by the committee in its inner consciousness as wanting.

The feeling of the Committee is not unfounded is known from the followings:

- (1) The unity among the major opposition parties itself does not cover the wide margin obtained between the opposition and the ruling party that won the election inspite of the split that took

place in the Congress. The margin is as high as 15.9 per cent and even in the states like Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh the gap remains fairly large, the regional concentration of the opposition in these areas being of no help. Therefore, a mere unity among opposition neither can undo the margin nor the question of distortion of vote-seat ratio can be shown as the reason for the poor performance. It is evident from the following contrast of the two tables.

Table-I : PERCENTAGE OF TWO PARTY VOTE CONGRESS PLUS "JANATA"³

	1971	1977	1980
All India	71.3	77.7	71.0**
Andhra Pradesh	67.9	69.7	71.1
Bihar	74.1	67.9	75.2
Gujarat	93.9	96.4	96.0
Haryana	78.2	88.4	94.3
Himachal Pradesh	94.7	96.7	
Karnataka	95.0	96.7	81.0
Kerala*			
Madhya Pradesh	84.2	90.5	85.9
Maharashtra	76.0	80.2	75.0
Orissa	89.0	90.0	83.4

3. Inderjit, "The Result of Disunity", The Economic Times, (New Delhi), January 1983.

Table - I contd...

	1971	1977	1980
Punjab*	55.8	48.9	64.7
Rajasthan	81.6	95.8	86.2
Tamil Nadu**			
Uttar Pradesh	86.0	93.0	86.6
West Bengal	40.6	53.2	42.8
Delhi	95.9	98.4	95.4

Table - II : THE "JANATA" VOTE⁴

	1971	1977	1980
All India	27.7	43.2	28.4
Andhra Pradesh	12.1	32.3	21.2
Bihar	34.0	65.0	39.0
Gujarat	48.6	49.5	39.8
Haryana	25.6	70.4	61.7
Himachal Pradesh	17.7	58.4	61.7
Karnataka	24.2	39.9	24.2
Kerala	6.1	7.2	NA
Madhya Pradesh	38.7	58.0	38.2

4. Ibid.

Table - II contd....

	1971	1977	1980
Maharashtra	12.5	33.2	21.7
Orissa	50.6	51.8	34.0
Punjab	9.9	13.0	12.2
Rajasthan	31.3	65.2	43.5
Tamil Nadu	49.7	16.1	8.3*
Uttar Pradesh	38.0	68.0	50.9
West Bengal	12.1	21.5	6.4*
Delhi	31.4	68.2	44.9

- (2) Following from the above, the only option left for the opposition is that they should offer a comparatively better programme than that of the Congress (R) in 1971 election time. This is especially true when the vote has become a political vote with the emergence of the new election process. The disinclination of the opposition to undertake any such programme towards that direction, which is the sure way to attract a considerable number of electorate from the Congress (R)'s fold, in order to cut into the percentage of votes secured by the latter, need not be overstressed as it is evident from the general outlook of the majority of the opposition parties on all policy matters.

The recurring phenomena of the significant percentage of the shifting vote as shown in the above tables conclusively proves that the vote is a political vote and the shifting is caused by the policy matters of the parties concerned resulting in the poor performance of the respective parties. While remembering that the committee on election reforms, did not conceive of any possibility of ending the single party domination except through changes to the election system, keeping in view of the prevalent political mood of the opposition, it is interesting to note, that contrary to the assumptions of the committee, as the later events would show that the opposition emerged victorious out of the elections held in 1977. The single party domination ended without any changes whatsoever made to the election system. With this new experience before, theoretically now it is possible to conceive of two possibilities that can end a single party domination as against no possibility visualised by the Committee. The two possibilities are as follows:

- (1) The opposition undertaking a comparatively better programme to offer to the people than that of the Congress offered in the event of 1971 elections.
- (2) The failings of the ruling party on the political and economic front attracting a negative reaction towards it from the people on which the opposition could benefit.

While these two possibilities are capable of bringing the single party domination to an end; however, it does not necessarily follow from it that the end of the single party domination taking place either the way will have some implications as far as the subsequent developments are concerned. It can be safely held that the first possibility will have positive impact in the sense that it may help for the emergence of two party system in future. Anyhow, it guarantees conditions for the healthy growth of the democratic system. The same is not true with the second possibility. There is not even a semblance of two party system emerging kept apart, the viability of majority system itself comes under serious question.

To sum up, had it not been for the failings of ruling party on the political and economic fronts between the period of 1971 and 1977 when it was in power, the single party domination would have continued giving no room for the opposition to come to power through 1977 elections. Similarly, the lack of the positive programmes with the constituents of Janata when it was in opposition and later when it came to power was the reason behind its fall half way to the term to which it was elected. Again the Congress (I) which came to power largely on the basis of negative vote in the elections held in the early days of 1980, even before it completed one year in office started expressing the fears of its fall. Ironically, not because it lacks any absolute majority but because of the apprehensions of a possible split or a large scale defection in an adverse situation. It is also important to note that a party or parties reduced to opposition are prone for further splits and defections of individuals and groups to the ruling party. The failings of the ruling parties sought as the assets of opposition and the oppositions

being reduced to nothingness is the scenario obtained in the recent past. The lack of a positive programme with the political parties to deal with the problems arising on all fronts social, political and economic, be it the opposition or ruling, in the absence of which the greed for power positions dominates the scene only to accentuate the crisis of the political system,

Therefore, to hold that the election system as responsible for the present crisis is to see the reality upside down. Turning the reality straight back on its feet and studying it systematically reveals that the basic source of the present crisis lies in the political economy of the country. For the present, the edifice namely the particular power structure and particular election system adopted to suit a particular type of political economy does, if any thing, reflect the crisis occurring in the latter. With the possible changes in the structure of political economy obtained from time to time, the edifice is bound to come under inevitable

pressure so as to change itself with the corresponding changes in the political economy. The major change occurring in the structure of political economy, sooner or later, compels the edifice to follow suit. In between, the changes occurring in the edifice are to be taken as a pointer to the direction to which the country's political economy is moving. It is not necessary that the change should take place only in a particular direction. It all depends on the relative strength of the conflicting forces and the compelling reasons with which they work. Should the interaction between the conflicting forces reach a boiling point at a given point of time necessitating a conclusive battle, change becomes reality.

Chapter - V

NATIONAL BOURGEOISIE AND POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

**The State, Social Classes and Political Parties : A
Theoretical Perspective:**

The state does necessarily originate out of the irreconcilable conflicts of the society. A society when it is divided into mutually contradictory class and sectional interests, the State does necessarily originate and grow so that the warring class forces do not consume themselves in an internecine battle. But this does not lend the state a neutral character. The function of the state is not one of mediation between antagonistic class forces. The state does not originate itself. It is the men, the sections and the class forces who are interlocked in a real battle, out of their practical necessity to outmaneuver each other, give rise to the organ of the state power.

Understood in this sense, it is only to be expected that it is the more articulate, historically and socially, who device the organ of the state power. The entire institutional framework is devised in such a way so that the state, once originated and put to work

invariably serves the common interests of the particular class and more importantly the section which gave it the birth.

Again, it is by capturing the state power, sections or classes seek to get an universal legitimacy to their respective interests and thus attain supremacy. In such a process a particular section or a class which manages to capture the State power, at a particular point of time, may find the existing state within the framework of which, it cannot best serve its interests. Therefore the occasional attempts to modify the structure of state in accordance with the needs contemplated. Any major change contemplated in that direction, if it is deemed that it considerably cuts into the authority, privilege and interests of either any important wing of the state or all the important organs of it, will, in the first instance, bring about a necessary resistance from the side of the state itself, let alone the sectional interests opposed to any such attempt. The long standing disputes on the pattern and extent of power distribution between the centre state and the states and between the powers of judiciary and political executive and the relative recent

controversy over the switch over to the Presidential system speak to the mind of different class forces engaged in power struggle. Thus, any changes minor or major, sought to be made to the institutional framework of the state indicate either the changing needs of the same class which wields the state power or the shift of the power from one section to the other. In the present context, the alleged attempts on the part of the ruling party to switch over to the presidential system is to be understood against this background.

The contention of the present study is that currently no particular class or section holds exclusive hegemony over the state, for the political and economic power of the national bourgeoisie, which held sway for a long time came to a near close. Instead the state is torn between different warring sections of the ruling classes with the effect of a considerable reduction in its authority. Appropriate to the reduction in the authority of the state are the slogans, accusations and counter-accusations such as 'a government that works',

the 'performance of the government' or the 'non-performance' which have been witnessed in the period following the assumption of power by Janata party in the post-emergency period. The same is true of today even after a monolithic party i.e., the Congress(I), assumed office at centre and in a large majority of states is particularly notable. But, the same situation will not continue for ever. In order that the various warring sections do not consume themselves in an internecine battle reducing the authority of the state by pulling it in to different sides and thus making it to serve contradictory interests; the state reasserts its authority. In the present context, the case made for the presidential system, of late, stands in this line.

Exempting both the camps i.e., the socialist and developed capitalist where the question of state power has been resolved with a particular class already enjoying an exclusive hegemony over the state that lasts for long; in the rest of the world, to a great extent, the question remains unsettled. For the socialists are

still in formative phase with new sections emerging afresh. Each seeks to assert its own authority. Therefore, the situation is likely to remain volatile. Again, it is all against the bleak prospects ahead that no particular section is historically opportune to establish its hegemony.

It should be mentioned, here, that between the social classes and the state, there are political parties seen operating. The relation between the social classes, groups and the political parties is rather complex. It may be said that the social classes, groups etc, operate through political parties. But the latter are not mere ambassadors of former's interests. A political party is much more creative in articulating the longterm interests of the social class which it represents, than anything the particular social class does visualise. Afterall, the social classes do not exist in isolation to each other. The very essence of any particular social class is dependence on others. Every social class or group is to operate in the whole gamut of relationships with others. A social class or group may operate, in

the first instance, through professional associations, pressure groups. But, the function of these associations, unlike the political parties, is confined to take care of the immediate and specific interests of the sections concerned.

'Politics is the concentrated expression of economics'. The other way of understanding the complex relationship between the political parties and the social classes is that a political party in power has got not many options. It has to operate in a given economy with certain social classes existing in it. A certain political party in power has to either learn to live with the existing socio-economic realities or change it. Firstly, any major changes, if contemplated, will inevitably bring about resistance from the existing dominant social classes which may deem that it adversely affects their interests and for the fear of which a certain political party may not be willing to undertake any drastic measures. Secondly, whatever be the nature

of changes, these will, in effect, benefit a particular social class or group adversely affecting the interests of others. Therefore, a change meant moving the entire social classes or groups in some way or other. It involves the interests of all. Whatever be the economic policy of a certain ruling party, it would, as a rule, serve the interests of a certain social class or a group. But, it cannot be otherwise. It is against this background, looking into the economic policy of a particular political party; the party is said to have been representing the partisan interests of a specific social class or group. It is to be remembered that the existing social and economic order, taken at the level of either national or international, restricts the choices of any ruling party, giving it to operate within a limited number of options. Again, given the limited number of options, any political party is free to choose one's own options and the way a certain political party chooses a particular option reveals its class character. At a particular point of time, when a certain political party is given to operate, there may exist only a few options. But by the actions of its own or so to say by its own intervention i.e., with the implementation of its own economic

policy, over a period of time, the number of options may either increase or conversely decrease. Perceived against this background, the question of economic determinism does not arise. Instead it is only the question of the class character of a given political party and the number of options or the choices available to it, at a given point of time, which determine its actions.

Under the above theoretical background, the concrete situation what was obtained in the immediate post-independence period and the aftermath leading to the current crisis of 'no-class hegemony', which looks more like a transitory period, needs to be studied. The present transitory phase is a setting for a new social and economic order to replace the existing one in future.

**National Bourgeoisie, State power, Social Classes
and Election System:**

The contention of the present study is that the section of the Congress Party under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru had been more articulate and historically

advanced than that of any other existed in the period either within the party or outside and therefore, it could acquire control over the state power. Jawaharlal Nehru in his beliefs and actions represented the national interests. The concentration of power at centre-state and the Soviet aid for the construction of a substantial part of the modern economy under the state control were the two most effective means establishing the hegemony of the national bourgeoisie. Attaining control over the state power does not constitute a sufficient condition in order to acquire hegemony, though it is necessary. The fact that the first five year plan had been mere indicative in nature abundantly reveals that in the absence of other vital conditions such as the Soviet aid; the political authorities could not make use of even the available instrument i.e. the state power for the purposes of mobilising resources to invest in the building of the modern economy. While the Soviet aid constitutes an external factor; the centralisation of power used as a means to mobilise resources for the plan programme forms an internal factor in constructing the modern economy, notably a substantial part

of it being under the state control. Had it not been for the large part of the economy been built in the public sector directly under the state control; the national bourgeoisie could have not been able to establish its hegemony over the other classes. A real hegemony of a particular class or a section is possible only when it acquires dominance over the nation's economic and political processes. In the case of the national bourgeoisie, the dominance over the political processes preceded that of the other.

The centralisation of power may have been done for any number of reasons into which the present study need not go. The relevance of the centralisation of power in the present context is to be seen in that without the concentration of which the bourgeoisie could not have mobilised resources, to activate the economic process. Much before the founding of independent state in India, capitalist system universally recognised the economic functions of the state as constituting an important component. In the case of India, the role of the state is much more, has been recognised since

the enterpreneurial class was weak and the available resources with it needed for the economic construction were meagre. The famous Bombay plan visualised the role of the state in building an economic sector under its control. Therefore, irrespective of the character of the bourgeoisie, all agree upon the intervention of state in the economic processes.

Public sector attaining 'commanding heights', an expression which best suits for explaining the ambition of national bourgeoisie in acquiring hegemony over all the other classes. The goal has not been realised. But for sometime, particularly when the intense industrialisation programme was on, the national bourgeoisie appeared to have had hegemony. All the other classes have had to accept its leadership not because the public sector commanded or compelled in any sense but the interests of all the other classes were so closely interconnected with it that once the pace of industrialisation in it got slowed down, the interests of atleast two classes i.e., the private

corporate sector and middle classes got adversely affected in direct proportion is known well.

Though the monopoly bourgeoisie, time and again particularly in the initial period, expressed its reservations, it should not be understood as an opposition to the existence of the public sector as such but on the role assigned to it namely the 'commanding heights'. The fact that initial misreading of the monopoly bourgeoisie over the role of the public sector came untrue, did not take much time to realise. Not only the private corporate sector thrived to a great extent on the public sector but also the latter in no way prevented the expansion of the former. The occasional overtures of the political authorities over preventing the growth of the monopoly bourgeoisie need not be taken seriously. But, nothing in reality has happened or is about to happen, given the no actual hegemonic position of the national bourgeoisie was best understood by the monopoly bourgeoisie in course of time. The fact that there were no any 'dreadful signs', on the contrary the monopoly bourgeoisie had all positive indications of

its unhindered growth needs not much elaboration.

The private corporate sector, particularly the monopoly bourgeoisie benefited not only in getting supplies of raw materials at cheap rates from the public sector but the latter promoted the sale of the farmers output either directly purchasing for its own needs or creating a market in general. The scale of the benefit accrued to the private corporate sector can be best gauged in that the rate of growth of it was largely determined by the rate of growth in public sector. Once when the plan holiday for three subsequent years in the early years of the later half of mid-sixties were declared, showing a 30 per cent cut in public investment; reports of retrenchment in the engineering industry, amongst the private corporate sector were heard. Strong appeals towards enhancing the scale of plan investment by even indulging in heavy deficit financing were made by the advocates of the interests of private corporate sector. It is well known that the stagnation in the public sector investment in the

subsequent period following the mid-sixties constitutes one of the most important factors behind the poor performance of the private corporate sector in the corresponding period. Thus, the national bourgeoisie, by its investments in the public sector, can be said to have provided an opportunity for the rapid growth of the private corporate sector. Therefore, there appears to be no reason why the private corporate sector, be it big or small, do not accept the leadership of the former. It is in this sense, the national bourgeoisie can be said to have had the leadership role, if not hegemony in its real sense. While the stagnation and the insignificant growth rate witnessed in the public sector did not, in any sense harm the interests of the monopoly bourgeoisie rather it resulted in strengthening it as a class; the same had disastrous consequences for the small industry as a sector. It is indeed the small industry and the leaders of which fall in the category of national bourgeoisie in the established analytical terms of the political economy is significant to note. The sharp erosion in the scale proportion of the investment in the public sector in the period following the second

plan^{is} notable in the sense that the public sector loses its leadership role. While the growth rate during the period of intense industrialisation was as high as 9 per cent in the following period it came down sharply to such a low level that the average growth rate in public sector has been put at 0.7 per cent.

Thus, while the private sector witnessed a real boom during the period when public sector's investment was at its heights, the middle classes too had good reasons to support the leadership of the national bourgeoisie is notable. In addition to the public sector lending vast employment opportunities, the expansion of government bureaucracy was the major avenue.

"Rapid expansion of the government bureaucracy has provided one of the avenues for the fulfilment of the economic interests of the petty bourgeoisie in India. By 1875-76 the wage and salary bill of the Central Government bureaucracy multiplied nearly six times to reach the level of Rs. 2,438 crores, as against Rs. 2,788 crores of the later." (all states put together).

"In India the budgetary expenditure (current account) of the States exceed those of the

centre. Therefore, if both the Central and State Governments are taken into account then it appears that the sum paid out to the government bureaucracy is twice the amount that accrues to the employees of all the factories put together."¹

Here, three things explained in terms of the correlation of class forces are to be brought into focus. Till the time of the mid-sixties, the national bourgeoisie held the hegemonic role and could successfully outbid its political adversaries. The acceptance for the leadership of the national bourgeoisie seen in terms of the real class motives of various dominant class forces has been unquestionable. The same has got reflected in the political processes can be seen later.

Firstly, except for the abolition of a particular institution namely the zamindari system, the rural elite had no reason to turn more vehemently against the leadership of national bourgeoisie. By and large, it went untouched since the political authorities drew

1. Ranjit Sahni "The Middle Class -- Dillusion and Reality", The Economic Times, (New Delhi), January 6, 1981.

food requirements from external sources. Internally, the terms of trade were generally in favour of the agricultural sector. The inadequate and malfunctioning of public distribution systems is one factor in keeping the terms of trade in favour of agricultural sector.

The causes that sustained its opposition were not that strong as being potential enough in going against its fundamental interests as a class and even if it is conceived so, it could successfully thwart such measures. The abundant scope opened before it through political channels by virtue of which it could attain enough political power, does not make it worried much. An attempt made to bring the agricultural sector under the scheme of cooperative farming in the later half of fifties was successfully prevented from realisation. A bill introduced in Lok Sabha to that extent was successfully prevented in getting passed. A significant number of the members of the ruling party voted against the bill, introduced by the government, is notable. The land reform act introduced in the first half of the

sixteen by way of administrative action was made ineffective when it came to the implementation side, let alone the high limits of ceiling rates allowed with a number of loopholes provided in it.

Here, the important point to be noticed is that feudalism as an institution, by and large, was left untouched. The weak political base which the national bourgeoisie had of its own and its political links with feudalism comes to light when seen that it made full reliance on the administrative powers for the implementation of its land reform programme. The exclusion of the powerful instrument namely the political mobilisation of masses in support of the implementation of its plan programme in general follows from its reluctance to make any structural changes which in effect facilitated the rural elite to heavily represent in Parliament and State assemblies through subordinating the majority election system to its interests.

No sooner, the structural changes to the earlier forms of institutions⁷ changes conceived to be made, were

found impossible, the political authorities took recourse in an altogether different strategy of institutional changes as it expressed in terms of green revolution and white revolution etc, creating a class of 'gentle men' farmers who intura lent support for some time in the later period. Thus, the earlier political opposition of the rural elite, either from inside the Party or outside, had been drastically cut both in qualitative and quantitative terms. Thus, the national bourgeoisie sought to preserve its leadership role by making compromises with the rural elite.

Secondly, the initial misgivings of the monopoly bourgeoisie soon came to an end and therefore, the acceptance of the leadership of the political authorities in effective control of the state power witnessed. The gradual disappearance of the Swatantra Party from the political scene which enjoyed the full confidence and patronage of the monopoly bourgeoisie explains that the latter shifted its loyalties to the side of the political authorities.

Thirdly, the middle classes, since their economic interests were taken care of, had no reason to go against

the leadership of national bourgeoisie. It is the middle class which started drifting away since the mid-sixties, for their immediate interests started coming under strain thereafter.

To sum up, that the political authorities representing the national interests could, by and large, manage to bring their leadership into acceptance by all the other dominant social classes. This phenomena of either no challenge or no effective challenge to the leadership of national bourgeoisie at least till the time of mid-sixties can be understood only when it is viewed in terms of the real class motives. It is true, there had been a political opposition, but the fact that even the political opposition has been on the wane in this period due to the lack of adequate support from the different class forces. The same is to be seen as having had reflected in the election processes which placed the Congress party at an unchallengable position. If it had not been for the particular alignment of the class forces the way it took place, as it is seen above, the opposition, however weak and divided, it might

appear, would have got crystallised much earlier bringing in it unity and strength. The results of the fourth general elections provides ample evidence which goes to support this contention. No sooner the national bourgeoisie in political power established its leadership, gradual erosion of the same occurred with atleast one social class i.e., the middle class drifting from it.

The failure of monsoon, the high deficit financing indulged in the preceding years which lead to the high price rise and the consequent declaration of the plan holidays for three successive years and the devaluation of rupee done allegedly under the pressure of world bank; all of which together may be expected to have brought about the questions such as the legitimacy of the leadership of the national bourgeoisie. The other important factor for the substantial gains made by the opposition in the elections held in 1967 could be the absence of the factor of Jawaharlal Nehru. The Congress Party particularly the section which represented the national interests and because of which the party could command the universal support of all sections and classes, with the death of Jawaharlal Nehru lost its nucleus. This

makes the party subjectively weak. The two factors together i.e., the subjective weakness of the ruling party and the turn of objective situation against it, can be said to have been at the background in bringing unity among of then existing, ^{opposition} The electoral alliance amongst opposition resulted in the defeat of Congress party in '9' state assemblies and gave the latter only a marginal majority in Lok Sabha in the elections held in 1967. The fact that if it had not been for the two factors mentioned, the opposition could not have come together needs emphatic note.

A Reflection on the Abstract Studies: Here, an interruption is to be made to provide space for a reflection on the abstract election studies, for two reasons. Firstly and more importantly, it should not go without mention. And, secondly, it facilitates a clear perception while at the same time avoidance of the same can be made in the course of examining the later developments.

With the results obtained in the 1967 elections, certain unscientific assertions have made place into the election studies. Certain abstractions which were made to look independent to the material situations were drawn.

While it is true that the abstractions per se appear valid and logically consistent, it is to be remembered that these generalised abstractions are no more than of marginal use to the election studies. By applying these abstractions to the situations, very often certain misleading conclusions were drawn. Moreover, the judgements made on such vital questions such as the functioning of the democracy in relation to the operation of the majority system, based on these abstractions prove to be highly metaphysical and mistaken. The following illustration is interesting to note.

'The division among the opposition facilitates a single party rule'. Therefore, the apparent conclusion drawn from it is that the opposition must unite or to the least form electoral alliances even if it is known that an alliance made for election purposes may not necessarily last long. Secondly, in the event that the divided opposition is unlikely to come together, a second conclusion logically arrived at is not to see into the material causes that prevent the coming together of the opposition, which of course, cannot be expected otherwise, since the metaphysical reasoning does not allow but to ask for an altogether modification of the majority system. For, the

syllogism that follows from it is as shown below:

- (a) As long as the opposition remains divided single party rule is inevitable;
- (b) The opposition is not likely to come together;
- (c) Therefore the only way out is to modify the majority system.

A totally different reasoning is possible, though not surprisingly, leading to an entirely different conclusion which ineffect makes the majority system look as the most preferred one for the smooth functioning of democratic system, when the syllogistic reasoning undergoes a slight change.

- (a) As long as the opposition remains divided, it is true a single party emerges dominant;
- (b) But the continued dominance of the single party motives^{to} the opposition to come together;
- (c) Thus, in a process, a two party system may come to be a reality.

This is all to bring about a stability. But what is more interesting is that, going by the recent experiences, a diametrically opposed basic proposition to that of the earlier propositions used in the two kinds of syllogistic reasonings presented above, namely single party rule does not necessarily imply stability, may be obtained. Again, this brings out into full focus the irrelevance of the kind of abstraction which were basic to most of the earlier election studies. While it is true that scientific abstraction making is only a necessity; it is possible that wrong methodologies give birth to misleading abstractions. The horizons of the election studies defined as strictly confining to the electoral processes alone to the near exclusion of the study of larger political processes and more importantly the movement and change in the correlation of the class forces can be said to have been at the root of the genesis of such misleading conclusions.

It may not be out of context to mention that it is the correlation of class forces which ultimately determine the electoral prospects of any political party or parties. Different class forces arising out

of a given socio-economic structure contend each other. The motives of various class forces and vice-versa the political parties are real which originate out of their respective basic interests. The studies which refuse to look into the basic interests and the correlation of class forces fail to reflect the reality ultimately leading to incorrect and misleading conclusions.

Majority System : Restoration from Subordination.

If the not so favourable subjective and objective factors which together lead to its poor performance in the elections held in 1967, the defeat of the Congress Party in 9 state assemblies and only a marginal majority secured by it in the fourth Lok Sabha further turns the subjective and objective factors unfavourable to it. While subjectively, having been reduced in size, the Congress Party loses its moral and political authority to a large extent, fresh outbursts of class contradictions elsewhere and the incapacity of the party to meet the new challenges, in turn cuts shortens its subjective image. Should the same situation continue, total rout of the Congress Party in the next elections would seem inevitable. Thus, the bleak prospects ahead poses it the question of

survival. It is against this background the split that took place in the Congress Party in 1969 should be seen.

As far as the correlation of class forces is concerned, the movement of the middle class changing its loyalties is interesting to note. The middle class which had been content with the political authorities in effective control of state power till mid-sixties and which started drifting thereafter, was seen to have become much more aggressive in taking recourse to open struggles in some form or other. In all the agitations which the period has witnessed, it was the middle class, mostly the students, who have been in forefront, unemployment was the most pressing problem. Whatever be the nature of demands, the participation of middle class in the agitations was in view of its partisan interests. The movements led for regional separation were in the hope of availing immediate and increased employment opportunities. A significant feature of all this, bringing the extent of widespread discontent among the middle classes is that the urban youth was seen taking part, in large numbers, in the Naxalbari struggle which had the overthrowing of the government by way of armed

struggle as its aim. The rapid expansion of the peasant armed struggle started in Nazalbari to certain other parts of the country would have not been possible, if it had not been for the substantial participation of agitated educated youth. Further, the peasant armed struggle brings into sharp focus the question of land. The severity of the land problem as it had been expressed in the peasant armed struggles together with the participation of the middle class youth in it brings into light, predominantly, two main problems. The political authorities are given to confront not the problem of unemployment alone but the problem of feudalism too, at a political level.

While at one side, feudalism has come under direct attack through an open resort made for arms by peasants in certain pockets of the country, the section of the Congress Party which had been in power at centre state finds it on the other, to be in consonance with its own interests in making it a major political question. For, the opposition having scored considerable gains in the last elections, a situation imminent to the ruling party's total rout in the next, being found to have ^{been} biased

towards the interests' of the rural elite; can be made to come under a direct political attack which may, in all probability, hoped to improve electoral prospects of the ruling party immensely. The need for making it a major political question becomes much more when seen in the context that the central government which had been formed only with a marginal majority had been reduced into a minority government which intum necessitates mid-term poll to be held. Further, with a section of the ruling Congress Party adding to the strength of the opposition, the need for making feudalism as a major political question becomes much more intense.

The declaration made abolishing the priefy pures and the call given for the land reforms notably with a relatively low ceiling rates reflects the situation described above. Additionally, the bank nationalisation, another measure taken by the government, provides opportunities for self-employment of the educated unemployed youth besides making cheap credit available to the rural poor. The emergence of the

section of the Congress, Party which had been in power through the mid-term poll held to Lok Sabha in the first quarter of 1971, ^{in to a full fledged party} would have not been a possibility but for the measures taken by it in the intermittent period. The land reform measures announced, even if implemented would in no way conflict the interests of gentlemen farmers, a class emerging afresh is significant to note. The results of the mid term poll marks two important developments.

1. The section of Congress Party owing to the tradition of Jawaharlal Nehru which submerged its identity for a period following the death of its leader reemerged as an independent entity, as a full fledged party, notably with no internal opposition. A significant aspect of it is that a relatively small Party with lesser strength when compared to the united opposition could emerge as successful through the mid-term poll. It is possible only when it is supported by an adoption of a correct strategy understood in the context of the given changes and movement in the correlation of class forces.

2. Consequent to the case made against feudalism either through mere policy proclamations or by undertaking certain measures and the 'reverberation' of the same by the people as it had been often expressed as 'Indira wave' on the eve of the mid-term poll, the earlier vote-banks held by the rural-elite have fallen through. The feudal institutional structure in the countryside facilitated the rural elite to subordinate the majority election system to its own interests. Never before feudalism has come under direct attack from the political authorities and reflecting the same is the restoration of election system from its subordination. In sharp contrast to the earlier position when the rural elite held the weaker section of society in their vote banks, the reports available in the later period reveal that in many places of the country, the powerful rural elite did not allow the scheduled caste and tribes to make use of their right of franchise whenever the former felt that it is not in their interest. As an instance, it provides ample evidence to suggest that the mid-term poll brought about a qualitative turn in the operation of majority system, particularly in the countryside.

Of course, there are other evidences which go to establish that such a change has taken place. It can be seen in due course of the study.

The Phenomena of the Rise of Powerful Individual:

Relevant and following from the above is that the ruling section which owes allegiance to Nehru tradition in the process of restoring its identity from its earlier submerged position found itself in a situation of creating its own leader as if to recoup the loss made by the death of Nehru. But, this anyway does not explain the entire phenomena behind the emergence of a powerful individual in politics. To begin with, this explains only a small part of the phenomena.

The implementation of the plan programme was, in no way accompanied by the involvement of the party, for, the process of its implementation did not envisage the precedence of any structural changes made to the existing socio-economic structure. Since the sole reliance has been placed on the administrative powers to the exclusion of the political mobilisation of mass

support in the implementation of the economic programme, the party did not have any positive role to play. This is as much true with the implementation of its programme which was undertaken in view of the mid-term poll held in 1971.

Given no role whatsoever to the party and the implementation of the policy measures solely by the administrative machinery, it is only to be expected that the implementation has been done in the name of the government and more specifically in the name of the key person holding governmental power. This together with the need of the ruling section in creating its own leader in the process of its reemergence as an independent entity, may be said to have constituted the basis for the emergence of the phenomena of powerful individual in the political processes of the country. The magnitude of the implications of this phenomenon on the country's political developments can be seen later.

Indeed, the dual role of any ruling party i.e., the executive functioning of it as a ruling party and the general functioning as a political party, has never

been observed as had been true in the case of Congress Party. The institutional structure of the Party and the general functioning of it had always been nominal while the legislative party functioned as the sole party. The former remains as a mere adjunct to the latter. The effective leadership of the party always preferred to be in the executive and legislature part of the party. This creates a situation that the government leaders are the real leaders of the party and the programmes of the party are implemented in the name of government and its executive head at centre, for, the top leaders of the party happens to be the top leaders of the government too. Having been long neglected a positive role to the party, the creativity of the individual members of the party, functioning at various levels, is lost. Instead it brings about a situation wherein the concern for the policymaking becomes the function of a top few while the rest are given to compete for power positions. In this context, it is interesting to note that it is the mid-term poll held to Lok Sabha in 1971 which brought about the major policy questions into central focus for the first

time. Policy matters had been the basis for the electorate in exercising their franchise either in favour or against the parties involved. It may be said as fairly a new trend in the history of electoral politics in independent India. Seen against the background, that the policy making group at the top and more importantly the person occupying the key position under the leadership of whom a particular policy is said to have been formulated, if and when it leads for the electoral successes of the party bestowing it in power, becomes powerful. The particular person in the name of whom the policy programme has been announced becomes popular among electorate. Here, this aspect needs an emphatic elaboration for two main reasons.

Firstly, there is every likelihood that the emergence of the phenomena of powerful individual may be misconstrued as had been borne more out of choice factors rather than a logical development given the functional character of the party. Secondly, it is impossible to comprehend the particular development if it is not supported by a correct understanding of the

concrete objective conditions obtained around the period. Again, it is to be remembered that a comprehensive picture of the phenomena may not be obtained if the two are viewed in isolation to each other. The developments in the functional character of the party are the end products of the interaction of two main factors. The same is as much true with the developments in the objective conditions at any particular point of time. The factors are commonly responsible for the developments both in the subjective character of the party, in terms of its functional aspect and the objective conditions. When seen individually, one reflects the other in it. But to forget this while examining them separately is to provide scope for making errors.

The two factors mentioned above as being the determinants of the developments either in the subjective character of the party in terms of the functional aspect or the objective situation are: (i) The basic class character of the party and (ii) correlation of the class forces as it is found at any particular point of

time. The two may be called as subjective and objective factors respectively. It is the constant interaction between the subjective and objective factors which is responsible for the rise of the particular kind of successive developments in either of the two. To begin with, it may be said, the subjective factor acts on the objective factor only to bring about a certain type of developments in the latter appropriate to its character. It is in this sense the developments in the objective factor are a reflection of the former. Here, it is to be remembered that the particular functional character which the subjective factor endows is a product of the certain kind of objective factor which means a reflection of the latter, seen in the former. Given the particular kind of subjective factor the specific functional character, it assumed overtime, may be said to have been the resultant of its adaptation to the changing objective situation in the corresponding period. The common denominator, between the Nehru period and in the aftermath following Nehru's death when the ruling section owing allegiance to his tradition tried to reemerge as a

independent entity is the adaptation to the varying objective situations in the respective periods.

If the particular kind of objective situation and the adaptation made to it during Nehru period expressive in the inability to make structural changes, has been responsible for giving rise to the type of functional character discussed earlier; the changed objective situation in its turn, demands further a suitable adaptation in the later period. Once the appropriate adaptation is made, corresponding changes in the functional character do necessarily follow and in the present context it is no less than the rise of the powerful individual. The phenomena of the rise of the powerful individual stands at the logical end of the functional character which had been evolving overtime. This phenomena is no sudden development instead it is both a logical continuation and extension of the particular kind of functional character which evolved over a period of time. As far as the evolution of the functional aspect is concerned, the latter development is different from the former only in dimensional terms. What brings about the large dimensional

gap is the qualitative turn the 1971 mid-term poll took. A top few being concerned of the policy matters holding effective control over the government power at the apex while the rest being found to have indulged in groupisms and power struggle - a characteristic feature of the functional aspect of the party found common to both the pre-1971 period and after. The only difference, the post 1971 period, makes is that this has become more pronounced. In the place of a top few being in the effective control over the government power at apex, it is the singular person who comes to wield the sole control. Besides the control over the government power, unlike in the earlier period where the top few had hardly influenced the electoral choices by their policy pronouncements and implementation, the top singular person exercises enormous influence by way of becoming popular among electorate.

The particular contradiction and the way the ruling party took advantage of it, without which qualitative turn in the 1971 election would have not been a possibility, needs some elaboration. The ruling party draws its source

of strength from the contradiction namely feudalism Vs peasant masses. Given the specific functional character of the party the strength derived out of the objective contradiction gets channelised ultimately into making a powerful individual. Also, the particular state and nature of at least one aspect of the contradiction namely the peasant masses deserves serious attention. As far as the strategies for the electoral successes is concerned, any party or an individual commanding a substantial part of the votes of the poor in the countryside in their favour is sure to win with a large majority, since the overwhelming bulk of the rural population comes under the category of poor. The electoral choice of the poor in favour of a particular party promises stability to the government by leading large majorities. But as far as the destabilisation of the governments by way of large scale mass agitations is concerned; the poor of the countryside, except in the recent period where their participation in the agitations has been witnessed to be considerable confined to certain pockets and regions of the country, stands the least. For it remains to be, by and large,

unorganised and politically with low level of consciousness. Unlike the other sections of the society, the common economic interest base, understood in terms of proletarianisation, of the rural poor remains to be poor. Therefore, the differences seen between the other sections and this particular section of the society in terms of the capacity to get organised on professional lines. It is the mid term poll held in 1971 through which the rural poor emerged, however feeble, as an organised section for the first time notably on political lines. To the extent, the political basis had a precedence over the economic basis. Precisely this makes the rural poor to remain loyal to the political mentors who brought it sectional shape, at least till the time the reverse happens. The fact that the particular state and nature of the rural poor emerged as a section, had significant impact on the subsequent political developments in the country, may be seen later. But, for the present context, it is enough to know that it is the particular nature and state of the rural poor, in view of which the ruling party felt it necessary to project an individual as had been capable of alleviating

their poverty. The call given for eliminating poverty, popularly known as 'Garibi Hatao', a slogan advanced by then chief of the government and party received immense response from the rural poor which, in turn, may be said to have laid the basis for the rise of the powerful individual. Therefore, in an ultimate analysis, it is the contradiction between the feudalism Vs. peasant masses and the way it expressed itself on the occasion of the mid term poll which had been the chief source in giving rise to the phenomena of powerful individual. Therefore, when viewed against the entire background, as is seen above, it becomes clear that the choice factors had no any role whatsoever. It is the concrete conditions prevailed at the time both at the subjective level and that of the objective which together had been responsible for the emergence of this phenomena. The minority rule of the party and the exploding class contradictions outside when added to the sufficient eagerness found on its part which inturn is expressive in its readiness to go directly into the outbursting class contradictions and turn the entire situation in its favour in view of making electoral successes -- a

cumulative combination of all this - The successive events, actions and reactions following one after another with such a rapidity whereby it is only responses and counter responses that count with the ultimate success predominating the minds of all - produces an outcome though not altogether unexpected.

But all this, it is to be made clear, do not sufficiently explain the phenomena of the rise of the powerful individual. The entire explanation presented above brings out only the sources. But the conditions without which the phenomena could have not become expressive, as it did now and recognised by all later in the following period, needs to be specially dealt. For, the conditions which facilitated it to express, equally weigh, may be more than the sources of the genesis itself. Here, it must be remembered that both the sources of its genesis and the conditions that brought about its presence to be felt do have a common basis for their origin namely the character of the national bourgeoisie and it is in this sense that the latter should not be seen as being disjuncted to the former. The conditions that brought

the phenomena in to operation and the role it played may be discussed as part of the dissolution process of the power of the national bourgeoisie which follows immediately.

The Dissolution Process of the Political Power of the National Bourgeoisie:

Reflecting the character of the national bourgeoisie is the comprehensive programme announced, supposedly, for implementation in the period immediately following the mid-term poll held to Lok Sabha in the first quarter of 1971. But, either the non-implementation of a part of the programme or the implementation with the result with not much effectivity helped the structural crisis remain intact and if anything, to grow in its intensity with the passage of time. Over and above the structural crisis is the OPEC oil price hikes in 1973 which sparked the large scale urban unrest. As usual, the falling employment opportunities and the huge price hike with more than 25 percent rate of inflation were the major reasons behind the agitations resorted to by initially

the middle classes and joined later by industrial workers. Though the intensity of the agitations was uneven particularly in the initial period, considering the large size of the country, soon it became, by and large, a countrywide phenomenon. The extent of the contribution of the price hike by OPEC to the internal crisis cannot be minimised. However, if it had not been for the structural rigidities which act as a primary source giving rise to the recurring crises that surfaced from time to time, the large scale urban unrest which the country has witnessed around 1974 would have not been a possibility. It should be remembered that the agitations, largely consistent of middle classes, were not of the nature of sudden occurrence. These should be viewed as merely a continuation of the past with a variance in intensity. The fresh urban unrest had been for the same set of reasons which had been responsible for the middle class agitations in the later half of sixties. The failure of the monsoon, the increased amounts of deficit financing in the period following the plean-holidays, increased taxation, inadequacy of public distribution system, the prevalence

of black marketing, inefficient management in the public sector and the lack of adequate foreign exchange were some of the factors giving rise to crisis which reflect the structural flaws in the economy. The fact that when there were no oil price hikes in sixties; it was the structural rigidity of the economy which was responsible for the middle class resorting to various forms of agitations, has already been seen. In the present context, the comprehensive programme announced by the ruling party was against this back-drop, is worth remembering.

The fact that various acts introduced by the ruling party were intrinsically incapable in easing the structural rigidities kept apart, the non-actualisation of the comprehensive programme with needed vigour kept the sources of crisis remain intact. The apparent subsiding of the crisis for a period in the early years of seventies was due to various reasons, the most important being the good harvests reaped. The complacency which made it place due to large majorities

obtained in Lok Sabha and various state assembly elections, added to it, are, often, argued as the reasons behind the non-performance of the ruling party as far as the implementation of its programme is concerned. While superficially looking, observation of this nature may appear to be true, unless an explanation is sought to be reasoned out of the basic class character of the Party in power concerned and the movement of the class forces and the change in their correlation at different points of time, no valid explanation is possible. In this context, an observation made by Ajit Roy is worth quoting:

The principal feature of Indian society, according to Ajit Roy, are the burgeoning of the youth, increased literacy, growth of cultural awareness, and political consciousness born of the sharpening class differentiation, leading to an explosion of expectations. While the consciousness gap has narrowed through the substance of democracy available to the masses, the material gap between the rich and the poor has widened.

Today antagonistic forces are contending to resolve the contradictions that have emerged and sharpened.

...He, however, takes note of the differentiation within the ruling classes as reflected in the vascillation between curbs on and concessions to monopolies during the decade.[†]

The 'vascillation between curbs on and concessions',
observed said to have been,^{observed} by Ajit Roy in the attitude of ruling party reflects the ups and downs in the actual agitations lead by different sections of the people and more particularly the way the middle class involved itself in different forms of agitations in the preceding period to the mid-term-poll held in 1971. While the curbs on monopolies, apparently a conclusion drawn through the mere existence of MRFT act disregarding its actualisation, concessions to the near exclusion of curbs has

†. Subrate Banerjee, "A Review — India in the Seventies by Ajit Roy", The Economic Times, New Delhi, September 8, 1979, (emphasis added).

been the dominant feature of the attitudes of the parties at centre during the seventies is significant to note. For, even the large scale agitations consistent of industrial workers besides the middle classes did not result in the political authorities initiating any curbing measures on the monopolies. Instead the latter declared internal emergency which coincided concessional measures to the big business. Therefore, it is to be noted ^{that} the pressures exerted by sections of people did not prove to be effective in getting the system adjusted in their favour.

A careful examination of the attitude of the government towards the comprehensive programme considered individual act wise, is necessary.

In addition to the popularly known programmes such as the abolition of privy purses, land ceiling act and the nationalisation of 14 major banks were the acts introduced namely MRPT (Monopolies Restrictive Trade Practices) and FERA (Foreign Exchange Regulation Act).

If the FERA was knowingly undertaken against the growing imbalances in the foreign trade and the specific act was hoped against reducing the country's need for hard currency by way of the liquidation of the extent of the transnational company operation in the country, the MRPT was particularly directed against the concentration of wealth in few hands. Merit and demerits of the individual acts per se apart, it is universally known that the implementation of at least two individual acts namely the land ceiling and MRPT were totally ignored. The implementation of FERA, though to a considerable extent, was a reality; it did not yield the hoped for benefits to the foreign exchange kitty is known. Making allowance for the intrinsic demerits of the acts concerned, there is a clear apathy found on the part of the political authorities on the implementation side is notable.

It is interesting to note that the avoidance of the actualisation of land ceiling act was sought to be compensated by undertaking certain relief measures of the temporary nature to the rural poor. The relief measures, grew in number, over the years, by way of

political competition, while at the same time the question of land ceiling was gradually abandoned by all in the due course. No other measure except the land ceiling would touch the status quo in the landed property, in the absence of which an uninterrupted growth in the economy and thus a sound basis for the political as well as democratic system cannot be conceived. Besides the longterm benefits such as the extended home market for industry, higher growth rates in agricultural production; the short term benefits of breaking the trader-moneylender and landlord nexus known for its indulgence in hoarding the essential agricultural commodities thereby contributing to heavy price rises particularly during the periods of monsoon failures are no less important when viewed against the background of the recurring phenomena of urban unrest.

Viewed against this entire background, one inescapable conclusion is that the comprehensive programme was announced in a situation of outbursting class contradictions. But when it came to the actual implementation, the structural changes have been carefully

avoided. At the same time certain relief measures have been sought to compensate for the failures in easing the structural rigidities. One probable explanation is that the political authorities were unwilling to enforce changes in the status quo. Keeping aside the actualisation, the programme itself did not envisage any considerable changes to the status quo is notable. Yet, it is to be remembered that going by the nature of the set of programme, it reflects the character of the national bourgeoisie. But the feeble nature with which the programme has been envisaged and actualised brings forth the fact that the political authorities 'lack enough courage to oppose thoroughly' the dominant economic and political interests. Moreover, the new political ascendancy might have been thought upon as a substituting factor for an inevitable loss to be made in terms of control over the dominant economic interests even if the latter is allowed to grow a little greater. The ascendancy provides an element of flexibility in terms of political control. Alternatively, the fresh political ascendancy added

to the newly acquired governmental control over the powerful economic interests by means of a substantial bank capital brought under its disposal and the introduction of MRPT and etc. which together might have been meant as enhancing the power of the political authorities in facing adverse situation in future, if any.

Explained either way, the attitude resembles a go between way. The attitude looks more like a compromising formula, evolved under the proteges of the political authorities against the background of a situation wherein the contradiction between the dominant economic interests on the one hand and the sections of people like the rural poor, the middle classes and the industrial workers on the other assumed a critical proportion. The ruling party given the strength of the public sector at its command could hold together the two contradictory class forces with its compromising strategy whereby it tried to accommodate antagonistic interests for a brief period. By all means,

the strategy is essentially a compromise since the ruling Party, by virtue of its character, finds itself in a situation that it cannot take sides with either of the antagonistic class forces involved. It is aware that a clear side taken with either of the forces will ultimately result in its dissolution only.

The comprehensive programme in itself stands for an accommodation. But the way the accommodation was sought to be made is interesting to note. It does not harm the interests of anybody but seeks to help every body and therefore, in a final analysis, it neither takes anything considerable from the dominant economic interests nor gives anything worthwhile to the agitated. Precisely, this situation leads for the crisis to surface by the time of 1974, the proportions of which were found to be far greater than anytime earlier. The additionally accumulated structural crisis which had been lying hidden for a brief period in between got burst with the external factor i.e., the price hikes by OPEC, working as a catalyst.

Not only the economic programme with which the two antagonistic class forces were sought to be

accommodated was thin but also the corresponding reflection of it in the political field, which in the form of the emergence of the phenomena of the all power vested in one individual, is also equally thin. Such a thin accommodation made in the economy and the political scene, can not be expected to withstand the escalated crisis situation. Therefore, as soon as the crisis surfaced, the two contradictory class forces, though paradoxical it may appear, either by the force of situation or otherwise got together to throw asunder the thin accommodation which held the two together for long. Thus, the accommodation, however thin it was, gives way not for an open and more distinct confrontation between the two contradictory class forces as is to be expected, but for a close alliance forged between with a single objective of getting rid of the subject which tied them together. To some extent the two contradictory class forces merged their identity in one single party which later came to be known as Janata. It marks the beginning of a new turn in Indian politics. The composition of Janata Party,

with socialists of different kind to the elements of the dissolved Swatantra Party, stands as an evidence for such a merger to have taken place. The motives of the different forces may vary in kind but the objective of everybody joined in the party could be one. The common objective is nothing other than that of getting rid of long impasse created by the politics of accommodation which had been a characteristic feature of the Congress Party rule. The Congress Party has long been under the uninterrupted domination of the politics which represent the character of the national bourgeoisie needs to be kept in mind. Thus, the politics of accommodation is the politics of national bourgeoisie in the given historical situation.

Actual Dissolution:

Be it major or minor, the roots of any political development, at any point of time in the history will have to be, as a rule, found in the prevalent class relations. Neither the phenomena, i.e., the rise of the powerful individual nor the party under the concerned

individual moving to right from centrist position as a consequence of the urban agitations lead under the joint leadership of the major opposition parties are accidental. Nor the developments for their essence, depend much on the discretion or will of an individual. As is contended by Plakhanov, with the change in the personalities the forms of the developments may vary but their essence will remain the same. The basic class character of the party and the economic policies emanating from it remaining the same giving rise to a particular pattern of the correlation of the class forces, it is the latter which plays the determining role on the developments but not the individuals.

The rise of the youth congress as a potential parallel organisation to its parent party is deant as indicating a shift in the centrist position long pursued by Congress Party. The ideological orientation set to the youth congress by its effective head i.e., Sanjay Gandhi was one of pro-Western and free market is universally known. The rise of the youth congress into sudden prominence overshadowing the parent party

Party should be conceived as a response to the complex mix of factors described below:

1. The significant feature of the urban population is that though, small in number, it creates situations of destabilisation to an elected government.
2. Almost all the sections of the urban population were under the influence of the joint opposition.
3. The important aspect of it is that most of the Parties among the joint opposition were right to centre in ideological terms.
4. Following from it is that the left to centre Parties did not have any considerable influence viewed either independently or jointly over the sections of urban population.

The latter two are much more important to note when viewed against the background that it is the left and right which constitute the two aspects of the fundamental contradiction between themselves. It is important in the sense that the centrist forces are

bound to move in the direction of whichever aspect of the fundamental contradiction gains strength over that of the other.

If the first factor makes it essential for the ruling party to build an organisation of youth under its control for it was the youth forces which had been the chief instrument in carrying the agitation, the rest of the factors indicating the particular movement of the two contradictory aspects of the fundamental contradiction, may be said to have been responsible in deciding the specific character of the youth congress.

When viewed against the above background, it appears that the factors prompting the declaration of internal emergency only to be followed by the prominence assumed by youth Congress could have been no different.

However, there is one more factor which deserves attention. The agitations were consistent of only urban people while the rural people, by and large, remained disassociated. It may be for two reasons. Firstly, no section of the rural people have ever been

organized on mass scale when seen on countrywide. Therefore, they remained traditionally immobilized. Secondly, the terms of trade for agriculture were generally favourable till the financial year 1974-75. It is a factor of advantage to the ruling party. The agitations confined to urban areas were of main concern to the ruling party. Hence, any measures directed against nullifying the destabilization effects produced by the urban agitations, will have no extension to the countryside. Coercive measures will inevitably bring about negative reactions strengthening the opposition. But the fact that it is the rural people who decide the electoral prospects of the parties, not the urban, leaves scope for the ruling party in going for coercive methods against the agitating sections. The main source of the success of the ruling party in the 1971 elections lies in the countryside is notable. The non-accompaniment of the rural people to the urban agitations implies a continued support too.

Therefore, both the declaration of internal emergency and the role given to youth congress should be

seen as part of one strategy of the ruling party. Both the measures have been directed against nullifying the effects produced by the urban agitations lead under the control of joint opposition. The formation of youth congress is an extension of the declaration of internal emergency. While the latter is basically a government action and should be seen as a measure taken in terms of immediate needs of ruling party; the former is a development conceived in the longterm interests of the same. But this development is no small measure instead a change in the basic class character of the party is interesting to note.

While the above explains the essential undercurrents behind the important developments in terms of the change and correlation of the class forces, what remains to be seen is the formal expression of the successive events.

The filing of a case challenging the validity of the election of the then prime minister cannot be said as pure accident. It is the realisation on the part of the opposition that the party and government

have no separate identity and existence outside the particular person whom against the court case was filed. The specific act of filing case and the subsequent judgement of the Allahabad High Court prompts the phenomena of powerful individual to express, itself fully and overtly. It marks the beginning of the actual operation of the phenomena which became an invariable part of the country's political processes in the subsequent period.

While the prominence assumed by youth congress is to be ascribed for reasons such as the larger social and political processes, as is held earlier, Sanjay Gandhi taking its leadership should be seen as an indicator of the consolidation of the phenomena of the powerful individual. Therefore, the consolidation of the phenomena of powerful individual and the rise of the youth congress to a position as to overshadow the parent organisation and the prominence assumed by its leader are strictly logical developments of the in-depth social and political processes and in no way shall be conceived as accidents. In the first instance, these developments

are the ultimate resultants of the actions and reactions between the joint opposition and the ruling party. But in a final analysis, these developments should be viewed as the particular forms of outward reflection for the inevitable underlying changes taking place in the realm of the larger process, i.e., the economic, political and social.

The increase in the role played by the Youth Congress with a proportionate decrease in the importance of the parent party accompanied to it, be it in the realm of policy framing or the practice, ultimately, resulting in some prominent individual leader and groups leaving the party, indicates the process of replacement of the latter by the former. The process of the dissolution of the parent party has been almost complete with the developments subsequent to the defeat of the party in the elections held to Lok Sabha in the first quarter of 1977.

The way the family planning programme has been implemented on a mass scale is the major reason in

addition to the others, behind the defeat of the Congress Party in 1977 elections has been universally acknowledged. An indepth examination of the economic and political processes would bringout the fact that it is no accident. The allegations that the programme has been undertaken due to the pressures borne out by world bank notwithstanding, the rationale of the government in undertaking to implement the programme on a mass scale is worth noting. The problems such as the growing unemployment and stagnation in per capita income were understandably sought to be solved by achieving a considerable decrease in the population growth rate.

It is true that the comparatively higher population growth rates nullifies the increase in the economic growth to a considerable extent in general but the problem becomes severe should the growth rates in the economy remain meagre. The negligible growth rate achieved in the per capita income during the decade seventies supports this contention. But this situation should logically lead to a conclusion that higher growth rates in the economy are to be achieved. But the achievement

of the higher growth rates in the economy will not be possible unless structural reforms are undertaken in sufficiently established earlier. A proper political climate, without requisite structural changes in the economy accompanied, may also lead for higher growth rates in the economy. It leads for surplus situations necessitating the integration into the world market is altogether a different matter. The declaration of internal emergency conceived as a measure bringing proper political climate for achievement of higher growth rates simultaneously bringing down the rate of increase in population by undertaking to the massive implementation of the family planning programme follow from a basic realisation of the government that it cannot go for structural changes. Thus, both the declaration of the emergency and the implementation of family planning programme should be seen as two inter-related with each other.

An other equally important factor, if not more, making it abundantly clear that it is not an accident is the allegedly feasible implementation of the programme

under the leadership of youth congress which indeed brought about the large scale resentment of the mass of the people. The 'immaturity' added to the 'enthusiasm' natural to the youth are often argued as the reasons behind the forcible implementation by some. It is also argued that placing the implementation part in the hands of the youth congress was a mistaken act, implying an accident. But, it is to be remembered that the youth in general and youth congress in particular have come to assume prominent role in the political processes given the concrete situation obtained around the period in the country. Therefore, it is only natural that the implementation part comes under the leadership of youth congress.

The Role Played by the Phenomena of General Individual and the Fall of Janata:

Over the entire decade of seventies, it was during the three successive financial years i.e., 1976-77, 1977-78 and 1978-79 where in the economy witnessed relatively higher growth rates. The prices remained nearly stable. The situation on the two

vital fronts i.e., the food and foreign exchange has been more than satisfactory with stocks and reserves built up. At the top of all is the ban imposed on the export of essential commodities which helped to keep the prices low. Except for the industrial workers who went on strike struggles for the restoration of bonus right and revocation of the 'industrial relation bill', normal situation prevailed as the other sections of the population did not have strong economic reasons to agitate. The price hike by OFEC in the second half of 1979 and the drought in some northern states together resulted in the reversal of the state of normalcy. But, it is to be remembered that the fall of Janata preceded the price rise. Therefore, the fall of Janata Party from power had reasons borne out from the situation other than that of the usual economic crisis needs emphatic note.

Though a overwhelming majority of the individuals, groups and parties that joined to form a single party

namely the Janata had much in common in ideological and political terms, sectional interests continued to predominate without an overall coherence achieved. The different constituents of the party, having had existed for long separately representing one or the other sectional interests for long may not, naturally, be expected to forge unity so soon in a short period, as to merge their separate identities. This appears much more true when seen in the context that the very basis of the formation of the party was more due to compelling and negative circumstances. Even the electoral success of the Party in the post-emergency period cannot be ascribed to a positive vote. This factor namely the negative basis is important to note in the sense that it indicates the lack of a commonly agreed economic programme at the Party. And in the absence of which it is difficult to imagine a basis for unity that lasts long. Again, an inevitable conclusion following from it is that the only determinant factor that kept the different constituent groups together was the strength of the opposition and, in the particular case, it is the strength of the Congress lead by

Indira Gandhi. True to the determinant factor, as the opposition party lead by Indira Gandhi appeared to have progressively reduced in strength, due to the differences within the ruling party surfaced, which subsequently lead for a vertical split with at least two important groups withdrawing from the Janata party to form the government at centre in alliance with a section of the Congress party that left the leadership of Indira Gandhi. Here, it is interesting to note that it was the leadership of Indira Gandhi which was considered as constituting the potential opposition by one and all. This is to be specifically considered for it has potential implications for the later developments.

The particular group under the leadership of Charan Singh might have hoped, given the past history i.e., the way a powerful individual emerged with the support of weaker sections from amongst the countryside, that should their government continue for the rest of the period, the same may be repeated as was in the case of Indira Gandhi in 1971 elections. So that their

single section may attain absolute majority in the next elections to Lok Sabha which were expected to be held in 1982. In the absence of the availability of direct evidence to exemplify the statement, recourse for inferential evidence is made below.

Firstly, the disputes arose at the time of the very inception of the Janata government particularly in sharing the prime ministerial post. Attainment of the prime ministerial office is prestigious seen strictly in terms of individual achievement. But the aspiration itself is the resultant of the concentration of power at centre state made through constitution. Added to it is the immense increase in the concentration of power at centre-state and particularly in the hands of the prime minister following the fifth Lok Sabha elections. The phenomena implies control of a single individual over the party and government. Important in the present context is the possibility that the attainment of the prime ministerial office may reproduce the powerful individual.

Secondly, following the 1971 elections are the successive programmes and schemes announced by both the central and various state governments. The objective behind the programmes has been one of preparing a support base in the countryside for one's own group and Party in power. With certain programmes directed against the welfare of the rural poor, a Party in power at centre and more particularly the person in the prime ministerial seat may hope for immense electoral prospects, should the government survive for a considerable period.

At the top of all, it may be suggested, is that the politics of 'one person and one party' has got ingrained in the minds of the people themselves. The rural poor have come to identify a certain Party and its programme with its chief. The propaganda carried centering around the prime ministerial candidates on the occasion of the mid-term poll held in the initial days of 1980, would make it abundantly clear that the phenomena of 'one person and one party' has become an

invariable part of the body politic. The contention of the present study is that the disputes over power distribution amongst the different constituents of the Janata Party have been sought to be resolved by finding recourse in the phenomena of one person and one party. This is the chief reason behind the split occurred in the Janata Party.

Constitutionalisation of the Phenomena of One Person and One Party?

Following are some of the important reasons for the success of Congress Party led by Indira Gandhi in the general elections held to Lok Sabha.

No singular individual has evolved as powerful either during the Janata rule or that of Lok Dal so as to negate the image of Indira Gandhi among the people.

In addition to that there are two other negative factors contributing to the defeat of Janata and Lok Dal.

Firstly, the split has been the chief source of the defeat. Secondly, underlying split, further eroding

the prospects is the price rise. The effects of the price rise may be gauged from the fact that with a few exceptions the Congress (I) won almost all the urban seats. It implies that the urban middle class and working population who constituted support base for Janata party at the time of the 1977 elections, have, to a substantial part, turned against it.

The peasants too had sufficient reasons to turn against Janata and Lok Dal. Indeed, the terms of trade had been unfavourable to agricultural sector beginning with the 1974-75 financial year. The price hike by GFPC, further raised the costs of production, fueling the prevalent discontent. The oil price hike coming before the elections has been a major disadvantage to Janata and Lok Dal which had been in power till then.

What lead the Janata experiment to failure, in a final analysis, is the sectional interests which predominated, although the period of its rule. Different sections have been engaged in interactive

battles. The state was constantly under pressure to serve different interests, often contradictory in nature, with the ultimate result that the government is reduced to a state of non-performance.

Viewed against the entire background, it follows that this is the ideal situation where in all the sections engaged for long as they had been in internecine battles and got exhausted as a result, found recourse in a single person and a single party to rule them all. That is how, the Congress (I) emerged as the ruling party with an absolute majority.

But the very fact that the people themselves are found divided on the basis of sectional interests and over the time each section has become increasingly conscious of one's own share in the state power vice-versa the economy -- does not lend the ruling party, however monolithic it is, the strength to satisfy every section. Under adverse situations, the ruling party may itself, be divided on sectional lines in the event of which the very basis of the party as monolithic is

undermined. Neither every section can be satisfied without antagonising some nor the future prospects of the overall economy would seem hardly far from bleak. Should a situation of general crisis arise, at any time, the prospects of which may not be ruled out; all sections of people may unite together against the ruling party. In such an event given the politics of power struggle, the opposition parties may join together, though under a force of situation as it may appear, to lead the agitations. If such a situation is allowed to take its full course, given the past experience, the ruling party can not hope for winning the next election. Moreover, if an event of this nature is to take place at any time before the ruling party completes its full term in office, it may eventually lead for a premature fall of the government, should the joint might of the opposition attract defections reducing the government into minority. The existence of groupism within the ruling party point to the possibility of defections. Anti-defection law, even if introduced, will be no effective bar.

However, these are only possibilities and the existence of which is not unfounded is to be known

from the alternatives made out by the ruling party. The case made for presidential system is one such an alternative being sought by it in order to be able to overcome adverse situations. The replacement of the majority system with that of the presidential is argued as bringing stability to the elected governments.

However, here, it is necessary to know about the immediate factors under the combined pressure of which the ruling party made open the presidential system as one of its future options. Among all, four most important factors can be identified.

- i. The phenomena of the peasant agitations
- ii. The death of Sanjay Gandhi
- iii. The groupism within party
- iv. General economic crisis.

The peasant agitations are significant in more than one sense. The significant features of it may be seen as follows:

Firstly, the possibility of countrywide peasant agitation, should the situation warrant, has become distinct for the first time in the history of the country since independence. It is not only a new but also a powerful social force.

Secondly, earlier to the rise of this new social force almost all the agitations got confined to urban areas while the countryside remained more or less immobilised. Now, the peasants having become a social force, fills the gap.

Thirdly, the division among the upper strata of the peasantry and its lower stratas is likely to be blurred for sometime in the near foreseeable future. The nature of the demands and the stated aims and goals of the agitations are verticle in character bringing unity between all sections of the peasantry. It is of utmost importance to note, for, the source of Congress(I)'s electoral success lay in the horizontal division among the peasantry. This takes out the objective basis from which the phenomena of powerful individual arose.

Fourthly, corresponding to the decrease in the strength of the phenomena of powerful individual will be the proportionate increase in the strength of the rank and file of the party in terms of support base among peasantry in future. More particularly, a factor of significance is that the peasant agitations are of special concern for the top leadership, for, most of the party leadership, from top to bottom has its roots in the rural areas. Seen in the light, it becomes increasingly difficult for the top leadership to ignore the claims of the rival groups unlike in the past. The groups and individuals of the party have been totally dependent on the top individual for their existence in the party. Being rooted in the rural areas, most of the leadership had hardly anything to do with the earlier urban agitations. But the recent peasant agitations can be assumed to have brought about a considerable change in the status quo. In this sense, the existence of groupism in the party gets added significance.

Viewed against the above background, it appears that the phenomena of the powerful individual, in the

wake of its eroding social basis is trying to reassert itself by choosing its basis in an altogether new source i.e., the presidential system.

Finally, the death of Sanjay Gandhi is of no lesser significance for the ruling party. It should be remembered that the rise of the Youth Congress and its leader into a sudden prominence was due to certain historical conditions. Once again, the same set of conditions came to prevail as in the preemergency period is worth noting. The reserves both in the food and foreign exchange fronts are progressively getting depleted. Whether this situation leads for fresh agitations under the leadership of a likely joint opposition or not is a moot point. However, the death of Sanjay Gandhi, in the wake of a fresh economic crisis, is a loss to the ruling party.

C O N C L U S I O N

A specific feature of Indian society vice-versa polity, observable since the early years of seventies, is that the rural poor act as a stabilising factor whereas the sections of urban people do just the opposite. Lately, the rural rich joining the latter, the governmental instability has increased.

It is no exaggeration to say that had it not been for this stabilising factor, the question of presidential system could have not even come to the agenda, as it did now. The introduction of presidential system may not necessarily be in consonance with the interests of the rural poor. A conscious rural poor, as a Section, may, indeed, opt to oppose the presidential system. But, considering the level of their political consciousness, the rural poor acting as promoters of the cause of the presidential system should cause no wonder. One probable explanation may be its late entry into the mainstream of national politics.

The economic and political situation of the country in the recent period, bears a closer resemblance, in many respects, to that of the same prevalent in the period preceding the declaration of internal emergency on 26 June 1975. Besides the closer resemblance, the present national and economic situation, also, makes significant departures from the past. It is this latter aspect which deserves attention.

Food and foreign exchange are the two vital elements determining the functioning of the Indian economy. The inadequate buffer stock in food and the nonavailability of sufficient foreign exchange, besides bringing about an immediate crisis in the form of price rise and the consequent slow growth rates achieved in the economy, reflect the deep seated structural crisis.

The inadequate food buffer added to the malfunctioning of the public distribution system brings about large scale hoarding and blackmarketing which pushes the prices up. The insufficient foreign exchange, if leads to a policy decision of lowering imports,

slows down the industrial activity, creates scarcities with the result of an upward push in the prices. The high cost of imports, sold unsubsidised in the internal market, may itself lead for a general price rise.

The import-substitution growth strategy, declared as an avowed goal following independence, did not make the economy self-reliant. The strategy is understood in the sense that it partly relieves the country of the need of earning foreign exchange, depending on its own efforts, through increased amounts of exports. Therefore, the greater reliance made on the aid capital and the developmental process undertaken with heavy financial and technical participation from abroad.

Besides making the country more dependent, such a developmental process has two most discernible effects on the Indian economy need special mention.

- i. A part of the domestic market is lost in favour of foreign business.
- ii. The need for increased amounts of foreign exchange grew with the passage of time.

The following account exemplifies the extent of drainage of domestic purchasing power.

- i. Some 40 percent of the additional expenditure to produce food grains with the new technology goes out of the country to pay for imported inputs;
- ii. nearly 10 percent of cost of production in industrial goods leaks out for similar reasons;
- iii. a substantial sum is repatriated in the form of profit, royalty, etc., on foreign capital and imported technology.

This leaves a gap in the domestic purchasing power. Hence the realisation crisis looms large on the economy at any given level of production, let alone expansion of production.¹

The price hikes by OPEC are responsible only to the extent of accelerating the deteriorating balance of payment deficits position but not its primary cause.

1. Ranjit Sau, "India's Economic Crisis - Reply", Economic and Political Weekly, vol.XV, no.16, April 19, 1980, p.735.

Devaluation of rupee, allegedly under the pressure of World Bank, was made, as early as in 1965. It is followed by an export drive, undertaken with considerable amounts of subsidy element accompanied, in the subsequent period.

As if to recoup the loss made in the domestic market added to the compulsions of earning larger quantities of foreign exchange, the sixth plan document reads:

"In order to ensure that the export effort is sustained and the country's competitive ability improved, it will be necessary to bring about a re-orientation in the economy from producing wholly for domestic market to producing both for the domestic and international market, thus earning foreign exchange for the country and at the same time benefiting the domestic economy through reduction of costs and improvement of quality."²

It should be noted that a part of the scarce resources diverted to the investment in export oriented

2. "Sixth Plan (1980-81): A Summary," The Economic Times, (New Delhi), February 16, 1981. (Emphasis added).

industries creates scarcities in the availability of goods in the internal market. The investible resources in these areas gets reduced. This situation calls for the import of such items which can be produced internally. An increased integration of Indian economy, inevitable in these circumstances, makes the country susceptible to crises abroad. It signals a progressive erosion in the initiative of the country's political authorities in controlling and checking the adverse situations.

The green revolution strategy brought about distortions. It increased food grain production but decreased the momentum of growth in oil seed production etc. The performance of agriculture is still dependent on the behaviour of monsoon. Besides the recurring phenomena of monsoon failures, the refusal of the rural rich to sell to the procurement system deprived the country, time and again, of valuable foreign exchange. Large sums are spent in

importing the food grain to build Buffer stocks. The rise of the rich peasantry as a dominant social force is a direct consequence of the implementation of the strategy of green revolution. The frequent monsoon failures lead to demand recession bringing down the growth rate in the overall economy, for the share of agriculture is around 40 per cent of Net Domestic Product. Besides the two important factors i.e., the monsoon failures and the continuous unfavourable balance of payments position except for a few years in the recent past, there are other factors causing price rise and slow growth in the economy. Government's fiscal and monetary policies have a major share in giving rise to the crisis.

Increased amounts of indirect taxation levied year after year and the continuous deficit financing have a direct impact on price rise. Bank financing to government will have the same effect
 needs no mention. Table-I, shows the amount of taxation and its contribution to the price rise.

TABLE-I : TOTAL TAXES GNP AND DEVALUATION³ (Rs. in crore)

Plan period	Year	Direct taxes	Indirect taxes	Total tax	GNP	% Indirect tax	% Indirect tax	Index of		
								Price rise	Rise in value of DM	Rise in indirect tax as % of GNP
	1950-51	231	428	659	9,503	65	4.5	1	1	1
End of first plan	1955-56	255	558	313	10,342	68.6	5.4	0.86	(A)	1.2
End of Second Plan	1960-61	420	1,040	1,460	14,946	71.2	7.06	1.16	(A)	1.5
	1965-66	775	2,273	3,048	23,948	74.5	9.5	1.53	1.6	2.1
End of 3 year's Plan	1968-69	910	3,013	3,923	33,024	76.5	9.1	1.92	1.8	2
End of 4th Plan	1973-74	1,653	5,874	7,529	58,863	78	10	2.94	2.9	2.27
	1977-78	3,158	10,545	13,703	86,888	77	12.1	3.91	3.5	2.7
End of 5th(B) Plan	1978-79	3,200	11,800	15,000	90,000	79	13.1	4.0	4.0	3.0

Data on Taxes cover taxes collected by Central, state and local governments (Source Commerce March 1979).

(1) Constant official exchange rate.

(B) Values assumed by interpolation -- not actual.

3. Special Correspondent, The Economic Times (New Delhi), January 1981.

A comparison of the amounts of budget deficits with that of the incremental taxes levied, gives a rough idea of the extent of price rise contributed by the former. Table-II, shows the amount of deficit financing and the net bank credits to the government over a fairly long period of time.

TABLE-II : TRENDS IN BUDGETARY DEFICITS, NET RBI CREDIT TO GOVERNMENT AND NET BANKING SYSTEM CREDIT TO GOVERNMENT⁴
(Rs. in crore)

YEAR	Budgetary surplus (+) or deficit (-)			Net RBI credit to government			Net Banking system credit to govern- ment
	Centre	State	Total	Centre	State	Total	
1971-72	- 519	--289	-808	583	207	870	1180
1972-73	- 869	- 7	- 876	1211	-386	825	1326
1973-74	- 328	- 226	- 554	639	1134	764	956
1974-75	- 721	- 31	- 752	533	134	667	807
1975-76	- 366	+ 75	- 291	- 288	91	-195	579
1976-77	- 131	+ 50	- 81	816	22	838	910
1977-78	- 933	- 229	-1162	- 260	142	-118	2449
1978-79	-1506	+1010	- 496	2191	-419	1772	1921
1979-80	-2700	- 441	-3141	2650	339	2989	--
(Revised)							
1980-81 (Apr-Jan 81)	-2000			1700	-245	1455	3360
1979-80 (Apr-Jan 80)	-1330	--	--	1032	-180	852	2192

4. Special Correspondent, The Economic Times, (New Delhi), November, 1980.

The mismanagement in the public sector, as reflected in the high degree of capital output ratio, plays no small part in keeping down the growth rates in the overall economy. The capital-output ratio stands as high as 6:1. The amount of corruption involved brings to light the extent of its contribution to the general price rise. The colossal under utilisation of capacity creates scarcity conditions thereby encouraging corruption which often involved politicians and bureaucrats. Corruption in the distribution of the key products may partly explain the causes behind the underutilisation of capacity. Corruption in the distribution of these key items is one of the major sources of the mobilisation of party funds. Thus, the underutilisation of capacity and corruption together contribute for general price rise. Table-III, gives an idea of the extent of corruption involved in these key items.

TABLE-III : AMOUNT OF LOOT ON SEVEN MAJOR ITEMS⁵

Items	Production in million tonnes	Controlled JPC levy cost price in Rs. per tonne.	Black open market in factory prices in Rs per tonne.	Mark upto manufacturers & traders in Rs. per tonne.	%sale other than for Govt. use on available with mark up.	Amount looted per annum in crore Rs.
Cement	20	600	1800	1200	60	1440
Steel	8	2500	5500	3000	70	1680
	(avg. variety)					
Sugar	6	2750	8000	5250	35	1102
Paper	1	2700	4000	1300	70	91
Vanaspati	0.7	8000	10000	2000	100	140
Caustic soda	0.06	2000	8000	6000	100	36
Soda ash	0.06	600	2800	1200	100	7

Note: Any supplies to industries through quota or licence are ultimately sold as inputs to consumer goods at inflated rates and bureaucrats have to be unnecessarily palmed to obtain the permits.

5. A Reader, The Economic Times, (New Delhi), December 3, 1980.

The ever increasing government expenditure, growing military budget, year after year, are some of the factors behind the increased taxes levied and the incursion of deficit financing. The lack of adequate foreign exchange results in the inefficient management of the supply-demand position. The sacrifices in the mass consumption items are the breeding ground for black money.

However, all these factors together contribute to the price rise. Over and above all is the increased prices of imported machinery consequent to the stagflationary situation, prevalent in the developed capitalist countries since long.

The continuous increase in the prices, year after year, result in the volume of public and private investment in terms of real value.

Thus, on the whole, the capital gets channelised into the non-productive sectors. Table-IV, gives an idea of the volume of the capital used for speculative purposes by the industrial bourgeoisie, particularly

TABLE-IV : NET CAPITAL FORMATION IN PRIVATE CORPORATE SECTOR⁶
(In crores, at 1960-61 prices)

Year	PULC		PRLC		Private Corporate Sector	
	Net Fixed Assets Formation	Net Capital Formation	Net Fixed Assets Formation	Net Capital Formation	Net Fixed Assets Formation	Net Capital Formation
1961	134.8	239.3	22.8	70.4	157.6	309.7
1962	135.4	233.5	42.8	77.8	178.2	311.3
1963	162.1	262.1	15.2	17.1	177.3	279.2
1964	123.7	227.1	20.9	55.2	144.6	282.3
1965	479.9	747.0	144.3	249.2	624.2	996.2
1966	195.8	348.8	23.0	58.6	218.8	407.4
1967	254.2	395.2	23.3	40.7	277.5	435.9
1968	109.8	145.5	10.6	26.9	120.4	172.4
1969	77.8	178.6	11.0	50.7	88.8	229.3
1970	0.1	193.5	-40.0	-34.9	-39.9	158.6
1971	31.4	230.6	27.9	64.4	59.3	295.0
1972	68.0	152.5	50.0	76.3	118.0	228.8
1973	70.0	283.2	10.6	82.9	87.6	366.1
1974	51.8	439.0	-1.4	75.6	50.4	366.1

6. Ranjit Sahu, "India's Economic Crisis - Reply", Economic and Political Weekly, vol.IV, no.16, April 19, 1980, p.749.

Table-IV : contd...

1975	87.0	255.4	-17.9	-18.6	69.1	206.8
1961/65	1035.8	1709.0	246.1	469.7	1281.9	2178.7
1966/70	637.9	1261.5	27.9	141.9	665.8	1403.4
1971/75	315.2	1330.7	69.2	280.6	384.4	1611.3

Source: V.V. Divatia and K. Shanker, "Capital Formation and Its Financing in the Private Corporate Sector 1961-62 to 1975-76", (Mimeo), 1979.

of big among them. This would have not been possible, had it not been for the monopolistic grip of the big bourgeoisie over the production process.

As a result of all this, mass poverty and unemployment grows. There will be a cut in the real wages of salaried sections and the industrial workers. This is the time, when the mass of the people rise in revolt creating conditions of destabilisation for the government.

In this context, it is interesting to make a comparative appraisal of the policies pursued by the then government in the period preceeding to the declaration of internal emergency and the present government with its policies in the recent period. Notably, the governments in both the periods are lead by the same person i.e., Indira Gandhi.

The comprehensive programme comprised of FERA, MRPT, Land ceiling, nationalisation of 14 banks, relief programmes for rural poor etc., FERA has been aimed at curtailing the activities of multinationals in the country and thereby saving the foreign exchange to an extent. This suggests a direction towards more self-reliance and a genuine step taken within the parameters of import-substitution growth strategy. The MRPT suggests lessening of the concentration of wealth, thus effecting a reduction in the monopolistic grip of a few. The land ceiling act suggests a direction of weakening of the grip

of rural rich over the chief means of production which also was hoped for breaking the rural rich and trader nexus as far as grain marketing is concerned. Indeed, at a certain stage, the whole sale trade in wheat has been taken over by government. Certain amount of force has been used in collecting food grain from the rural rich. Also were the steps announced preventing hoarding and black marketing in essential items and smuggling which involved diversion of foreign exchange.

However, not even a single programme has ever been thorough enough either at the level of conception or implementation. As a result, the inevitable occurred with government getting alienated from large sections of population which ultimately culminated in the declaration of internal emergency.

Here, it is interesting to reflect on Plekhanov's analysis on the role of the individual in history. Assuming that the government under the leadership of

Indira Gandhi was sincere in conceiving the comprehensive programme, however limited was its scope, implementation of the same is not possible if it fails to draw active support from sections of population who are supposed to directly benefit from them. A 'powerful' leader and the administration may find themselves utterly incompetent to meet the challenges of change. An administration, with no changes of a qualitative nature made in its character, is averse to social transformation needs no special mention.

Again, the limited scope of the programme itself acts as a constraint in getting an active support from the people, needs not much of a time and labour to realize. This situation implies the need for widening the scope of the programme to attract support which would mean a greater hostility from the propertied classes. The logic of this situation would end nowhere except in the abolition of the

dominant classes and the involvement of the leader alongwith the mass of the deprived in a virtual battle which would mean a civil war. A leader may appear powerful in his or her own individual capacity. But, in an ultimate analysis, the real power lies with the actual classes, and an individual derives his or her strength in the class policies pursued which bring about support from the benefited. The antagonistic classes in the society by their respective strength and power may get a seemingly powerful leader to wear their side. The balance of power may determine the sides taken by the leader.

The policies being followed by the government in the recent period are in sharp contrast to those of the same in the preemergency period. The import oriented growth strategy has been abandoned. The export oriented growth strategy is being actively pursued.

If the FERA constituted as one of the comprehensive programme aimed at lessening the foreign

exchange burden in the earlier period, liberalisation of imports is the present policy. The earlier MRPT leaves place to an all out encouragement to the monopoly bourgeoisie through a variety of relaxations and concessions made, supposedly to divert its attention from the huge inventory build upto fixed capital formation. This would lead to the greater concentration of wealth vice-a-versa the monopolistic grip of big bourgeoisie is known.

With the government acceding the IMF's conditionalities, efficiency became the motto. The efficiency would intum mean an allround increase in the prices beginning with food to steel. Subsidies are in the process of being withdrawn. The relief programmes such as the food-for-work is virtually abandoned. The credit squeeze puts the small industry into further hardships.

At one side the prices are allowed to increase, at the other Essential Services Maintenance Act has been introduced presumably to implement wage freeze,

DA freeze, etc. This all would inevitably bring about resentment from among the effected. The Export Oriented Growth Strategy by further integrating the Indian economy into the world economy accentuates the economic crisis. It implies an erosion in the manoeuvrable capacity of political authorities in the economic matters. This situation calls for a system of government which, besides preserving its own stability, can place greater reliance on containing the political unrest. Probably, presidential system meets these conditions. Thus the present thinking on the introduction of presidential system should be seen as a corresponding superstructural need to the changing economic base.

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