CONCLUSION

It can reasonably be concluded that there were a variety of forces which made for a party like the Bharatiya Jana Sangh to come into existence. The Partition of India with its colossal problems, the weak policy of the Congress towards Pakistan, the appeasement of minorities, the impact of western culture on the minds of the intelligentsia were some of the factors for bringing likeminded people together to form a political party which was to be rooted in Indian culture and maryada, the two most important concepts of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh to guide and promote Indian polity. Another contributing factor was the ban on the R.S.S. after the murder of Mahatma Gandhi. The leaders of this organization felt that there were very few people to espouse their cause in the legislatures or on other public platforms. In such circumstances the leaders thought of a political wing of their own which should speak for their cause at the time of need. A well-knit organization like the R.S.S. was already there in different parts of the country. There was no problem of followers. But an eminent leader of great stature was needed. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, a towering personality who had resigned from the Nehru cabinet and was already disillusioned with the moribund Hindu Maha Sabha, came forward to lead a new political party, the Bharatiya Jana Sangh. Since parties like the Communists and the Socialists drew their inspiration from Russia, and the Congress which had proclaimed time and again against partition
but had finally accepted it due to its weak policies, it had convinced some of the enlightened leaders that a strong and vigorous India inspired by and based on Indianness could not be built by the existing parties. Thus there were political and cultural compulsions for the emergence of a new political party and a great desire was felt to form the Bharatiya Jana Sangh.

As far as its ideology was concerned it seems definite that the cultural moorings of the R.S.S. provided the basis for the political structure. That is why in the earlier stages of its growth there was greater emphasis on Hindi, banning of cow slaughter, unitary form of government, tough policy towards Pakistan, opposition to the Hindu Code Bill etc. The R.S.S. ideology of one nation, one people and one culture with due consideration to the aspects of diversity, seems to have inspired the leadership to a considerable extent. In fact, the Bharatiya Jana Sangh wanted to provide cultural content to the political ideology. In this connection it may be mentioned that India had maintained a sort of cultural unity and continuity in spite of several glaring diversities. Emphasis was, therefore, put on this cultural unity. It was felt that a strong political, social and economic superstructure could be effectively raised on this unity. But as time passed and linguistic and regional aspirations came to the forefront and began to assert themselves, the Bharatiya Jana Sangh had to make changes in emphasis. The unitary form of government became a forgotten topic in the days to come. The emphasis on learning and propagation of Hindi and discarding of English became much less.
Keeping in view the demands and needs of the common man, economic and social issues and the causes of the students, Harijans, farmers, backward classes, clerks, teachers and various other sections of the society became more important. For this purpose it incorporated certain matters in its programmes, policies and principles. Due to the sincerity of its leaders and its concern for the growth of all religions and welfare of all communities including the minorities, some Muslims and Sikhs were attracted towards its fold. During the course of all this the Jana Sangh's main thrust in its ideology had been to strengthen the indigenous institutions, to make every Indian proud of his heritage and become self-reliant and self-sufficient in all fields.

The Jana Sangh believed that in order to attain this goal, only the democratic process could be helpful. That is why in its organizational structure right from the local Samiti to Bharatiya Pratinidhi Sabha regular elections were held, discussions and debates were encouraged. The democratic process was in full operation in the meetings conducted at different levels.

The Jana Sangh in Punjab inherited the same ideology but it gave greater emphasis to the local problems of the people. It must be said in passing that the same democratic structure which obtained elsewhere was adopted as far as the Punjab branch was concerned.

In the electoral battles from 1952 to 1972 the Jana Sangh came out with varying degrees of fortune. In the election of 1952 it drew a blank but was in a position to have 4.0 per cent
of the total votes. Lack of experience of fighting political battles and with little record of espousing the cause of the common man regarding social and economic issues, the party could not make its presence felt in the legislative assembly. By the time of the next election the leaders had gained some experience and had also reached many sections of the people through their agitations. During the elections of 1957 and 1962 they had made entry into the legislature. The party registered a good success in the elections of 1967 when it got nine seats with 9.85 per cent of votes. In this election the party got 6.5 per cent of rural votes and 31.9 per cent of urban votes. Those were the days when the Akali Party was frantically working for the Punjabi Suba. The Jana Sangh which was mainly supported by the Hindus was against the formation of the Suba. Of course the Jana Sangh was for a Maha Punjab and vehemently opposed the Punjabi Suba demand of the Akali Dal, which according to them was a Sikh state in disguise. With the acceptance of the Punjabi Suba by the Congress, the Hindus thought that the Congress had betrayed them and they found in the Jana Sangh a ray of hope which could protect them. It may be said in passing that the Jana Sangh had to accept unwillingly the inevitable and accepted the Punjabi Suba in the larger interest of peace and amity between the two communities. In the mid term election of 1969, the Akalis and the Jana Sangh had made an electoral alliance, because they thought that the Congress was their common enemy. It was a very strange sight to see the Jana Sangh and the Akali Dal, earlier staunch opponents of each other, speaking warmly from the same public platform. Here the
Jana Sangh could not improve its position and got only 8 seats, because a large section of Sikhs did not vote for its candidates. In the next elections of 1972 the powerful and massive Indira wave brought the Jana Sangh and the Akali Dal citadels down. Like the election of 1952 the Jana Sangh had no representation in this election to the legislature. The Akali Dal was also badly mauled and a Congress ministry was formed.

An analysis of the voting pattern shown on page 165-66 reveals that the Jana Sangh though a very new party, had made its presence felt in the political life of Punjab. The Congress and the Akalis, the two old parties with sufficient resources, had already been in the politics of Punjab over a long period of time. It was the sustained and hard work of the Jana Sangh which enabled its leaders to extend their sphere of influence not only in the urban but also in the rural areas.

It may also be mentioned here that the success in the assembly elections was to some extent also reflected in the Municipal elections. In some cities like Amritsar, Batala and Pathankot this party gained majority in the Municipal elections. It also registered its gains in Banga, Hoshiarpur, Ludhiana, Jalandhar and some other cities. It means that this young party had gained the confidence of the voters because of the devotion and honesty of its leaders together with the fact that by 1969 the party had started penetrating in various sections of the society.
However, it may be stated that the electoral success of the Jana Sangh belied its expectations. The view that it was a party of petty shopkeepers, lower middle class and white-collar workers still clung to it. But actually it had nothing to do with either socialism or communalism or purely communal politics of the Akalis. Rather its faith lay in nationalism. It is a fact that every section of the people wants to ascertain how various manifestoes of different parties are going to fulfil their social, economic and emotional aspirations. By trial and error the Jana Sangh was trying to come up to their aspirations of the voters. It must be accepted that on the whole between 1952 and 1972, the Jana Sangh was never able to transform itself into a mass based party in Punjab politics. Primarily its own ideological approach which quite naturally limited its appeal, was responsible for this. Punjab was never a monolithic state either ethnically or culturally and therefore, a monolithic ideological approach was bound to suffer when pitted against the thoroughly opportunist populism of the Congress Party as well as communal approach of the Akalis.

Movements and agitations are a necessary part of a political organisation's existence. In India the agitational approach—fasts, dharnas, processions, rallies etc.—has acquired a special significance because it is a legacy of our freedom struggle. The Jana Sangh had to deal with many problems and issues such as the demand for Punjabi Suba, the language controversy, the Chandigarh issue, Chinese and Pakistan aggression and the refugee problem. The Jana Sangh's object in its agitations was to focus attention on these issues and to force the government
to concede certain widely felt demands. For this purpose it organised rallies, processions, meetings, conferences, deputations etc. Quite a number of its workers and leaders were arrested in these agitations from time to time. Some were even shot at and wounded and here and there some even died.

The most sensitive issue in Punjab was that of language i.e. Hindi versus Punjabi. But as bickerings increased, and attitudes hardened during the course of time, this issue ultimately took the shape of Hindu versus Sikh, Punjabi Suba versus Maha Punjab. The Jana Sangh tried hard through protests, negotiations, agitations in short any means that were open to it — to avoid the imposition of Punjabi and Punjabi Suba. It also joined the Akalis to form coalition governments in order to contain Sikh extremism. But ultimately all its efforts came to naught as the central government gave way before violent Akali agitations and conceded the demand for a smaller Punjab on the basis of language.

However, the rallies and demonstrations of the Jana Sangh organised to protest against heavy taxation, rising prices, devaluation of the rupee did win the sympathy of the weaker sections of society. It was as a result of the Jana Sangh movements and agitations that the hated permit system was abolished in Jammu and Kashmir and a major irritant came to an end. Again the endless efforts of the Jana Sangh succeeding in compelling the government to mitigate the sufferings of the Hindu and the Sikh refugees from West Punjab. As a consequence of this these refugees became the major support base of the Jana Sangh and in all elections local or provincial, they always voted for the Jana Sangh.
It is interesting to note that the agitation work of the Jana Sangh was limited to the sphere of cities and towns. The countryside practically did not take part in these agitations. We have already seen that a comparison of the voting pattern has clearly demonstrated that this party was much more concentrated in the cities than in the villages. In the rural areas a vast majority of the Sikhs either sided with the Congress or the Akalis. They did not think that the Jana Sangh could give them more than these two parties.

Another significant aspect of these agitations was that generally they were non-violent. It goes to the credit of the leaders as well as the workers that peace was generally maintained during demonstrations, processions and fasts etc.

Although there were ideological differences between the Jana Sangh and the Akali Dal yet the exigences of politics persuaded both the parties to form the People's United Front in March 1967. By itself the Jana Sangh could never hope to form a government in Punjab even if it won all the Hindu majority seats. Thus it could do only as a partner in a coalition, and since both the Akali Dal and the Jana Sangh wanted to keep the Congress out of power because they were thoroughly disillusioned with its practices and tactics, they agreed to join hands. Besides, the Jana Sangh wanted to seek accommodation with the Akali Dal on such issues as language, Chandigarh, and communal harmony. It felt that the Jana Sangh - Akali Coalition would create an atmosphere which would be conducive to remove friction between the two communities.
The Jana Sangh played a significant role in the coalition government. The language problem was partially solved, communal harmony was maintained, and tax relief was provided to the government employees. It was able to fulfill many of its election promises like the abolition of Marla tax, abolition of professional tax, introduction of crop loan system and reduction & amalgamation of House tax and property tax, etc. This was achieved in a very remarkable short period of 8 months. But on 22 November, 1967, the defection of Lachman Singh Gill led to the fall of the Peoples United Front Government. But in 1969, and again in 1970, the Jana Sangh and the Akali Dal succeeded in forming coalition governments. But their relations remained strained in spite of these coalitions. There was lack of understanding between the two on various issues, particularly on the question of Hindi and its place in education and administration in Punjab.

On June 30, 1970 the Jana Sangh withdrew its support to the coalition over the controversy regarding the jurisdiction of the Guru Nanak Dev University. The Jana Sangh wanted that a Dayanand University should be established at Jalandhar to give a boost to Sanskrit and Vedic cultural studies. But the extension of Guru Nanak Dev University jurisdiction to Jalandhar meant a death-blow to this hope. The Jana Sangh did not want to lose the support of Arya Samajists and so it decided to part company with the Akali Dal.

In spite of stresses and strains the Jana Sangh was able to do some good work in the coalitions. It was able to provide
tax relief, the language issue was contained and communal harmony was maintained. Because of the coalition it was also able to contain the extremist Akali elements and their demand for a Sikh homeland. But so far as corruption, inefficiency and favouritism in the government were concerned, the Jana Sangh could not do much about it. Again, the Akali Dal was a communal organization with its aims and objects limited only to a particular state and a particular community. This factor often clashed with the Jana Sangh's all-India orientation as a national party and resulted in cleavages in the coalition. Two mutually irreconcilable ideologies could not be yoked together and this always led to stresses and strains. In a way this was inevitable and the Jana Sangh could do nothing about it; much less the Akali Dal.

In the second coalition with the Akalis the Jana Sangh remained in power for more than one year from February 17, 1969 to March 27, 1970 and in the third coalition the period was about three months i.e. from March 27, 1970 to June 30, 1970. No doubt in the first coalition when the Jana Sangh and the Akalis were well adjusted due to fear of the Congress, the Jana Sangh ministers had some positive achievements to their credit. But as time passed the Akalis attitude became more aggressive on sensitive issues. The Jana Sangh had to spend its time and energy in combating the Akalis aggressive postures. As politics is considered the art of compromise the Jana Sangh tried to practise this art. But the compromise had to be maintained within certain constraints. But when these constraints are crossed, its consequences are always bad. In the earlier stages of its clash with the Akalis, it took a strong stand against the regional formula, status of Punjabi,
the Punjabi Suba, Chandigarh etc. But as time passed the Jana Sangh had to accept the Akalis viewpoint in these matters. Perhaps the leaders thought that they were in for a losing battle and they must sit with the Akalis to neutralise their aggressiveness and strengthen conditions for peace and brotherly relations. On the other hand, some of the liberal Akalis were always ready to seek the support of the Jana Sangh which was a disciplined party. The Akalis believed that some among their own party might betray them but not the Jana Sangh.

On the whole the political record of the Jana Sangh in Punjab remains much cleaner than those of other parties in the field. It certainly tried to do its best in certain very difficult situations and an atmosphere constantly charged with mutual suspicion and distrust. It was maligned both by the Congress and the Akali Dal and had to wage a constant war with the opportunism of the one and the communalism of the other. But in spite of the heavy odds under which it worked it did register its presence and achieved some success. Above all it was able to keep before the public certain major national issues and problems. It even tried to lift the Akali party out of its communal ruts and bring it into the national mainstream. Considering the very difficult political and communal situation in Punjab, and also the heavy handicaps under which the Jana Sangh had to work as a minority party in the state, it did produce a fairly good record.

To wrest the political initiative from the Congress was a very uphill task for the Jana Sangh in Punjab; so was it in the remaining parts of India. To enlist the support of the urban and the rural Sikhs was another road block in its progress because the
Sikhs had been sufficiently oriented to the Gurudwara based politics. These political realities had limited the Jana Sangh Hindu voters to the cities and the towns. No doubt, it tried to fill up the gap by reaching to the labour, women, students, farmers, scheduled castes and other sections of the society, but it failed to catch up with other parties because they were already in the field. It is true that the Jana Sangh has been dissolved now but in its place a new party with a slightly different name (Bharatiya Janta Party) has emerged under the same old leadership of the Jana Sangh. It seems quite certain that the party which really serves the people and tries to solve their problems and has a broad based programme has a better chance in the political life of the state. The Jana Sangh leadership must undergo a process of introspection and devise ways and means to enlist the support of the masses by concentrating more on economic and social issues. The vast masses are more concerned with bread and butter problems and less concerned with cultural issues. The Jana Sangh must enlarge its scope from the limited clientele of petty shopkeepers to a vast majority of the have nots working in the fields, factories, farms and offices if it wants to play a constructive and vital role in the political life of the state.