ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I desire to place on record my thanks to the authorities of the University Grants Commission and University of Madras for granting me teacher fellowship under the UGC Scheme of Faculty Improvement Programmes which enabled me to undertake this study.

I worked on this subject under the supervision of Dr. C.A. Perumal, M.A.,LL.B.,Ph.D.,M.P.A. (U.Calif.), Professor and Head of the Department of Politics and Public Administration, University of Madras. His kindness, help and patient guidance were extremely helpful for me throughout my period of study. But for his valuable guidance and helpful suggestions at every stage, this study would not have been completed. I am deep debt of gratitude to him which is beyond the scope of formal acknowledgement.

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I also feel to record my thankfulness to late Dr. S. Ramachandran, D. Litt., D.Sc., Reader in the Department of Politics and Public Administration, University of Madras for his advice and suggestions.

I owe my gratitude to Prof. Balachandar, M. A., Reader in the Department of Politics and Public Administration, University of Madras - who was most helpful in the arduous task of going through the manuscripts - for his valuable ideas and suggestions.

I acknowledge my indebtedness to the Commissioner and the Staff of Tamilnadu Archives, the Librarians, of Tamilnadu Legislature Library, Coimbatore Public Library, Madras University Library, Periyar Library, Karaiyakudi Adigal Library and Officer in charge of "Kamaraj Memorial Building" for their consistent help.

Finally I also acknowledge my sincere thanks to those whose names, for obvious reasons, I am not making any mention here, who responded to my questions and also spared their valuable time for my interviews with them.
K.amaraj, the politician par excellence of Tamilnadu occupies a unique place in setting up a model of leadership in independent India. He was no philosopher statesman but a typical mass leader who could read the mind of the common man in a realistic and pragmatic manner. He did not possess any extraordinary intellectual power like Rajaji; an intelligence that could hurt. Thus neither did he belong to the educated elite of India nor did he enjoy any special social status like Jawaharlal Nehru. Though not known for any subtle sophistication yet he could speak to his rural and urban audiences in a way that was meaningful to them. He needed no intellectual effort to indentify himself with them. In a way his lack of education could be considered a blessing in disguise in the sense that it helped him not to cherish any shining, but irrelevant ideals; ideals that could blur true realities and facts. He was not an ideologist who sought to change society by governmental action but a realist to the core who accepted the pluralistic nature of Indian society based on caste and community as it was and its interrelationships and understood in a remarkable way the mechanics of real polities in a democracy. He never imagined that the business of politics was to make a new society by governmental action but had an objective
assessment of real forces among different groups in the society.

As a whole time politician (a bachelor without family responsibilities) he acquired a personal knowledge of men and things all over Tamilnadu and also acquired considerable knowledge of the world affairs. This first hand knowledge along with his shrewd nature helped him a lot, in sizing up men and grasp the essentials of the situations; slowly but steadily and by popular consensus, he gained power and influence. A quality most admirable about him was, he never sought power for its own sake; whatever office he held, they came unsought and not by manipulations and manoeuvres; thus he belonged to that category of the leaders of the past who commanded dignity and respectability on that account.

As Tamilnadu Congress Committee president he successfully ran the party machinery in Madras State. And as Chief Minister of Madras, he headed a stable administration for over nine years, a record so far no Chief Minister in Tamilnadu had broken till this day. He had shown how with a small cabinet containing 7 or 8 ministers only, the interests of various communities and regions could be satisfied whereas his counterparts in
other states with 20 or more ministers in the cabinet failed to achieve this. Under his leadership Madras State occupied a foremost position among the states of India for good administration and orderliness. Thus he established a pattern of leadership in Madras that fitted the state admirably.

Though there are a number of books in Tamil and a few books in English written about him, they are mostly adulatory in nature and written when as All India Congress President his popularity was at its peak. No objective study as it is, had been done so far on any aspect of his political career, in order to make proper assessment of his role as a leader. Hence, a study of his political career with emphasis on his role as administrator may not be insignificant. The present day politicians of India have lot to learn from his public life; especially certain qualities of him like, his placing of the party above personal ambition, his concern for the poor illiterate and backward sections of the people, his integrity, his undemonstrative nature and pragmatic temper are some that are lacking among them.

This thesis is divided into five chapters apart from the introduction and conclusion. The first chapter
contains a brief sketch of the manifold aspects of Kamaraj's political career. Kamaraj started his political career as an ordinary Congress volunteer in a remote town in deep South at the age of 17, in the year 1919; he was elevated as the head of the Congress organisation in Madras in the year 1940 and he became the Chief Minister of the State in 1954; he became All India Congress President in 1964; as Congress President he played a key role in the selection of two Prime Ministers, one, after the death of Jawaharlal Nehru and the other, after the death of Lal Bahadur Shastri; he also played a leading role at the time of the Congress split; he once again came back to state politics. The political developments that took place both at the Centre and at the State levels particularly after the Congress split upto his death did not prove advantageous to his hitherto successful career. Kamaraj died on Gandhi Jayanti day in 1975, probably as a sad man broken in spirit. These aspects are brought out and though they are treated briefly, they may help to understand the man and his personality in a better perspective.

The second chapter investigates the role that Kamaraj played in provincial politics - how he was mainly responsible for pulling down Rajaji from his leadership
position and the role he played as king-maker - making and unmaking ministries - in the State. The groupist politics that existed in the provincial Congress, offered him as an excellent ground to learn political subtleties and intrigues which helped Kempe Gowd known and assessed and soon learnt how to bring different groups together and reconcile their conflicting interests, and finally he evolved into the king-maker. It is this politics that he learnt at the provincial level which probably helped him to play the role of a successful king-maker once again at the national level. Hence a separate chapter dealing exclusively his role in provincial politics may not be out of context.

As administrator of the State for about nine years (1956-65) with a clean and efficient administration, he was responsible for advancing the State on many fronts such as education, industry, irrigation, power etc., that are his administrative contributions in these fields are the aspects that are dealt theistically in the third, fourth and fifth chapters. Though he himself was an uneducated man, probably in no other state his counterparts would have done as much for the educational advancement of the people in the State as Kempe Gowd did with limited finances but with lot of imagination and planning. So also
in the fields of industry, power and irrigation, much has
been done for the progress of the State under his leadership.
These three chapters in a detailed way set forth information
as to what was achieved by him, in those fields during his
era. The last chapter is the conclusion, which assesses
his achievements and failures.

The approach of this study has been as much descriptive
and narrative as thematic. Information was collected through
various sources. An important source of information for this
study, particularly those aspects that cover administration,
consisted of Government orders, Reports and Publications,
available in the Tamilnadu Archives, was obtained through a
special permission from Government of Tamilnadu. For the
period in which Kamaraj was Chief Minister, this source
provided first hand information. Apart from the newspaper
reports and journals both Indian and foreign, which provided
information for the various political developments that
took place during his period, interviews with certain
personalities particularly his colleagues who were in his
cabinet helped to clarify certain issues; and also helped
to get a better picture of him as administrator and
finally Tamil books and certain English books provided as
a tertiary source of information.