CHAPTER V

PROMISES, PLANS AND PROGRAMMES OF D.M.K.

Tamil traditionalism, absence of the concept of idolisation in the Party, wide mass contact, attachment and allegiance of the rank and file of the Party, the unity and solidarity resulting from absence of groupism or factionalism of any nature, the administrative set up of the party and the easily understandable and pragmatic programmes all these formed the basis for the Party to plan its policies in a democratic manner while the Party got popular verdict, to form the government in 1967.\(^1\) The D.M.K.'s practical experience as opposition party from 1957 to 1967 also served as a catalytic agent in formulating its policies. The relationship that existed between the Party and public was a major factor that helped the leadership to frame policies to suit the needs of the masses.\(^2\) The caste oriented. Tamil society expected more from D.M.K. which never attached any importance to either casteism or communalism and that broad outlook enabled that party to chalk out programmes to satisfy the majority.\(^3\) Though that party was not in power between February 1976 and 1989, its staging a comeback with thumping majority in January 1989, even by setting aside a national

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party like the Congress bears testimony to the fact that the Policies and programmes of party were of such a wide scope that they were potable to all sections of people.  

From the date of its inception on September 17, 1949 D.M.K. Party had its own firm stand on proceeding birds and objective. The District and State Conferences, topic mettings, books, the stage and the screen, the similar mass media, were effectively utilized in propagating principles amidst educated an uneducated alike. As January 1950 they announced that the position of working class should be elevated and the money gained through the Hindu Temples by Hindu Religious chartable Endowments should be diverted towards the alimentation of welfare measures. For providing equal fortuities to all, irrespective of community, the party assessed the proper implementation of the already existing communal Government order. This not only stirred the dent population but also gained a warm welcome among ills. Such radical measures gained for them a strong national as well as national political parties. Its policy import food gains at times of famine in Tamil Nadu also strength to the Party due to the enthusiasm shown by the public. 

With its growing popularity among the masses, two D.M.K. members were elected to the Parliament and 15 members to the Madras State Assembly in  

5 Dravida Nadu, 9 February, 1950.  
the elections held in 1957. This electoral triumph encouraged D.M.K. to concentrate more on securing political power for implementing their policies effectively. Even though they did not gain a majority, it paved the way for their progress towards their aims with measured steps and calculated efforts.

On April 10 and 11, 1954 at the Thanjavur District D.M.K. conference the party pleaded for the single point Sales Tax, the legal approval of the Self - Respect marriages and making Tamil as the State’s Official language. They did not hesitate even to condemn the U.S. Pakistan agreements. Thus gradually they began to express their views on economic matters and events of national as well as international politics. Its support to the formation of linguistic states, will testify to its broad mindedness.

The importance they attached to the 1st of the Tamil month of Thai, and the 1st of the English month of May, will bring out their interest in the working classes.

In the second state conference of the D.M.K. held at Trichy between 17 and 20 May 1956, it was clearly declared that the satisfaction of the basic needs and requirements of the common man alone will be a success of democracy. The importance assigned to the promotion of handloom industry, nationalisation

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7 Nam Nadu, 12 April, 1954. 
8 Ibid. 
10 Discussion at Tiruchi -17 to 20 May 1956; Murasoli, 21 May 1956.
of Banks and heavy industries, uplift of the status of N.G.O.’s, protection of the Match Box industries were certain programmes advocated by them which enabled them to have a proper economic policy when they assumed power.\textsuperscript{11}

In the election manifesto of 1957 they pinpointed their plans such as the supply of consumer goods by the Government, Co-operative farming, machanisation etc., State’s right to have self determination, review of centre state relations, nationalization of industries, fixation of age ceiling, land and agrarian reform, protection of handloom weavers, village officers and over seas Tamils were few programmes announced in their second election manifesto.\textsuperscript{12}

With the initial success the D.M.K. achieved in the elections of 1957, the party began to contemplate more on the welfare of the Tamil Nadu Public. The entry of D.M.K. in the state Legislature and Central Parliament made it to look at issues with wider vision and in broader perspective. Being an opposition party it stressed the imperative need for decentralization of finance.\textsuperscript{13} It also insisted on the equal development of all the parts of the Indian subcontinent in an uniform pattern. For all the well being of the non Hindi speaking people it opposed the three language formula vehemently.\textsuperscript{14} This responsible opposition party served as a hydraulic brake for the fast moving Central Government. But at the same

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{11} Elaval, \textit{Achievements of D.M.K. Government}, Muvendar Publishers, Madras, 1977, p.68.
\item \textsuperscript{12} Murasoli, 23 December, 1961; \textit{D.M.K. Election Manifesto}, 22 December, 1961.
\item \textsuperscript{13} Swaminathan, S., \textit{op.cit.}, pp.29-32.
\item \textsuperscript{14} \textit{The Hindu}, 24 January, 1968.
\end{itemize}
time D.M.K. offered a helping hand to the Centre during the Chiness aggression and on the Goa issue. Such measures not only enhanced the prestige of D.M.K., but also opened an avenue for analysing political issues dispassionately while opposing the ruling party or point out their drawbacks and defects. D.M.K. though was firm, expressed its sentiments critically but gently without wounding the feeling of the ruling party. Thus D.M.K. served as a model for a true opposition party in a democratic form of government and that helped in achieving true democracy. Besides, the D.M.K. was able to formulate clearly her own policies with regard to various issues.

Clean and efficient administration, simple living, service to humanity were the few objectives which the D.M.K. projected before the people in the Election Manifesto of 1967. In that respect, equitable distribution of essential commodities through ration shops, checking the price rise, creation of more employment opportunities, avoidance of inflation, reduction of taxes for food materials, promotion of agriculture and the interest of farmers in all possible ways, fixation of a proper land ceiling etc., were some of the economic programmes advocated by D.M.K. These programmes offered ample scope in formulating their economic policies when they were called upon to form the government in Tamil Nadu.

Illustrated Weekly of India, 26 September 1969.
In addition to such measures with a humanitarian outlook they attempted to wipeout the miseries of the handloom weavers. Being a popular party among the middle and lower class wage earning group, D.M.K. was more sympathetic towards workers of all categories. Even by supporting their rightful claims through strikes and also by living wide publicity through other means, D.M.K. proved that it will be always ready to protect the interests of the working class. It did not lag behind in finding solutions for the problems of the fishermen, toddy tappers, and people Backward classes and communities.

Since they had an unshakable faith in the dictum that teachers are the real makers of history, they fought for well being of the teaching fraternity of all categories. The same was their attitude with regard to N.G.O.’s too. Thus D.M.K. Proved that it is an organization which aims at the inculcation of the policy of greatest happiness of the greatest number.

As a party which endeavoured to offer prosperity to the youngsters, it assisted the effective implementation to the Mid-day meals scheme and school uniform.

Being a party of Tamilians and a party keen to ensure Tamil glory, it called upon the then government to change the name of ‘Madras State’ into ‘Tamil Nadu’. It pleaded for the introduction of Tamil in official

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correspondence. It also compelled the Government to use pure Tamil words such as ‘Thiru’ or ‘Thirumathi’ in the place of ‘Shri’ or ‘Shrimathi’.\textsuperscript{21}

Simultaneously with the promotion of Tamil, they opposed Hindi and vehemently advocated the retention of English. Thus it was in favour of the two language formula.

In the field of administration, D.M.K. criticized the lavish expenses and offered suggestions for economy. In addition to that they fought for increased powers for the decentralized civic bodies such as Corporations, Municipalities, village panchayats etc. Much stress was said on the fact that the government should give top priority to the appeals and applications of the needy public. D.M.K. did not hesitate in pointing out the stagnation and delay in executing the policies already formulated by the government. Thus its role as an opposition party served as a training ground for the D.M.K. and offered and opportunity to become familiar with the various mechanisms of democratic government and an outlet to disclose its policies and programmes.

As a party interested in promoting trade and commerce, it unhesitatingly called upon the Railway Ministry to link the different parts of Tamil Nadu with Railways and electric trains. The concern shown by D.M.K. to improve transport

\textsuperscript{21} Veeramani, K., Achievements of D.M.K. Government, Viduthalai Publications, Madras, 1977, p.32,
and communication facilities is a proof of their grasp of the economic problem of the state.\textsuperscript{22}

As an opposition party, D.M.K. had clear cut ideas on various political and economic issues, it had no difficulty in formulating its policies clearly in the election manifestoes of 1962 and 1967.

As it was a party having faith in Democracy and Socialism, the twin essentials of an independent nation, it clearly declared that centralization of finance will never be a solution for economic distress. It believed that industrialization by locating various industries at proper places alone will lead to prosperity and welfare. Again it had its own views regarding foreign aid and loans and their utilization. Execution of the Sethu Project, Cauvery Oil Scheme, expansion of the Neyveli Project, getting water from the nearby States, Dairy Development, fisheries and poultry development, encouragement to sugar, paper and cashew and handloom industries, giving importance to industries of magnasite, gypsum, aluminum, mica, etc., improving leather technology and production were their proposed plans before the general election of 1962.\textsuperscript{23} This indicates that D.M.K. had promptly proceeded in the right direction as a political party with specific policies even prior to the formation of the D.M.K. government in 1967. Like other things D.M.K. was so keen on the proper

\textsuperscript{22} D.M.K. Election Manifesto, 1962.
utilization and introduction of programmes through co-operative endeavour. In the field of education they advocated the scheme of free education, technical and job oriented education, developing Research, Centres and promotion of Tamil culture etc.\textsuperscript{24}

With the aim of introducing a progressive government, they proposed that D.M.K. will redress the grievances of the Backward Class people. To put that into action they suggested plans for slum clearance and housing facilities for them.\textsuperscript{25} Above all they proposed that they will give lands to the landless labourers.\textsuperscript{26}

D.M.K.’s dedication to the cause of the promotion of Tamil and Tamils made them to announce their policies and proposals as election manifestoes. Further upto 1967 as they were in the opposition it was possible for them to attain clarity of thinking in framing policies. So that, when in 1967 the D.M.K. ministry was formed it was handy for them to execute their policies into action. On March 6, 1967, C.N. Annadurai formed the first D.M.K. ministry. A detailed and critical analysis of the various bills passed schemes introduced and measures adopted is reserved for later elaboration.

The major thrust of the D.M.K. Government during its tenure of office i.e., from March 6, 1967 to January 31, 1976, was on bringing about a proper

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{24} D.M.K. Election Manifesto, 1962.
\item \textsuperscript{25} D.M.K. Election Manifesto, 1971.
\item \textsuperscript{26} D.M.K. Election Manifesto, 1962.
\end{itemize}
unserstanding of the States by the Centre and making the latter to Co-operate with the States. They were so particular on the issue that in the federal set up the States should have more rights and privileges and the Centre-State relations should be in accordance with the principles of federalism.\textsuperscript{27} Secondly, the D.M.K. Government being a people’s government, having understood all the needs and requirements of the Tamils, decided to dedicate and serve the case of promoting the welfare of the Tamils.

The D.M.K. staunchly believed that the correct nationalism could be served better only by renaming Madras state as Tamil Nadu. From the very beginning it moved the matter through its State Conferences, mass media, on the floors of the Assembly and parliament. In the Second State conference of the party held in 1956 at Tiruchi, a resolution was passed to this effect.\textsuperscript{28} This problem was raised repeatedly by the lone member of the party in the parliament and the party members in the Assembly. The mass media were exploited to whip the emotions of the people in this regard.\textsuperscript{29}

\textbf{Education}

The D.M.K. firmly believed that the education can serve as an instrument of social change and progress. The party from that beginning envisaged the idea

\textsuperscript{27} Norman D. Palmer. "\textit{A Leader to Remember}'', Anna Commemoration Volume, Madras, 1969, p.20.

\textsuperscript{28} Murasoli, 21 May, 1956.

\textsuperscript{29} Madras Legislative Assembly Debates, Vol.1, p.117.
that the avowed actives of the upliftment of the down trodden, emancipation of women, eradication of untouchability, removal of restrictions and social evils could be possible only through providing free and compulsory education to the children. The party had promised that it would arrange for supply of books, uniforms and all necessary amenities for continuation of mid-day meal scheme, special scholarships for Backward Class students, establishment of free hostels and libraries, extension of free education upto Pre-University level and free coaching centres for I.A.S., I.P.S. and State Government Services for the benefit of the Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribes and Backward Class people. The party insisted on the education through mother tongue and stood firmly on two language formula.\(^{30}\)

**Land and Agriculture**

Co-operative joint farming and mechanisation of agriculture, were the main programmes of D.M.K. To promote agriculture, Government should instal sales department of agricultural implements; tractors etc.\(^{31}\) The wages of the agricultural labourers should be fixed. The Party envisaged the idea of the establishment of an Agricultural University as a major step for the conduct of Research and also to promote scientific farming. The use of high yielding variety of seeds for increased production was also the outcome of the plans of D.M.K. They emphasised the removal of tax on wet lands. The agriculturists’ as


\(^{31}\) Ibid., 1957, 1962.
well as tenants' problems were highlighted. Above all the D.M.K. insisted on scientific manuring. In 1971, due to the efforts of D.M.K., the production of rice was raised to 56 lakh tons from 35 lakh tons in 1967.\textsuperscript{32}

**INDUSTRIALISATION**

Since D.M.K. was particular in the all-round economic development of the State, they paid equal attention to the promotion of large scale, small scale and cottage industries. Salem steel factory, Tuticorin chemical and manures factory, are examples of proposed Public Sector and joint Sector ventures respectively.\textsuperscript{33} The Steel Rolling Mill at Arkonam was also due to the efforts of the D.M.K. government.\textsuperscript{34} The Cotton Mill Corporation established by the D.M.K. government is doing an yeoman service in serving the problems of cotton spinning and weaving mills. Twelve Co-operative sugar mills were also newly established. Small Scale Industries Corporation was another outcome of the policy of D.M.K. The establishment of the Directorate of Sugar was a significant step to remove the ills affecting the sugar industry.

Thus with a planned economic policy the D.M.K. government endeavoured to maintain the economic stability in Tamil Nadu. Further it paved the way for solving the unemployment problem too. The Industrial policy

\textsuperscript{32} Tamilarasu, September, 1971, p.18.
\textsuperscript{33} Spratt, P., op.cit., pp. 117-120.
coincided with the policy of agricultural development and both helped the Tamils in many ways.

**Insurance Scheme**

The introduction of agricultural insurance, insurance for cattle and fisheries was mainly intended to benefit the labourers.\textsuperscript{35}

**Drought Relief**

Since TamilNadu was depending upon rain for farming, the absence of rain will spell ruin of agriculture. Keeping that in mind the D.M.K. promised to introduce new irrigation schemes and to improve existing facilities. By this multipurpose scheme of creating employment opportunities and solving the problems of drought, the D.M.K. revealed its far–sightedness and vision.\textsuperscript{36}

**Electricity**

Being a government which aimed at scientific socialism, priority was offered to gain more out of the use of electricity. Every year they planned to enhance the capacity of the use of electricity. It was widely properly used in achieving success in welfare schemes. The Phase of electricity in agriculture and


\textsuperscript{36} D.M.K. Election Manifesto, 1967.

\textsuperscript{36} Veeramani, K., op.cit., p.10.
industries, electrification of unelectrified villages etc., were all planned and practiced due to their systematic policies.\textsuperscript{37}

\textbf{PORT TO N.G.O’s}

The D.M.K. party was as much interested in the well being of the government officials as it was in that of the labouring classes and a number of schemes were planned towards this end. Some of them were abolition of the practice of confidential file, cashing earned leave, increase in D.A., H.R.A. and C.C.A., Marriage loans upto Rs.2,000/-, the introduction of revised old age pension, pension to those non-permanent government servants, housing loans etc., were few of the measures envisaged. The D.M.K. Patty believed in the principle more pay more work and more privileges and facilities means more turnout.\textsuperscript{38} So it was believed that the government could run the administrative machinery, efficiently without any delay or stagnation.

\textbf{Housing Facilities}

For the benefit of the houseless poor and needy, the D.M.K. Party promised to introduce many beneficial schemes through the Housing Board and Slum Clearance Board. Through the co-operative land mortgage banks, housing loans were to be distributed. The N.G.O’s co-operative House Building Societies could also offer housing loans. The slums were to be cleared and were to be

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{37} Ibid., p.11.
\textsuperscript{38} D.M.K. Election Manifesto, 1971.
\end{footnotesize}
replaced by fire proof houses. The party also promised housing sites for Backward and scheduled castes.\textsuperscript{39}

**Upliftment of The Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes**

The D.M.K. Party was of the opinion that all facilities should be offered to the Backward class people for their development and well being. Preference in employment was to be given for removing the inferiority complex among them. People belonging to Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribes and various Backward Classes were to be absorbed in different posts. Such a policy of D.M.K. was aimed to help the removal of social disparity and instil confidence in the minds of people of all communities.\textsuperscript{40}

**Elimination of Beggary**

To eliminate beggary the D.M.K. Party proposed the programme of the rehabilitation of the beggars and establishment of craft training centres so as to inculcate the spirit of dignity of labour, self confidence and self reliance among them.\textsuperscript{41}

\textsuperscript{39} Ibid., 1962; Tamil Nadu Administrative Report, 1973-74, p.369.
\textsuperscript{40} Asaithambi Committee Report on Cause of Beggary, 1971, p. 10.
Unemployment

To provide employment opportunities, the Party proposed to introduce the employment training schemes and Apprentice Teachers' schemes. The unemployed were to be given training in various crafts which enabled them to stand on their own and helped to create self-confidence.

Prohibition and Horse Race

Drinking is a social evil. Again the rich could indulge in this pleasure with no ill-effects on their health and their families’ happiness. The poor drank at the expense of the families’ happiness and sometimes even when the family starved. Anna firmly believed in prohibition in Tamil Nadu. But Prohibition would result in tremendous loss of income to the State because the people have the tendency to consume liquor smuggled from the neighbouring states.\(^4\) Further spurious liquor resulted in large numbers dying and losing their eye-sight.

Horse-racing may be a pastime for the rich but it is a luxury in which the common people cannot afford to indulge. The D.M.K. realized that tempted by the lure of quick money, even the middle class and poor sections of people were foolishly indulging in this luxury at the cost of the happiness and well being of

their family. As the D.M.K. party was interested in the welfare of the common man, it proposed to abolish horse racing. It was abolished from November 18, 1974.

Welfare Scheme

For encouraging individuals to start small scale industries the D.M.K. party advocated the liberalization of the sanction of loans. It promised measures for helping the goldsmiths by extending loans to enable them to start their own business. The conduct of eye camps were promised to help the poor in regaining their eyesight at the government’s expense. The distribution of cycle rickshaws to the poor free of cost, to create self confidence among them, was promised. The party pledged to help the physically handicapped to play a useful role in society, not with standing their physical disabilities. For the development of women, the party advocated the widow remarriage by offering various incentives. To employ them in fruitful ways, the party promised to supply free sewing machines to women and to start care homes. Such measures explicitly suggest the broad mindedness of the D.M.K. party.

45 Ibid.
46 Ibid., 1967;
Transport

The party was of the opinion that only by linking the different parts of TamilNadu through road transport the economic stagnation could be removed. Further with a view to offering facilities to the people to have easy movement many transport corporations were to be created. Thus it would pave the way for the distribution of wealth.

Casteism

Caste is a great curse on Tamil society. The D.M.K. Party strongly believed that casteism should be totally abolished. For that it planned many positive measures to bring equality among all castes. The Party guaranteed to encourage inter-caste marriages and to offer various incentives for that.

By giving facilities they planned to enhance the status of Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes. Exemption and privileges were to be given for them in job opportunities. This sort of equalisation would enable the government to preserve the self respect of the Tamils.
Thus the policies of the D.M.K. Party were mainly intended to achieve the welfare state ideal. By the experience which they gained during their role as opposition party they were able to understand the situation thoroughly. That in turn helped them to chalk out their plans for creating a society where there will be no economic harassments, social disparities and wants. As they did not make false promises and as they did not project ambitious and Utopian plans they were able to serve the community effectively in fulfilling its needs and requirements.