CHAPTER FOUR

EMERGENCE OF TELUGU DESAM PARTY (TDP)

MOTIVATION, AND ELECTION MANIFESTO
Nandamuri Taraka Rama Rao (NTR), who is the age of at 60 he is going in for an entirely new kind of role. By launching the Telugu Desam Party on 29th March 1982 he has announced not just his decision to enter politics but his candidature for the Chief Ministership of Andhra Pradesh. While announcing his decision, N.T. Rama Rao said that he was entering public life to serve the suffering masses in Andhra Pradesh. He felt that new party was needed to protect the honour and self-respect of the six crore Telugu speaking people. His aim was to unite them in a new bond of kinship. True enough, Telugu Desam was not a shooting star that dazzles for a few moment and then makes the night grow darker. What was the magic of N.T. Rama Rao could ever cause these questions to be raised. N.T. Rama Rao has in fact been playing 'God' on the silver screen for three decades now and some of his tinted divinity seems to have rubbed off on his earthly personality. This demi-god of innumerable Telugu mythologicals has, it is said, convincingly portrayed Lord Krishna in several films that many ordinary folks in Andhra are certain that N.T. Rama Rao is none other than Sri Krishna Paramatma himself in a Kaliyuga Avatar.

When Rama Rao has turned 60 years he was a hero of over 300 films. By this time he had almost decided to retire from films and there was a lingering thought in him to enter politics and serve the people of Andhra Pradesh.

In October 1981, one of the journalists at the launch in nol asked N. S. Rama Rao: "You will be entering into your 60th year after 6 months. Throughout your life you have been acting in films. You have made a name for yourself, and you are a rich man now. Do you have any plans to do anything by way of service to the people who have patronised you for all these years."

He said, "Yes, the Telugu people have been kind enough to me for more than three decades. They have given me their affection, patronised my films, made me rich and famous. It is my duty now to repay this debt in whatever way I can. I would like to do something for them. Beginning with my next birthday, I would like to devote 15 days every month to social service."

When N. S. Rama Rao was thinking about politics, Anjaiah was at the helm of affairs in the State. Because of his

3. Ibid., p.6.
downfall in politics people were dissatisfied. Some opportunities encouraged N.T. Rama Rao.

People are fed up with the Congress (I). There is no opposition worth the name. You are known throughout the state. If you enter politics there is a good chance that the people may vote for you in the next election. At the same time Congress (I) was pregnant and could deliver the dissident children at any time. Dissidents like, Padmashastra Rao, N. Sreenivasula Reddy, conducted negotiations with N.T. Rama Rao in 1982. They said, "The basic decision is yours. If you start a political party, we are prepared to quit the Congress (I) and join with you."

It was the press and the Congress (I) dissidents who instigated N.T. Rama Rao, to involve himself in politics. It was on March 21, 1982 that a thunderbolt-like news released from the 'Akashavani', Hyderabad Centre, stated that N.T. Rama Rao was intending to form a Regional Political Party. This historic announcement revolutionised the whole political thinking in Andhra Pradesh. In one of the interviews N.T. Rama Rao has explained the need for a Regional Party.

4. Ibid., p.7.
"Forming a regional party is to restore the prestige of the Telugu people, to protect the respect and dignity of the Telugu people, to understand the problems ourselves to provide everything that our society, our State, our people badly require. Why is Andhra Pradesh not industrially developed as Tamil Nadu, which is ruled by a Regional Party? Why? Don't we have resources? Are we not utilizing the existing raw materials, resources etc? Are we not producing self-sufficient power for Andhra? We are not providing power to the remote villages. But we are supplying power to other States. Who decides their distribution? Central Government? Andhra would not be developed unless we utilise our resources? To do this, we need a Regional Party."

On March 28, in a meeting at Jubilee Hills, N.T.Rama Rao formed a steering Committee of 13 people and decided the formation of the Party. On 29th March, 1982 a meeting was organised in a small hall at the New MLA quarters. It was a quiet affair. Only 20 people were to come, but the large crowd that appeared made it necessary for this clandestine meeting to be shifted to the open Lawns. Nadendla Bhaskara Rao told at the meeting that N.T.Rama

Rao had been chosen as President, and requested him to announce the formation of the party. N.T. Rama Rao rose to speak in the midst of the large crowd, said, "Brothers and Sisters, I have been thinking of entering into politics for the past few months. But I was not sure how people will react to it. Now I see that so many of you have come here unasked when you heard that I would announce my entry into politics. I am overwhelmed by your response. I am entering politics from this very moment."

The people asked, "What is the name of the Party?" on the spur of the moment, Rama Rao responded, "Telugu Desam". "I am a Telugu man" he explained, from today onwards, I have decided to devote myself to the cause of our cultural heritage and for our language. Therefore, we will call our party as Telugu Desam."

N.T. Rama Rao considered to start a political party in the early days of March 1982 and he gathered the consensus of different people. The film actor's move to enter politics had given a shot in the arm to former minister, Nadendla Bhaskara Rao, who once aspired to become Chief

7. Ibid., p.8.
Minister and thrown out of the ministry by Anjaiah, announced his resignation from the ruling Congress (I). In a news conference on March 23, he stated that he was completely 'disillusioned' with the functioning of the Congress (I) and expressed his willingness to join the new party. Bouthu Latchanna, M.L.A. President, State Lok Dal had welcomed N.T.Rama Rao decision to enter politics and form a regional party. Bunkara Satyanarayana, MLC General Secretary, Lok Dal congratulated N.T.Rama Rao on his decision to enter politics inside the State. In the initial stage, the youth, who were organised themselves as N.T.Rama Rao fans associations or clubs enthusiastically visited Hyderabad and encouraged the birth of the new party under the stewardship of their favourite actor.

The Congress (I) leaders started criticism, stating that Kammas (N.T.Rama Rao & Nadendla Bhaskar Rao are kammas) formed as a separate party to safeguard the interests of the "new rich". On March 31, 1982, N.T.Rama Rao declared that his party would support land reforms, ceiling on urban incomes and dispersal of industries throughout the state. He firmly opposed the collection of...

donations by the private colleges and he affirmed that banks and financial institutions should lend money for huts but not for the construction of seven-stored buildings. The flag of the party would consist of a wheel in red colour representing the industrial front, a plough in green colour to symbolise the farmers' community and a hut in white colour: The flag would have a yellow background. The Telugu Desam Party Skeleton was formed by N. Bhashar Rao and N.T.Rama Rao gave life to it. George Fernandes, Lok Dal un 1st April at Vijayawada welcome the formation of Telugu Desam and he wished it to help the opposition to give an additional blow to the Congress (I). However, the stated that regional parties 'cannot solve' the problems of the people.

THE FIRST MAHANADU

The first convention of the party was held in 'Nizam College Ground at Hyderabad on April 11, 1982. Hundreds of party workers attended the closed meeting under the hot sun in the morning and thousands of people attended the convention in the evening. He took to politics, he said.

to do something for the people of Andhra Pradesh who admired him and made him rich and famous by way of gratitude. He categorically criticised the Congress (I) rule in the State and promised to restore the "Telugu Pride". A steering committee, was constituted to chalk out the future programme. N.T.Rama Rao in his initial statements made some uncharitable remarks about leaders like Prakasan, and had to relent and modify when he faced severe adverse criticism.

The party started its activities after first convention. N.T.Rama Rao led a silent procession about 2,000 party workers to the statue of B.R.Ambedkar near the tank bund in Hyderabad to protest against alleged police insufficiency of Ambedkar and the lathi-charge on the Ambedkar Jayanti procession organised by the BJP on April 14, 1982. The Party had an initial set back due to the resignation of B.V.Subba Raju, MLC from the Steering Committee on April 15.

After the first convention, N.T.Rama Rao and the Steering Committee members started to meet their supporters
from all walks of life at Hyderabad. They also toured the State to consolidate their position by the time of the second state level convention at Tirupati in May, 1982. The people disgusted with the Congress (I) misrule were attracted by the new party through the other political parties branded it as a 'Rama Party'.

The Congress (I) leaders rejected any comparison between the two matinee idols of the South N.T. Rama Rao and late M.G. Ramachandran. They argued that late M.G. Ramachandran, then the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu had a long period of political experience before he became the Chief Minister and whatever he earned in the Cinema field was given to the people. In contrast, they argued that N.T. Rama Rao was a novice to politics and earned a lot to invest only for the advancement of the members of his family (6 sons and 5 daughters) and failed to show the minimum courtesy towards the junior artists in the cinema field. They hailed the sudden change of his attitude to serve the people after closing his eyes for decades. However, the youth who were already formed as fans associations, transformed themselves into party workers under the name of 'YUVA SHAKA'. They decided to follow the

principles of discipline announced by their 'ANNA' (elder brother) and they prepared to work hard for the propagation of N.T. Rama Rao's mission to safeguard the self-respect of the Telugu People.

Ramoji Rao, the Editor in Chief of EENADU (To-day), a popular daily (who also belongs to Rama community) started giving wide publicity to the activities and meeting of the newly formed party. Eventually, Eenadu became the mouth piece of Telugu Desam.

THE SECOND MAHANADU

The second convention of the party was held at Tirupati on May 28, 1982. The gathering was thrice that of the first convention and N.T. Rama Rao took more care in his statements. He concentrated on the present problems of the people and planned for the future of his party. He called for the immediate ouster of the State Government in the wake of the alleged land grab scandal. A resolution adopted by the convention said the Government's continuance might affect the inquiry into the charges made against some ministers of their involvement in the scandal. It was also

12. Ibid., p. 35.
decided that no member elected to any body on a different
party unless he resigned the membership of that body to
which elected. It was also decided that such members
should submit their resignations to the Assembly. Several
members of the newly elected Panchayat Raj Institutions and
Municipal Councils also attended the convention. On the
following day - May 29, (being his 60th Birthday) N.T. Rama
Rao declared that he would stop acting in cinemas and
concentrate on active politics. Later, he started his tour
of the entire state and planned to touch every village and
town. Wherever he went, the people surrounded him with
veneration. The tension he built with his impassioned
oratory, timely modulations and theatrical gestures kept
the crowds cheering and rapt.

Following the Tirupati convention, out of the four
M.L.A.s Nadendla Bhaskara Rao resigned his membership in the
Assembly. After waiting for a reasonable time, Rama Rao
had written to the three M.L.A.s to resign their membership.
Rama Rao in a statement on June 27, declared that
C. Narayana Adiga and G. Ravindra ceased to be members of the
Telugu Desam Party as they failed to resign their
membership of the Assembly. On the following day, they questioned the right of Rama Rao, the Party President to 'remove' them from the party or to ask them to resign from the Assembly. In a joint statement at Hyderabad, they stated that the decision calling for their resignations was not taken properly. They protested and pointed out, that the decision of Rama Rao did not have the legitimate sanction of the executive committee of the steering committee. They said that they founded the party along with Nandula, and Rama Rao had been invited to join the party to strengthen it. However, the Steering Committee ratified the action of the President.

KONA PRABHAKARA RAJ'S CRITICISM ON N.T.RAMA RAJ'S PROMISES:

Kona Prabhakara Rao, Finance Minister severely criticized the promises made by Rama Rao as 'vague' and 'aimless'. In a statement on July 19, 1982 the minister pointed out that it would cost the state exchequer a staggering sum of Rs.1,400 crores per year if the promises made by N.T.Rama Rao should be really implemented. N.T.Rama Rao promised to supply the rice rice at Rs.2/- per

Kilo, unemployment dues, free mid-day meals for schools children, electrification of all villages, water supply, separate Women's University and house-sites to weaker sections. The minister ridiculed the inexperience of N.1. Rama Rao in the political field and warned him to be cautious in his promises. The Telugu Desam Leader Y. Sivaji retaliated the minister's criticism. Sivaji said his assessment had shown that not more than Rs. 400 crores needed to transform the Telugu Desam's promises into actions. He asserted that conservative estimates indicated that if 50 per cent of the corruption and the evasion of taxes could be controlled, the revenue of the State would swell by Rs. 500 to 1500 crores. He pointed out that the State Government could make a profit of 50 paisa per kilo rice even if sold at the rate of Rs. 2.7 per kilo and Tamil Nadu Government was selling rice at the rate of Rs. 1.75 a kilo. His calculation was that the paddy was being purchased at the rate the rice cost should not exceed Rs. 1.70/- a quintal. Besides, the State Government was getting the central subsidy of Rs. 700 crores a year, at the rate of 58 paisa for every kilo of rice sold through fair price shops.

15. Ibid., P. 310.
ELECTION CAMPAIGN

If the whirlwind campaign of N.T.Rama Rao, at the age of 60th of the theatrical, it is only because there is something powerfully dramatic about the way he is going about his quest for political power. Ranging himself across from the galaxy of the Congress (I)'s star campaigners, who with their helicopters and fleets of cars are sparing no effort, Mr.Rama Rao confesses to be a one-man show and while on the move a fairly modest one at that. From before dawn till late into the night he rides a 40-year-old Chevrolet van owned by his Ram Krishna Cine Studios, refitted last August at a cost of Rs.10,000 to serve as a self-sufficient campaign trailer. Now and then he joins others vehicles bearing local candidates, and organizers from his nascent, Telugu Desam Party or simply enthusiastic supporters.

I have had no sleep, no food for the last three days, he said one afternoon last fortnight at the start of his campaign, his voice hoarse from addressing dozens of meetings, big and small, and riding 400 km each day.

Inside the van he sits on an air-craftstyle seat, drinking soda and wiping his brow to wipe the sweat and grime of the meeting he has just left, mentally composing himself for the next one. The van is loaded with boxes containing cassette of his speeches which are distributed to party workers, and copies of his party's manifesto.

Under the bed built to one side are stacked crates of soda-water. Garlands collected from meeting are strewn on the floor. There is an ice-box and a picnic hamper with fruit. Dressed in khaki bush shirt and slacks, his feet in dusty sneakers, N. T. Rama Rao is alerted to an approaching crowd of people by a buzzer sounded by the van driver. A dab of perfume, a quick glance in the mirror above the van's wash basin, and the portly screen portrait of gods and goddesses climbs an aluminium step ladder, through an open hatch, on to the roof of the coach.

The effect is electric. From no-where the crowds begin to pour on the roads. Faces of men, women and children of all ages, light up as recognition dawns. The coach keeps moving to the venue of the public meeting.

and soon it is surrounded by a flowing river of people, running along pell-mell, stretching far behind and ahead of coach. Normally falling hours behind his published schedule, N.T.Rama Rao has often kept people waiting for hours, sometimes, through the night, coming in the morning to meetings scheduled the evening before. But there is little impatience, and none remains as his van heaves into view.

At small towns, waiting crowds hail passing cars and buses, asking for his whereabouts. Jeeps travelling ahead use loudspeakers to forewarn town-folk of his imminent arrival. His campaign symbol, the bicycle - Because it is common man's vehicle and we stand for the common man, he explains - is the most visible of all political signs. Shopkeepers hold their own bicycles on the top of their shacks. Elsewhere, the party's yellow flag flutter a top poles, competing for attention with the Congress (I)'s 10 tricolour and spinning wheel, lit up at night.

In discussion N.T.Rama Rao plays down his cinema image as a factor in his campaign. "Where is the image," he asks in brief snatches of conversation in between meetings. "I am completely black there is no

19. Ibid., p.24
n' glamour, this dress I am wearing is ordinary. No, it is the faith of the people." But that doesn't tell the whole story. Years of film acting have left an indelible mark on him. In gesture or body language, N.T.Rama Rao is an accomplished performer. Whether it was the flick of a hand or a turn of his shoulders to emphasize a point, the practised skill is evident. And his campaigner uses large murtis of N.T.Rama Rao as Lord Krishna hooped with garlands at important vantage points. If it is a role he has often played and the identification is complete.

That is why the people put their hopes on me, he says by way of explanation. "I've portrayed lost of divine character, so they believe I will do what I promise. Then it N.T.Rama Rao comes to power there won't be corruption."

N.T.Rama Rao offers no palliatives, no solutions. But his message was direct and aimed at the Telugu heart. He spoke of the persistence of poverty in spite of nearly four decades of independence, of Telugu honour which is trampled upon because Delhi appoints and topples Chief Ministers at will, of the Telugu language and its neglect.
of the need to give property rights to women, of inflation, costs, fees which deny poor people education and medical help. And to the delight of his inflamed audiences he ridicules MLA's who "are happy if they get a vehicle with a flag, a phone, a bungalow and are not bothered about anything else. Do MLA's ever come back and ask you if they can solve your problems? They take votes and go and sit in MLA quarters in air conditioned rooms, drink and play cards. Is this why you sent them there?" N.R.Rama Rao hampered by the lack of an organisation, but relies completely on a strong personal charisma.

POWERFUL REPORT

The tension he builds up with his impassioned oratory keeps his crowds cheering and rept. Road-side meetings scheduled to last a few moments extend into minutes. A 15 minute speech is prolonged to 45 minutes. And his arrivals and departures are chaotic. I did not come here for power, he says in his parting words, "I did not come here for money, I did not come here for status and prestige. I enjoyed all this and more. I came here as a sanyasi to follow you. I have earned money. I have earned

status. And all because you gave it to me. I want to do something in return and serve you. Vote for the Telugu Desam candidate. I hope he will not disappoint you, but if he does we will throw him out with all dishonour."

And as the cavalcade moves on, there is again bedlam. The river of people again begins its unsteady flow. Flowers and garlands cascade on to the coach. Slowly the crowdebb, and the young men running along with the van fall behind. The catcalls and whistles grow softer, and N.T.Rama Rao returns to the cavernous van that is his home for three weeks.

The foremost factor was the charisma, which has been determining the political fate of any party in Indian politics. Indira Gandhi's charisma no doubt previously influenced the Telugu people, but N.T.Rama Rao reversed the trend. N.T.Rama Rao's charisma dominated the Political scene. N.T.Rama Rao's personal appeal and his constant politicisation of the people, his eloquent speeches, his action-oriented movements stirred up the sentiments of the Telugu people, who felt proud of their Telugu pride. Wherever, Mrs.Indira Gandhi went, she received cuff...
opposition and many times, her election campaign was not at all successful. N.T. Rama Rao was received by all most all the people, irrespective of any of their reservations.

N.T. Rama Rao belonged to the Kamma Community which was affluent. In Andhra Pradesh their Community constitutes 5% of the total population. The whole community supported N.T. Rama Rao because there are rivalry community in politics was Reddy's who dominated the Andhra Political scene for several years. Kamma community donated funds, worked ceaselessly for the Telugu Desam Party.

When the date of Assembly elections was declared as January 5, 1983. On November 26, 1982, Rama Rao had to cut short his tour and return to Hyderabad to negotiate with other opposition parties in the State. He could cover most of the coastal districts and Rayalaseema area by the end of November 1982 and still he was to tour Telangana Area. His tour was a great success because he touched every village on the road side wherever he went and the people turned out in large numbers to his meetings with veneration and worship. The news media acclaimed the attendance of his.

25. Ibid., p.313.
meetings and compared to those of congress (I) meeting where people were paid and brought in lorries and addressed by Indira Gandhi, Sunjay Gandhi and other State Central leaders. The YUNA SENA of Telugu Desam Party spread like a jungle fire and engulfed the entire state. The mounting dissident activity in the Congress (I), the uncooperative attitude of the ex-chief Ministers Anjaiah and Venkatram, the increasing popularity of the Telugu Desam Party hastened the Congress (I) High Command to postpone the elections. The Exodus increased after the date of elections was declared, I.I.Sanieeva Reddy, Malayala Samithi President, Karimnagar, who was an Independent joined Telugu Desam Party on November 28, Mudragada Parmanabha Janata M.L.A. Pratihapudu, East Godavari district also joined on November 29, Samithi Presidents of Vayolipadu and Fultur (Chittoor) and one ex-M.L.A a long with 100 surpanchis joined on November 30, Lina Ramachandra Reddy, former Inspector - General of Police, T.Raina Bai, Janata Ex-M.L.A. Ramachandavaram Nissanka Rao Venkata Rama R. Ex-M.L.A and Janata Vice-President of Gunur district; L.Amaneyulu, opposition member in Kurnool Municipal Council; Veeramallu Rama Krishna Rao, Vice-President, Panachayat Samithi, Akividupudi Members of Manadupudi
Panchayal (Virakhta), Budimella Bhima Rao and Kanti Adinarayana of Burugupudi, East Godavari, and Chegondi Haribabu, Ex-M.L.A and Ex-Z.P. Chairman, West Godavari joined Telugu Desam Party in the first week of December 1982 along with hundreds and thousand of their followers. All the legislators who joined Telugu Desam Party from parties like the Congress (I), Janata and Lok Dal, after resigning their membership of the Assembly were given party tickets. All the candidates who were given Telugu Desam Party tickets were asked to sign a pledge that they would resign their membership of the Assembly in case they chose to defect after getting elected on the Telugu Desam Party ticket. N. R. Rama Rao, the party president directed the candidates to take the pledge openly before the voters of their constituencies during the election campaign.

The role of the press was an important factor in giving publicity and propaganda to the Telugu Desam Party. The Telugu newspaper ‘Eenadu’ with a circulation of about 3 lakhs became a pamphlet of the Telugu Desam Party. All papers except ‘Eenadu’ failed to guess the pulse of the people. ‘Andhra Jyothi’, ‘Andhra Bhoomi’ supported the Congress (I). ‘Andhra Patrika’ was traditionally a

"Eenadu" serialised the election manifesto of Telugu Desam Party and campaigned openly against the Congress (I). There were editorials every day appealing to the people to vote against the Congress (I). Corrupt methods of the regional party. Four days before the election, Eenadu published the findings of an opinion poll its staff had conducted in a few selected constituencies. The survey said Telugu Desam would bag between 175 and 225 seats and the Congress (I) between 50 and 60. This was a something like a exit poll and it came true.

CHANGE IN THE CONGRESS (I) LEADERSHIP:

Bhavanam Venkataram, Chief Minister who was the schoolmate of N.T.Rama Rao underestimated the popularity
of the cinema hero and described the smooth gathering as cinema glamour. Venkatram failed to implement the new 20-point programme and was equally unable to contain the individual activities of his colleagues, N. Janardhana Reddy and Kona Prabakara Rao. He thoroughly neglected the drought relief. When the Congress (I) leadership contemplated to conduct the mid-term poll before the spread of N. T. Rama Rao's charisma, he opposed it and wanted time to stabilise his position. This stand, instead of helping the Congress, had given more time N. T. Rama Rao to strengthen his hold on the electorate. The High Command realised this lately and changed the state leadership by installing K. Vijaya Bhaskara Reddy as Chief Minister in September 1982. Vijaya Bhaskara Reddy was confident to contain the popularity of N. T. Rama Rao. He said "We can take N. T. Rama Rao in our stride. Tuluqu Desam is one of those parties which spring up before election and die after elections. It has no political ideology and a temporary phenomenon. We have a party an ideology; we deliver the good life we have infrastructure to cope with difficult situation."

30. Ibid., 10.
31. Hanumanth Rao, V., op. cit., p. 111
tried to steal the wind out of the sails of N.T. Rama Rao by introducing the poll promises of Telugu Desam the free mid-day meal to primary school children and Rs. 2/- a kilo of rice with little success.

The Telugu Desam party determined to mobilize the people of all the classes and wanted to consolidate its position, before the announcement of the election date. In short, his "Chaitanya Rath" travelled 2,500 km and spoke to 1 crore 50 lakhs people within 55 days. The election date was announced, the "Prachara Rath" started in Tirupati on December 16th 1982. This became a historic record as he travelled indomitably for 19 days and worked for 430 hours out of 456 hours.

FAILURE OF TELUGU DESAM’S NEGOTIATIONS WITH OPPOSITION PARTIES:

As the emergence of Telugu Desam was the result of the corrupt rule of the Congress (I) in the state, it mainly attacked the ruling party and decided to join hands with the other opposition parties. In November 1982, five
Opposition parties - BJP, Lok Dal, Janata, Congress (R) and RPI formed as Progressive Democratic Front to oppose the Congress (I) in the Assembly elections. N.T. Rama Rao reserved the idea of negotiations with the other opposition parties until he estimated the strength of his party after touring the State and consulting his supporters. In the early days of December he insisted that his party should have absolute majority on its own to fulfill the promises made by him. He also estimated the strength of his party and his popularity and then started negotiations. Telugu Desam Party had offered to concede 60 seats to the two communist parties and 34 to the People's Democratic front, retaining for itself the remaining 200 seats. The People's Democratic front and the Communists rejected the proposal and criticised the over-ambition of the newly entered regional party which had no mass base, proper organisation and detailed party programme. Later, within the PDF sharp differences arose due to the dominating attitude of the BJP which claimed a lion's share of the seats and it led to the dissolution of the People's Democratic front. However, a new alignment emerged when CPI, CPM, Janata, Lok Dal and RPI for poll adjustments.

under the name of Five Party alliance. Finally N.T. Rama
Rao made poll adjustments with Sanjay Gandhi. Telugu Desam Party contested 282 seats
leaving 51 seats to Congress in the Telangana area.

All the opposition leaders ridiculed N.T. Rama Rao for
his over ambition and squarely threw the responsibility of
breaking the negotiations on him. Even his staunch
supporters feared to face the elections without the
opposition unity. The news media criticised him for his
dogmatic approach. Even the intelligence felt that he had
committed a blunder by spoiling the opposition unity.
Though Telugu Desam appointed the District Convenors
and Yuvasena was active, still it was an unorganised political
party only with nine months history when compared to any
other party. Whenever be the criticism, N.T. Rama Rao was
confident and he reaffirmed his stand which was later
proved correct.

Even after N.T.Rama Rao rejected alliance with the
opposition parties, the exodus unabatedly continued in the
second fortnight of December also. Some of the sitting
Congress (I) M.L.As who were denied Congress (I) tickets
changed their allegiance to Telugu Desam Party or actively worked for the success of Telugu Desam Party. Anam Venkata Reddy, Ex-Minister and his son Rama Narayana Reddy joined Telugu Desam Party. Nallapu Reddy family was strengthened when Anam's group was also joined Telugu Desam Party. Nellore district politics had a new turn to the detriment of the interests of N. Janardhan Reddy who was aspiring to become Chief Minister since 1981. In Guntur District also, the tables were turned in favour of the Telugu Desam Party when B. Mallikarjuna Rao, M.L.A. Burejala and Jalsakanti Nagi Reddy, Ex-M.L.A. Burejala, also joined Telugu Desam Party. Jampigumpala Rama Rao, Samithi President, Burejala also followed suit with 14 Sarpanches. P. Venkababu, Samithi President, Ganapavaram and Ch. Rama Krishna Rao, Samithi President, Nallajari (W.G. Dist) along with their followers joined Telugu Desam Party changing the West Godavari Political wind in favour of it. Noone Satyanarayana, rival Congress (I) leader of Rajahmundry joined Telugu Desam Party along with his Yadava Community supporters. Latchi Reddy with 500 followers and Anjaiah Bowu with 1000 followers joined in Ranga Reddy District. The migration continued mainly in coastal Andhra and Rayalasema till the end of December, though N.T. Rama Rao cancelled his
campaign in these districts so as to concentrate in Telangana area. P. Sundarayya, CPM declared that where the opposition alliance had not put up its candidates, the CPM would support the candidates of Telugu Desam Party. In Siddharram District G. Latchana declared support to Tanga Selvamnayana, Telugu Desam Party Candidate. Wherever the prospects of the opposition and independent candidates were bleak, they withdrew from the contest and supported Telugu Desam Party candidate. Surprisingly, the fishermen and washermen communities, and even Harijans and Birijans strongly supported Telugu Desam by the end of December. They argued that Madam Bandhi did little for them though she was in office for 17 years.

SELECTION OF CANDIDATES FOR ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS 1983:

As was already pointed out no political party was free from factionalism, the nine months old Telugu Desam Party also faced factional fights within the party at the time of selection of candidates for Assembly elections. When the party was started in March, 1982 there was no mass following except the N.T. Rama Rao fans Associations and Clubs which transformed themselves into Yuvamana.

%6. Ibid., p. 317.
N.T. Rama Rao was crippled by the lack of an organised party across the state. The district convenors identified themselves as Representatives of Telugu Desam Party from their districts. They arranged the meetings of N.T. Rama Rao and strived to propagate the party among the masses till October, 1982 from November onwards the exodus started from Congress (I), Janata, Lok Dal and other parties and experienced politicians migrated to Telugu Desam Party and started dominating the party affairs. Mostly Kamma who aspired the post of Chief Minister, changed their allegiance to Telugu Desam Party to support N.T. Rama Rao to make him the first Kamma Chief Minister. At the time of the selection of party candidates collected the bio-data of all the district convenors and others who aspired the party tickets. Though he collected election fund during his tours he knew that it was not sufficient to oppose the Congress (I) and he was in a desperate position to raise funds. For instance, according to Birl Prasad, CPI leader, N.T. Rama Rao changed his party candidate in Razol constituency (East Godavari) at the last minute in favour of person who could raise Rs. one lakh for the publicity campaign as against his predecessor who could work up only Rs. one lakh. He was accused by the leaders of the Congress
(I) that foreign money was following to assist him and MLA
was made pull adjustments with Sanjay Vichar March only
after he was advised by the CIA though the rejected
opposition unity on one protected or the other.

Rama Rao was disillusioned when he discovered from
the bio-data of the aspiring candidates that most of the
party men where light weight and economically not sound to
bear the election expenditure. When the party became
popular, and rich and experienced politicians openly
supported him, he could not resist to give party tickets
to those defectors mainly from Congress (I) and highly
qualified party workers of Telugu Desam Party. The Party
in a Press release stated on December, 1982 that more than
half of the candidates who were given Telugu Desam Party
tickets were graduates and Post-graduates. It stated that
the educational qualifications of 277 candidates out of
207 contesting candidates were available. There were 20
post graduates, 126 graduates, 33 intermediates, 60 high
schools finals, 76 High Schools Education, two Hindi
Pandita, One Telugu Pandit and one Engineering Diploma
holder. Out of 153 graduates and Post-graduates there 20
doctors, 47 lawyers, eight engineers, one D.Phil and one
M.Phil. A maximum number of 13 graduates were recruited in
East Godavari District. The Party nominated 40 Marathi candidates. The average age of Tuluqa Desam Party candidates was 41 as against 50% of the Congress (I) candidates.

Congress (I) contested for all the 294 seats while Tuluq Desam contested for 286 seats and made poll adjustment with Sanjay Vichar Manch of Menaka Gandhi for five seats. Bharatiya Janata Party in the absence of any alliance with the opposition parties, independently contested for 80 seats and a maximum number of 1804 Independent Candidates were in the fray. Majlis contested for five seats in the old city of Hyderabad.

Twenty-six ministers, besides K. Vijaya Bhaskara Reddy, Chief Minister, 35 former Ministers, including T. Anjaiah, former Chief Minister, A. Edward Reddy, Speaker, Chairman of eight Zilla Parishads and of three planning and Development Boards figured among the Congress (I) candidates. Only one MLA Minister, T. Amar Singh was among the 90 sitting members of the Assembly who were denied the party ticket because of their 'poor prospects'. Of the three Ministers from the Upper House N. Janardhan Reddy 37.Ibid., P.318.
(Vemilangiri, Nellore District) and K.Poseya Rao (Secunderabad) contested in the Assembly elections for the first time. C.Jayamohan Rao, the other Minister who was nominated for Narsapur in Medak District contested unsuccessfully from same constituency in the 1978 poll and lost to Ch.Vittal Reddy (CPI). The M.L.C. Ministers who were exempted from the contest were B.Ram Dev, R.Rosaliah, B.Karloini Pulla Reddy and V.Harumantha Rao, K.Vijaya Bhaskara Reddy, Chief Minister contested from Emmiganur in Kurnool District.

After the formation of the Telugu Desam party by N.T.Rama Rao, some of the congress stalwarts like Nandendla Bhaskara Rao, Nallapureddi Sreenivasa Reddy and others defected to Telugu Desam and the process of Defections continued till the time of the election. The disgruntled Congress men who failed to get the Congress tickets, quickly changed their allegiance to Telugu Desam and as many as 80 such candidates were given tickets by Telugu Desam. Due to the influx of the dissident Congress leaders into the Telugu Desam, some of the Telugu Desam party workers who originally, started the party in their areas were denied tickets by N.T.Rama Rao on the ground that they were not able to face the Congress (I) candidates in their
constituencies. Hence some of the Telugu Desam Party workers revolted against the selection of defeated Congress (I) leaders. However, the Telugu Desam fielded more lawyers, doctors, graduates. It is interesting to note that both the Congress (I) and the Telugu Desam were not free from the Subotage of their own party men. Sixteen Congress (I) legislators who contested as independents were expelled from the party for six years along with 85 others who unsuccessfully sought the party ticket but continued in the fray as independents. N.T.Rama Rao contested from two constituencies- Gudivada and Tirupati.

ASSEMBLY ELECTION, 1983 IN ANDHRA PRADESH

The change of four Chief Ministers within a span of four and half years, rampant corruption in the state administration, the contagious dissident activity in the Congress Party, and above all the emergence of Telugu Desam Party under the dynamic leadership of the matinee idol, N.T.Rama Rao had direct impact on the Assembly Elections in the State. Though the High Command considered to have a mid-term poll during the regime of the Chief Minister Bhavanam Venkataram, it discarded the idea to give him some time to stabilize the administration and to minimise the
incident activity. When the influence of the Telugu Desam Party was increased the state leadership was changed and the poll was tentatively fixed in the month of February 1987. However, the High Command feared from the increasing popularity of N.T.Rama Rao and decided not to give him enough time to tour the entire State. It is proposed the election to January 5, 1987 and geared the State and Central machinery to cope up with the early elections.

HECTIC ACTIVITY:

All political parties started hectic activity and an unexpected realignment of opposition parties in the wake of the disintegration of the progressive Democratic Front on one side and the abortive Communist Telugu Desam Party negotiations on the other, gave birth to a new five-party alliance on December 4, 1982. The new alliance which comprises CPI, CPM, Janata, Lok Dal and RPI announced a list of 17A constituencies where the five parties fielded their candidates. Announcing the formation of the alliance G.Latchamma (LD), P.Gundeavva (CPM), N.Giriprasad (CPI), and Tirupatlaiah (RPI) stated that they had separately and
collectively negotiated with Telugu Desam Party with the
main objective of defeating the Congress (I) in vain.

P. Babul Reddy, Janata leader, declare that the alliance
members were free to enter into 'bilateral agreement'
with other opposition parties, including Telugu Desam and
Bharathiya Janata Party, exclusive of 176 seats announced.

On January 5, 1983 Andhra Pradesh went to poll, that
day was a historically event in the political history of
Andhra Pradesh. That day put an end to the rule of the
Congress (I). N.T. Rama Rao put forth two alternatives
before the people. They were whether to save the
self respect and decide the future of the people themselves
or to trample Telugu prestige and honour under the iron
gate of the Delhi Directors.

People opted for the first alternative by giving their
verdict in favour of the Telugu Desam Party.

Table 1:

Brief statistics of the Andhra Pradesh voters

1983, JANUARY 5, ELECTORAL RESULTS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total No. of Voters</th>
<th>Polled votes/ Voters</th>
<th>Male valid votes</th>
<th>Female valid votes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3,16,20,356</td>
<td>2,10,34,658</td>
<td>1,55,25,513</td>
<td>1,58,47,290</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Simplon-Dewan mandate secured by different parties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>R.D.P.</th>
<th>CONG.I</th>
<th>C.P.I.</th>
<th>C.P.M.</th>
<th>R.J.P.</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>70.73</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>70.59</td>
<td>572</td>
<td>5.90</td>
<td>570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>664</td>
<td>5.91</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>25.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.72%</td>
<td>50.76%</td>
<td>7.91%</td>
<td>2.07%</td>
<td>7.76%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Table - II**

**Seats secured by the different Parties**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Party</th>
<th>Seats contested</th>
<th>Seats won</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Congress (I) (including Sanjayya vichar March)</td>
<td>794</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telugu Desam Party (including Sanjayya vichar March)</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communist party of India (Marxist) (Janata)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communis party of India (Marxist) (Janata)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bharatiya Janatha party</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lokdhol</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congress (I)</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naxil</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communist party of India (M.L)</td>
<td>805</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence</td>
<td></td>
<td>294</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tabled indicates the thumping majority of Telugu Desam Party and downward slide in Congress (I) performance in 1983 Assembly Elections. Telugu Desam Party secured 202 (including Sanjay Vichar Manch) seats out of 293 declared (Election in Nandapalli constituency Countermanded) while the strength of the Congress (I) dwindled to meagre 60 as against 294 before the election. It emerged as the main opposition party in the Assembly. Sanjay Vichar Manch of Morada Gandhi which made pull adjustment with Telugu Desam captured four seats in Telangana area. The members of the Five Party Alliance contested for 157 seats and won only 10 seats as follows: CPM-5, CPI-4, Janatha-1, Lok Dal and RPI (K) zero. Bharatiya Janatha Party and Congress (J) contested for 80 seats each separately and BJP won 3 seats whereas Congress (J) secured only one seat. Majlis contested for five seats in the old city of Hyderabad and bagged all the five seats as against their three seats in 1978. Congress (I) contested for nine seats and failed to secure one. As many as 905 Independents which included the rival Congress (I) and Telugu Desam candidates contested and only two of them were successful.

N.T.Rama Rao was elected both from Tirupati and Gudiyada with a thumping majority and later he resigned Tirupati seat.
REGION-WISE PERFORMANCE

There was a powerful swing in favour of Telugu Desam. The Party's impact, particularly on the Coastal belt from Nellore district to Srikakulam district, which comprised 134 constituencies was spectacular. Here the Telugu Desam Party bagged 119 seats out of 134. Congress (I) bagged 9, BJP 1, CPI Congress robins 4. In the Rayalaseema district, village factionalism and Congress (I) in-fighting helped the Telugu Desam. In the Telangana region Telugu Desam Party and Congress (I) bagged, 43 seats each.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Total Seats</th>
<th>Votes %</th>
<th>Polled</th>
<th>Seats Won</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andhra</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>37.1</td>
<td>30.80</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rayalaseema</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>35.42</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telangana</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>36.26</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>38.3</td>
<td>33.56</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 indicates the downward slide in Congress (I) performance as compared to 1978 assembly elections.

The performance of Congress (I) in 1983 in the reserved constituencies, when analysed, in the context of our earlier data regarding the support structure of Congress (I), shows poor performance. The reserved constituency offers the necessary socio-economic base for the ruling party to derive necessary support from the socially, economically and educationally backward voters.

The new infant political party assumed office on 9th January 1983. The swearing in or oath-taking ceremony of the party leader N.T. Rama Rao and his followers was conducted amidst the mammoth gathering of the people. This was the strange and dynamic method of enticing the public by creating the opinion that the government under the leadership of Telugu Desam Party ensures and fulfills the election promises. This opened new vistas in the annals of the political history of Andhra Pradesh. No doubt the people voted for the Telugu Desam Party to power in the hope that it will do something better than the Congress Government. It was truly an epic battle between Indira Gandhi's 97 years old Congress Party and N.T. Rama Rao’s nine-month old Telugu Desam Party.
FORMATION OF THE MINISTRY:

Nandamuri Taraka Rama Rao was unanimously elected as leader of the Kollu Deseam Legislature Party of January 8, 1983. He maintained strict secrecy regarding the selection of the ministers till they sworn in on the next day. The swearing in ceremony was openly arranged for the first time in Lal Bhadur Stadium. A new era of regional party rule began in the State with Rama Rao sworn in as the tenth Chief Minister at 11 a.m. on January 7, 1983. The compact team chosen by Rama Rao comprises 10 cabinet Ministers and five Ministers of state. Except three Ministers N. Bhashkara Rao, N. Srinivasulu Reddy and P. Mahendranath, the rest including the Chief Minister are new to administration and some of them are newly even to politics. Only five among 15 members had been MLAs earlier. Rama Rao preferred young and educated newcomers as ministers instead of seasoned politicians.

Out of 15 ministers including the Chief Minister, even belong to Andhra area, two to Rayalaseema and six to Telangana. The ratio 3:2 has been maintained in respect of Andhra (including Rayalaseema) and Telangana according to

Gentlemen's agreement. Care has been taken to represent all castes in the small ministry as there are four Reddis, two Kammams including Rama Rao, two Harijans, one Muslim, one Brahmin, one Kapu, one Kshatriya and three backward class Ministers. One woman member Kum. Pratibha Bharati is included in the Ministry.

MOTIVATION

The Emergence of Telugu Desam Party is more a result of frequent changes in chief Ministers of the State and during Mrs. Indira Gandhi's period and humiliating treatment meted out to some of the State Congress (I) leaders including a Chief Minister by Central authority and persons exercising extra-constitutional authority. A few chance happenings in the form of treatment to state leaders affecting their self-respect in particular and the respect of Andhras in General have primarily converged into creation of a party with no solid ideological backing right from the beginning. The ideology was tagged on later to the party since any party's existence without any ideology is like playing 'Hamlet' without prince Hamlet.
Constitutionally, the Telugu Desam Party harps on the delicate balance between the various organs of the state power, the balance between the Centre and the States, the safeguards provided against the arbitrary exercise of authority and against violation of the balance between the Centre and State all had to be maintained with zeal and care.

The constitution was the fruit and consummation of long years of bitter and heroic struggle against the British.

The Telugu Desam Party asserts that the constitution was a testament to the political wisdom, foresight, maturity of judgement, statesmanship and scrupulous adherence to the norms of the norms of constitutional action and behaviour. "Our firm commitment to the unity, integrity and solidarity of the nation, and our unswerving loyalty to the principles of democracy, secularism, socialism and co-operative federalism can ensure its survival and success."

41. As reiterated by Dr. A.K. Nandy. He further proclaims that "it ought to be, the solemn duty of every one of us, of every group, association and segment of

society, of every authority, to be aware of the sacredness of the constitution and pledge eternal vigilance in its defense and preservation."

The social and economic motivation of the party is very much tilted in favor of the downtrodden and the underdone. The party believes that it will strive to end the socio-economic disparities and give real meaning to the objectives of the constitution. It will spare no efforts to protect Harijans, Girijans and other poor people and the minorities.

It promises to live up to the spirit of the constitution by eliminating disparities, and wiping out poverty, illiteracy and ignorance. The political catch word is "We will not rest until poverty is eradicated, social justice is achieved and an egalitarian society is ushered in". In particular, N.K. Karanpat stresses that people of all castes and creeds had fought for India's independence, but only a few seemed to have secured the resultant benefits. "The fruits of independence have to be shared by all." He is committed to an egalitarian society, free from caste and communal consideration and he asserts

42. Ibid., p.1.
44. The Hindu, (Madras), 3-1-1983, p.3.
that every person should follow his dharma and serve the people. "Person having yajna varnam 45 is a dhanin", he said pointing out that "It was sage Vasishth, a 46 bishnuvada, who gave the Brihati samhita". Rama Rao said caste and community differences were 'man sad', people should think such differences and must work for the welfare of society and not for narrow sectarian ends.

Declaring the denigration of politics in the country, he said it had become so dark and rather that the purpose of freedom struggle by great men like Mahatma Gandhi, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, Alluri Seetarama Raju, Bhagat Singh and others seemed a vain effort. "Have the fruits of freedom reached the poorest of the poor even after 40 years of independence?" he asks.

He further asserts that the Telugu Desam Party Government policy is to help the poorest of the poorest and not the rich. Since 1983 the Telugu Desam Party has won five elections both local and by elections, he says, adding the success of Telugu Desam Party means that the poor people in

45. Ibid., p.3.
46. Ibid., p.3.
47. New Times, (Hyderabad), 11-2-1988, p.1
the State are happy with the ruling party. "To lead a clean life dedicated to the cause of people", he says, "I have given up everything and I am for a clean and spotless public life."

The motivation, the social and economic objectives of the Telugu Desam Party are vouched for by leaders of other states. The Karnataka Chief Minister Ramakrishna Hegde, Assam Chief Minister Prafullakuma Mahanta are overheded by the socio-economic programmes taken up by the Telugu Desam Party and they in turn have made their intentions known to take a leaf from this party to be initiated and implemented in their states.

MANIFESTO OF TELUGU DESAM

CLEAN ADMINISTRATION:

"Telugu Desam", if voted to power, will remove, lock, stock and barrel, the discredited culture created by the Congress(I) and provide a clean and efficient administration. It will recognize, honour and encourage honest officials and will see that a real democratic system is fostered.

48. The Hindu, (Madras), 17-1-1986, p.3.
49. Ibid., p.3.
PRIDE OF PLACE TO TELUGU LANGUAGE:

Telugu language will be given its pride of place. Telugu will be made the official language right up to the Secretariat level. It will be made the medium of instruction at the University level too. "Telugu Desam" will strive hard to restore the lost glory of Telugu and do everything for the enrichment of the Telugu language. At the same time, "Telugu Desam" will encourage and protect the language and culture of people from other states.

AID TO FARMERS:

Agriculture is the main occupation of a vast majority of people in the State. But, presently it is in a very sorry state. Farmers are not getting remunerative prices though cost inputs have been going up. With the result, farmers are on the verge of bankruptcy. Small and marginal farmers are migrating to urban areas for sheer survival. Artisans are not able to eke out a living and are just languishing. "Telugu Desam" if voted to power, will guarantee remunerative prices for farmers, and reasonable minimum wages for agricultural labourers. Similarly profitable avenues will be created for the upliftment of artisans. Loopholes in the Land Ceiling Act will be
planned and land reforms effectively implemented so that the landless may be benefited.

VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT:

Small and cottage industries will be promoted. Projects will be taken up for all round development of the village. Walking long distances for a pot of potable water will be a thing of the past. Measures will be taken so that chronically drought-affected regions of the State, especially Rayalaseema are relieved of this problem. Long-term projects will be taken up for counteracting the vagaries of nature.

RURAL ELECTRIFICATION:

Andhra Pradesh has ample scope for power generation. Despite this, ten thousand villages are still engulfed by total darkness. 'Telugu Deeam' will take steps for electrification of all the villages.

MORE POWERS FOR PANChAYAT RAj INSTITUTIONS:

If developmental works are to be executed successfully, Panchayat Raj institutions and local bodies should work well. For this, they should be vested with
ished and provided with enough funds. By decentralisation of power and authority, the "Telugu Dream" will strengthen democracy at the grassroot level.

BASIC CHANGES IN EDUCATION SYSTEM

The present educational system is only contributing to more unemployment. The chaos and confusion that are now prevailing in all the educational institutions right from the primary school to the University level will be removed. "Telugu Dream" will see that bright students will not put a stop to their education because of their poor economic conditions. Importance will be given to vocational and technical education so that they generate self-employment opportunities. Uniform curricula will be framed for all the Universities in the State. Strict measures will be taken to set right the conditions in Universities which are plagued by partiality, anarchy and indiscipline. Capitalism system of education will be ended and only merit will be given preference. Scholarships will be liberally extended to students belonging to scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, backward classes and economically weaker sections.

S.J. George Mathew, *Shift in Indian Politics*, (Concept Publishers, New Delhi, 1983), P.106.
MID-DAY MEAL SCHEME:

Mid-day meal scheme was originally conceived by 'TELUGU DEEMI' with a view to provide nutritious food to the poor children in the Primary Schools. But when the ruling party borrowed this idea to be used as an election gimmick and tried to implement it in haste, many loopholes crept in. 'TELUGU DEEMI' will evolve a scientific system to implement the Mid-day Meal Scheme quite effectively and also successfully.

RAPID INDUSTRIALISATION OF THE STATE:

Andhra Pradesh is accorded a stepmotherly treatment by the centre with regard to industrial development. In spite of having abundant natural resources, the present rulers have turned a Nelson's eye on this state. As a result of the callous attitude of the ruling party, the Vizag Steel Plant which Telugu secured by sacrificing their lives is still in an infant stage. The Mangalagiri tyre factory is yet to take shape even on paper. Though innumerable promises have been made for the industrialisation of the backward regions, nothing has been done so far. They have turned out only to be a lip service.
If people vote Telugu Desam to power, it would take steps for the speedy execution of all these major projects. It would ensure rapid industrialisation of the state. It would fight for the due share of industries and create and environment which would attract investors living in other States as well as abroad. Red-tapism and inefficiency among the public sector undertakings would be eliminated. Taking into account the local conditions and the cost of living, "Telugu Desam" would try to raise the wages of industrial workers. Telugu Desam would take all the measures for the welfare of the workers who occupy a significant place in the economic development of the country.

MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES:

"Telugu Desam" is determined to provide medical and health benefits to all sections of the people. It would raise the budget allocations for medical and health services and see that there is no shortage of man power nor scarcity of equipment in the Primary Health Centres, Taluk and District hospitals. It will attach importance for providing modern equipment and raising the bed strength in hospitals.
To contain population explosion, 'Telugu Desam' will adopt persuasive methods for accepting family planning as a way of life instead of compulsion measures.

REFORMING THE POLICE FORCE:

The police force in Andhra Pradesh is very much discredited under the Congress rule. Law and order is fast deteriorating. 'Telugu Desam' will cleanse the police force the moment it comes to power. Obstacles faced by honest officials in the discharge of their duties will be removed. It will see that there is no scope for political interference in the functioning of the Police. It will look after the welfare of the Police and provide modern equipment for the efficient performance of their duties. It will reorganize the entire police force in such a manner that the activities of the anti-social elements will be ruthlessly curbed and people will repossess confidence in the police department.

TIMELY COMPLETION OF PROJECTS:

Construction and completion of irrigation projects have progressed at a snail's pace under the Congress
Governments. Projects initiated 25 years back are yet to be completed. Other states were able to complete their projects by bringing pressure on the centre and by getting aid from World Bank and other agencies. But the Congress (I) Government exhibited callous negligence in this regard which is unpardonable. Though people in Royalasseema have been making a demand for decades for the diversion of the Krishna waters for their parched lands, nothing has been done so far for their benefit. If 'Velugu Dusam' wins the elections it would hasten the process of construction of Srisailam canals.

WOMEN'S WELFARE

"Velugu Dusam" will see that women's welfare does not remain a mere slogan. It will guarantee their legitimate rights. It condemns the feudal culture which only views women as objects of pleasure. It would initiate action for equal share for daughters in the paternal property along with the sons. It would establish a separate University for women and would ensure a respectable place for women in the society. The evil practice of dowry will curbed.
ENCOURAGEMENT TO YOUTH:

'Telugu Desam' will give special importance to youth -- the hope of future India. It will prepare projects which will channelise abundant energies of the youth for constructive activities. It will do its best to relieve the youth from the terrors of unemployment. At a beginning, it would take up projects which would ensure one job per family. It will introduce self-employment scheme in villages to the enthusiastic youth and artisans.

The party will promote sports and promising sportsmen will be given scholarship. Provision for employment of sports men and women in educational institutions will be made. Every district will have a stadium. Promotion of games and sports in villages will be given priority.

CENTRE-STATE RELATIONS:

'Telugu Desam' will work according to the spirit of the federal character of the Constitution which ensures greater autonomy to the States. 'Telugu Desam' will oppose Delhi rulers imposing their decisions on Andhra Pradesh. Only defence, foreign affairs, currency and communications should be under the purview of the Central government.
'Telugu Desam' believe that Centre-State relations are interdependent and a strong Centre emerges only when States enjoy more powers. 'Telugu Desam' after coming to power, would establish a High-power Committee to go into the question of Centre-State Relations including clear demarcation of powers and to suggest necessary constitutional amendments, if necessary.

DEDICATION TO DEMOCRACY:

'Telugu Desam' will fight for the protection of democracy. It will uphold moral values, democratic traditions, and see that all the citizens of the fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution. It will fight for the withdrawal of black legislations such as NIA and ESMA. 'Telugu Desam' feels that no person should hold two posts except under unavoidable circumstances.

AUTONOMY FOR RADIO AND TV:

It is the firm belief of the party that Doordarshan and All India Radio should be autonomous. Till such time 'Telugu Desam' demands that these two instruments of mass

communication should be handed over to their respective states. 'Telugu Desam' will strive for the establishment of more centres of AIR and Doordarshan. 'Telugu Desam' strongly oppose the present tendency of this media in distorting the facts contrary to public opinion and to suit the interest of the ruling party at the centre.

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

'Telugu Desam' is totally committed to the freedom of the press, and it gives a solemn assurance to the Fourth Estate that it will not come in the way of free and fearless functioning of the press under any circumstances. Further, the party will strive to bring an amendment to the Constitution to make Press Freedom as a fundamental right.

INDEPENDENCE OF JUDICIARY

'Telugu Desam' will do its best for the elevation of judiciary to a higher plane. It will not interfere in appointment, promotion and transfer of judges. It will strive for cordial relations between the executive and the judiciary.

53, ibid., p.129.
ELECTORAL REFORMS:

'Telugu Desam', within its own purview will strive for comprehensive electoral reforms. The 'Telugu Desam' feels that the present trend, where money-power alone wins the elections should go. The government should bear the expenses of electioneering of the candidates so that honest candidates can contest and win. It also demands the audit of the election expenses of all the parties by the Election Commission. The People's Representation Act should be so amended that the party in power will not commit fraud against the people and the electorate. Elections should not be postponed for more than three months and elections should not also be preponed.

ANTI DEFECTION BILL:

Political defections have reached ominous proportions. 'Telugu Desam' firmly opposes the defection game, which is why it has insisted on MLA's wishing to join 'Telugu Desam' that they have to resign their elective posts first and only then join the party. This healthy precedent should be followed by an enactment whereby membership of the legislative bodies automatically gets canceled, the moment the concerned person defects. With a view to set an
example that 'Telugu Desam' practices what it preaches, the party is asking its candidates to take an oath in public that they would resign their elective posts in the event of their joining other parties in future.

CURB ON GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE:

'Telugu Desam' will take effective steps to reduce government expenditure at executive level. It will also see that public money is not squandered on ministerial visits and official extravagance. Many government corporations and boards which do not serve any purpose and which have become white elephants will be abolished.

A KILOGRAM OF RICE FOR RUPEES 2.5

'Telugu Desam' will strengthen the public distribution system and will see that the essential commodities are made available to the people at very reasonable rates. It is the firm resolve of 'Telugu Desam' to ensure sale of a 54 kilogram of rice for rupees two.

PRIORITY TO HOUSING:

'Telugu Desam' will take up a massive house construction programme all over the State, both in the

54. Rama Rao, N.T., Manifesto of Telugu Desam. (Director, Information and public Relations, Hyderabad, 1983), p.3.
villages and in the villages, special housing schemes will be taken up for weaker sections and industrial and agricultural labourers. Similarly, 'Telugu Desam' will launch a project by which every government employee will own a house by the time he reaches the age of fifty.

SECULARISM

'Telugu Desam' will observe secularism enshrined in our Constitution in letter and spirit. It will take special care with regard to minorities and see that all the privileges guaranteed by the Constitution are provided to them. It will discuss with educationists and take measures for the promotion of Urdu language. 'Telugu Desam' will ensure that all those who live in the state enjoy equal rights, privileges and opportunities irrespective of their caste, religion or state of origin.

DEVELOPMENT OF BACKWARD CLASSES

It is the firm belief of the party that people belonging to backward classes, who have been oppressed for centuries should draw special attention from the government. 'Telugu Desam' will see that the privileges guaranteed by the Constitution with regard to education,
employment, etc., are extended to them in practice. 'Telugu Desam' will protect the Harijans, the Tribals, and other down-trodden sections of the society from the atrocities of the dominant castes and official excesses. Land revenue system will be amended to benefit the Toddy-tappers. It will also take measures for the development of fisheries and initiate a comprehensive package deal for the upliftment of fishermen. Finance will be made available to rickshaw pullers for the purchase of rickshaws.

AID TO HANDBOON INDUSTRY:

'Telugu Desam' will take all measures to strengthen and develop the cooperative movement in handloom sector which is playing a vital role in rural economy by providing the cotton yarn and establishing the necessary infrastructure to market their products.

St. (ibid.), p. 131.