CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION: TRENDS AND FUTURE
OF THE TELUGU DESAM PARTY
The origin of the democratic tradition belong to the history of the old world, but the first extensive practical application of the theory was worked out in the New. Like many ideas which have later won wide acceptance, democracy was originally the hope of the small numbers of radical thinkers whose views were anathema to the established political and religious authorities. The Greeks gave the world the limited democracy of their city-states.

The political parties facilitate the smoother functioning of democracy. The people are usually attracted to the study of political parties for one or both of the reasons. The first and the foremost is to gain some useful knowledge about an important political institution and in the second place to satisfy an intellectual curiosity. The parties are intriguing phenomena. They have so many aspects and the proper understanding of them requires an investigation of many possible relationships.

The political parties are important political institutions. People who want to bring about social and political change, along with those who prefer to maintain the social and political status quo, have often seen
parties as a means to promote or frustrate change. Citizens, party leaders and candidates all engage in party activities. For decades parties have been perceived by citizens generally as necessary and valuable political institutions. Indeed, there are some researchers who argue that it is impossible to conceive of a democratically functioning political system without parties.

The political party is a creature of modern and modernizing political systems. Wherever the political party has emerged it appears to perform some common functions in a wide variety of political systems at various stages of social, political, and economic development. Whether in a free society or under a totalitarian regime, the organization called the party is expected to organize public opinion and to communicate demands to the centre of governmental power and decision. Somehow too the party must articulate to its followers the concept and meaning of the broader community even if the aim of the party leadership is to modify profoundly or even to destroy the broader community and replace it with something.
Political party emerges whenever the activities of a political system reach a certain degree of complexity, or whenever the notion of political power comes to include the idea that the mass public must participate or be controlled. Thus, one might argue that, just as bureaucracy emerged when public administration could no longer be adequately handled in the prince's household, the political party materialized when the tasks of recruiting political leadership and making public policy could no longer be handled by a small coterie of men unconcerned with public sentiments. The emergence of a political party clearly implies that the masses must be taken into account by the political elite, either out of a commitment to the ideological notion that the masses have a right to participate in the determination of public policy or the selection of leadership or out of the realization that even a rigidly dictatorial elite must find the organizational means of assuring stable conformance and control.

It is customary to view parties as institutions or organization for the expression of social and economic interests and as mechanisms involved in both the expression and the management of conflict. The literature on parties, assumes that the political system in which parties operate
is accepted by most of the population as legitimate, that the public is loyal to the national state and that there are more or less accepted relationships between political participants and the state and among the participants themselves.

The dominant elite may grant individuals and groups demanding political participation on rights of full participation either through existing parties or through newly formed parties. Among well-established democracies, this is the typical response. Precisely how new participant groups are absorbed is conditioned very much by whether the governing party, like the Indian Congress party an electoral instrument. If the governing party is ideologically oriented, that is, if it is concerned with restructuring the values and behaviour of its members and its citizens, then it often restricts its membership to those who share a well-defined outlook. Alternatively, when the party's leadership is primarily concerned with winning elections, its programme is likely to be pragmatic and it is likely to modify its programme to attract the largest number of people. New participation demands are thus more readily handled by electorally oriented rather
than ideologically oriented political parties. Among some
democratic parties the desire for electoral victory is so
great that ideological commitments will be reduced in order
to achieve victory.

Some parties are themselves not committed to the
maintenance of representative government but participate in
competitive politics only in order to overthrow the system.
Under such circumstances a fundamental issue in many
representative governments is whether to admit non-
democratic parties into government (in coalitions, for
example) with a high risk that the system may be subverted,
or deny them the opportunity for sharing or influencing
power, thereby ensuring that such groups will continue to
remain alienated and that they will strengthen their
efforts to convince supporters that the system does not
work precisely because it does not permit them to share
power. The task of establishing a sense of legitimacy for a
competitive party system is still further complicated by
the general lack of cohesion found in most newly
established party governments.

The fundamental issue is not whether government wins
popular support, but whether legitimacy with respect to the
system is established. After all, an unpopular government hold power in a system widely accepted by the populace as legitimate. Alternatively, a government may be so concerned with its own popularity that it fails to take measures to make the system itself legitimate. A charismatic leader may successfully retain popular support but fail to take steps to institutionalize a new political system.

The state politics operate within the constitutional framework provided by the framers of the Indian Constitution. They provide an almost identical framework for all the states and set up a strong centre which occupies a pre-eminent position. The States are in themselves both a "whole" and a "part" both an individual political person and a member of a bigger political family, and are faced with the challenge of right ordering of loyalties. The Indian political system is a three tier system, with the state standing in between the Centre and the local government. The interlocked mechanism of state politics which resembles a web of inter-growth between the Union and the local tiers, with the former by the large "operating into" and the latter tending to "open out" to it, particularly since the establishment of Panchayat Raj
at the grassroot level. Both the centripetal forces such as planning and one party dominance and the centrifugal forces like democratic decentralization, regionalism, linguisim and the like influence the State politics. The combination of these two types of forces imparts an element of competitiveness and bargaining in Indian politics.

Though it has been observed that the State politics in various units of India operates differently and serves dissimilar purposes in the various parts of the country, yet there are some distinct feature in the Indian politics. India is wedded to a parliamentary set up. India is considered as the largest parliamentary democracy of the world in which the adults have been granted suffrage. The successful participation of the voters in different elections have proved beyond doubt that Indian democracy is alive.

The extension of the franchise has also led to the emergence of new groups of society and the new leadership. These new groups which enjoyed political leadership during the days of nationalist movement. In contrast to the centre, where single party (Congress has dominated the scene so far, without having to face an effective opposition, the State politics has witnessed greater
competitive political structure. In a number of states after 1967, the Congress was ousted from power or was reduced to a precarious majority and had to face hostile opposition.

Factionalism has been another prominent feature of State politics in India. Though factionalism prevails amongst all the political parties, it had been deeply-rooted in the Congress party since decades. The main cause of this factionalism has been the ambitions of leaders to enjoy the fruits of power and privileges. The factionalism has always demonstrated in between the organisational wing and the governmental wing.

Another peculiar feature of the state politics in India has been its virtual segmented character. The happenings in one State usually do not produce any impact on the others. Sometimes these happenings have only a local effect and do not produce any repercussion even in other districts of the same State.

REGIONAL PARTIES

Regionalism in India found formal expression through the regional political parties. Regional parties are
therefore not a new or unexpected feature of the Indian polity. They existed even before independence. As the Congress declined, split and tended to degenerate into a personality cult, regional parties have grown in strength and in numbers. An equally important reason for their growth has been the absence of any viable national alternative.

The political party structure in India exhibits a wide measure of heterogeneity and the major political parties have no agreed view on Centre-State-Relationship in India. The Party system in the country has not been able to evolve a measure of consensus which could help the smooth operation of the federal system. Rather, the area of disagreement among the political parties has been enormously widened with the gradual decline of the one-party-dominant system. The sharp differences between the Congress and the non-Congress parties have had their powerful impact upon Centre-State relations. For instance, while the Congress believes in a powerful centre, the Communists, on the other hand, have demanded more rights for the States and have supported the Opposition's call for regional autonomy. Further, the formation of multi-party

2.Hanerjee,K., "Regional Political Parties and Centre State Relations", Focus, (The Secretariat of the Kerala Legislature, Trivandrum, 1987), P.5.
coalition governments have made the ordinary operation of the Centre-State relations extremely difficult because of the resulting fluidity and political instability at the State level. With the powerful entry of the regional political parties on the political scene after 1967 the problems in Centre-State relations have greatly increased. There have been powerful manifestations of regional pulls and pressures which have generated conflicting demands on the centre. In the post of 1947 era regional pulls had manifested themselves more in the form of interstate disputes like inter-state river disputes inter-state border disputes, disputes on the location of big industrial projects and the like. But conflicts in the post-1967 era have taken the form of direct confrontation between the Centre and the States. The federal conflicts, which existed in the pre-1967 era in subdued form, came out in the open after 1967. The non-Congress governments, and particularly those run by regional parties, did not make any secret of their anti-Congress bias and some of them came to develop a pronounced anti-Centre posture.

The changes in the dynamics of the political processes in the country after the Fourth General Elections in 1967, 3.Ibid., p.9.
particularly with the failure of the national parties in several states and the offshoot of regional parties to fill up the vacuum, have led to the development of a new feature of regionalisation of Indian politics. The all-India monolithic hegemony of the Congress has broken down and the formation of new alignments have resulted in ushering in a transitional phase in the Indian polity. The excessive preoccupation of the Congress with North India had led to the party’s virtual withdrawal from the political arena in South India. The national parties have made no impact in the north east. The tribals of the north eastern states do not identify themselves with the Congress or any other national party. They have empathized with regional parties. The predominant role of a number of ethnic regional organisations in the entire North-eastern States is a testimony to it. Even certain other national parties like the Janata and the CPM having failed at the national level came to consolidate their hold in some particular regions like Karnataka, West Bengal and Tripura. Thus with these changes a variety of new political arrangements have emerged and they have strengthened the regional level of the federal structure.
often joined hands with the regional parties at the time of elections either for getting seats or for the purpose of securing support for some legislations at the parliamentary level. This regionalism is not incompatible with nationalism. Regional identity and autonomy can coexist with national unity and development. India as 'Union States' needs both the autonomy of states and the unity of the nation. In a federal polity it is essential that the Centre and the States equally make their respective contributions within the framework of the Constitution for the progress and prosperity of the nation.

The name Telugu Desam Party on the face of it appears to be regional. However, when one looks closely into the multitude of symbolic imageries with which Nandamuri Taraka Rama Rao bombarded the electorate in the January 1983 elections in Andhra Pradesh, one is astonished to find the extent to which these imageries recall the composite culture which is the heritage of India. There is nothing regional in the symbolic imagery employed by the new-found Telugu Desam Party in the recent Andhra Pradesh Assembly elections. The symbols representing the just ruler and the good Government taken from the roles played by N.T.Rama Rao 4, Ibid., P.17.
Regionalism in Indian Politics has generally been
condemned as something incompatible with India's unity and
integrity. It cannot be denied that most of the regional
parties have drawn their sustenance from parochial forces
and for which they have been considered as antagonistic to
the demands of modernization and secularization. They are
regarded as anti-system and anti-federal. The Congress
central leadership has always been critical of the regional
parties for allegedly encouraging fissiparous tendencies
and divisive forces. But the apprehensions and contentions
of the Congress party would not stand scrutiny when
examined in the light of actual facts. All regional
parties do not harbour secessionist or subversive
tendencies. Regional parties like the AIADMK and the
National conference have stood the test of time by their
uninterrupted rule in Tamil Nadu and Jammu and Kashmir
respectively. With all their limitations, the achievements
of the regional parties, including those of the Telugu
Desam and Kranti Ranga, have been no less significant. The
performance of parties like the CPM based in West Bengal
and Tripura, and of the Janata Party in Karnataka has also
been commendable. It would therefore be unrealistic to
ignore their relevance and useful role in the existing
system of governance. The Congress party at the Centre has
often joined hands with the regional parties at the time of elections either for getting seats or for the purpose of securing support for some legislations at the parliamentary level. Thus regionalism is not incompatible with nationalism. Regional identity and autonomy can coexist with national unity and development. India as 'Union States' needs both the autonomy of states and the unity of the nation. In a federal polity it is essential that the Centre and the States equally make their respective contributions within the framework of the Constitution for the progress and prosperity of the nation.

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4.Ibid., P.17.
in moving and projected by implication as promises to the electorate of Andhra Pradesh are emotionally and culturally very much an integral part of the idiom and imagery common to the Hindi belt. The Telugu Desam movement, in other words, very different from the DMK in Tamil Nadu which was and still is culturally a more fundamental kind of breakaway movement and has been, at least, in phases, irredentist in its inclinations. 5

However the N.T. Rama Rao personality is important for understanding the specifics of the situation. It may be recalled that N.T. Rama Rao was at the height of his film career and fame when he formed the Telugu Desam Party. He had acted in more than 500 films and had always preferred to play mythological roles portraying Gods and Goodness. He is a household name in every nook and corner of Andhra Pradesh. He is reputedly a wealthy man, well-known for his strict discipline and capacity for hard work in the 35 years of his film career. Many times during the campaign he himself answered this question thus:

I did not come here for money. I did not come here for status and prestige. I enjoyed all this and more. I

5 George Mathew, *Shift In Indian Politics*, (Concept Publishers, New Delhi, 1984), p. 129.
came here as a manjum to follow you. I have earned money, I have status. And all because you gave it to me.

He repeatedly reiterated that he owes his wealth, fame and triumphs to the people and gives the impression of being obsessed with the idea that he must reciprocate and serve the Telugu people in their hour of darkness. This need of the hour is articulated in the introduction to the Telugu Desam Party Manifesto as follows:

The 35 year Congress misrule has created such a mess that the Telugus have to hang their heads in shame. Despite overwhelming majority of the ruling party in the State Assembly, political instability has become the order of the day. The enthronement of four and dethronement of three Chief Ministers within a span of five years is an indication of the sorry state of affairs. The elected representatives of the people have become mere pawns. They have neither the power to elect their leader nor to impeach him. Nor is all well with the opposition which are hopelessly divided leaving the field free for the Congress (I) to rule the roost. There is no limit to the injustices meted out to the people of the State. It is because of this

historical necessity 'Telugu Desam' has come into existence in Andhra Pradesh.

The election Campaign was a colourful and fulfilled affair. The grim questions about the non-performance of successive Congress governments were articulated through innuendos, projective implications and by analogous reference to India's rich pantheon of heroes since mythological times-kings, politicians, saints who sacrificed their all for the common man and in turn were cherished by him as models for all time to come. Slogans like Garib has, secularism or national integration, and so on where not couched in abstract terms smacking of western ideological inheritances, but it was emphasised that these radical ideas were central to the cultural inheritance of India. And N.T.Rama Rao reminded the electorate that he had played these roles for their entertainment during the last so many decades, and that if elected he would like to activate these noble ideas, emotions and perspectives in the governance of the State.

The pamphlets and life-size posters projected imagery which by implication promised good and clean government. One booklet was released which was priced and widely

/George Mathew, op.cit, P.131.
distributed. It is produced in colour and shows N. T. Rama Rao with folded hands on the backcover with the inscription "Vijayasarathi" - victorious leader of Telugu Dream. The booklet consists of seven pictures of mythological and historical roles which N. T. Rama Rao has played. In between the portraits are brief write-ups characterising these roles. The pictures are those of N. T. Rama Rao in the role of Krishna, Yama, Dhishka, Veera Bramendra Swamy, Sri Krishna Devoraya, Sri Rama, and Draupada Nayade in that order. It can be seen that all-India mythological figures, together with more recent and local saints and beloved kings and rulers depicted in these pictures. The brief write-ups on these figures convey selective messages about them. Lord Krishna (incarnation of Vishnu) worshipped in several worlds, appeared on this earth as protector of the innocent and destroyer of the wicked when "the earth was burdened with sin and the elements were losing their rhythm." He is the same Krishna who is absent in the political arena, who guided the Pandavas, and helped justice and destroyed evil. Krishna's role vis-a-vis the plight of Draupadi and his role in giving shelter to 16,000 young women who were being

8. Ibid., p.132.
9. Ibid., p.133.
persecuted by the Raj whana are emphasised.

Sri Rama showed that bhakti is more important than caste or the specific religion by eating the bar frutes first tested in the forest by the tribal woman Sabari. The Jatayu episode is recalled to emphasize the virtue of gratitude and the lesson is drawn that gratitude in heroes is important for a nation to sustain itself. Sri Rama is depicted here as the ideal son, husband, brother, parent and, indeed, the ideal man. Special mention is made of his faithfulness to one woman—Sita. Thus the special obligation of society towards women and the ideal of man—woman relationship in Indian thoughtology is repetedly highlighted.

Karna's Sudra caste and low birth are mentioned in the context of stories of the heroism with which he maintained status and self-respect. The episode about Karna at Shrutamati's wedding when he valiantly fought many kings to save the dignity of a woman, is also told in this booklet. The electorate is told that N.C. Rama Rao always idealised and adored Karna and would follow in his footsteps if he was voted to the helm of affairs of the State.

10. Ibid., p. 134.
Sri Krishna Devaraya, who ruled over Andhra and Karnataka, is eulogised for his secular attitudes, for his belief that inter-caste marriages are sanctioned by Dharma, and for his religious tolerance. Although a Vaishnavite, he built a Saivite temple and helped to re-establish a Muslim kingdom. His services to the Telugu language, poetry and literature and as a patron of scholars are remembered. Also he is remembered for his concern for women—the shelter he gave to fallen women and for his giving court dancers equal status with the women of the royal family. We are told that "in his reign people were religious, patriotic, women, secure, the poor former free from exploitation, the poets at the height of their creativity. Thus he ruled Telugu land," the electorate is told that N.T.Rama Rao has tried to incorporate the quintessence of Sri Krishna Devaraya's character into his own life.

Brahma Naidu's attempts to establish a casteless demurrally is eulogised too. Similarly, Venra Bramhendra Swamy's dedicated work to bring down conflicts between Hindus and Muslims and between castes is praised. We are told that the Swamy was a "favourite of the Muslim rulers," the saint's kindly concern for women is underlined— that he thought that all the ornaments worn by a woman are natural
to women and should not be removed after the death of her husband, and that he had requested his wife not to stop wearing the bindi on her forehead and the bangles when he went into Samadhi.

The centre-state distribution of financial resources has been such that it has become impossible for the State governments to fulfil their essential political and civic functions. While most of the buoyant sources of revenue are in the hands of the centre, the states are left to tap the resource bases which are both inelastic and politically sensitive to exploit (such as the agricultural sector). States are also charged with functions—education, health, housing, land-reforms, and so on, which most intimately reflect the urgent and fast-growing aspirations of the people. Non-performance in these areas obviously has serious consequences.

The elitist socio-economic structure is in inflammatory combination with pervasive politics. Undoubtedly, India enjoys a degree of political freedom, and freedom of expression which is rare in most third-world countries. These three features of the Indian situation have created conditions for regionalism as natural as the gravity flow of water.
At moments of crisis, N.T. Rama Rao invariably speaks in the people in terms of imagery, drawn from the mythologies. The symbol system he uses is redundant with meanings, which immediately evoke powerful emotional responses from the people. It is a symbol system that enable communication of vast transcendental moralities with maximum economy in words. A good example is his speech during the state government employees' strike in July-August, 1983, hitting out at Sakuni, Chanakya and Durvadhar, in the party and the Government. In Indian mythology, these figures refer to those who seem outwardly to be well-wishers but in reality machine to bring ruin to those...

11. It is significant that on 4th March 1983 when N.T. Rama Rao was in Auroville he said that the State had no power to decide the annual plan of economic development for itself and that there was no scope for bringing to fruition "our economic ideas". He said further that "We do not have any powers except to say that the State is ours". The Deccan Chronicle, (Hyderabad) 5 March, 1983.

12. In the Mahabharata, Duryodhana had imprisoned Sakuni, his brothers and his father. All of them were starved to death except Sakuni, Sakuni took revenge by gaining Duryodhana’s confidence by playing on his weakness and giving him wrong advice which ultimately ruined the entire Kaurava dynasty. Sakurcharya was counsellor for the rakshasas (demons). Considered a brilliant scholar, he was always competing with Brihaspati-the counsellor for the devatas (the gods) even to the point of jeopardising the welfare of the rakshasas. Chanakya and erudite Brahmin was Chandra Gupta Maurya’s advisor and was the author of Arthashastra (treatise on political administration). He had been slighted and insulted by the Nandas (the dynasty which was ruling pataliputra) (prior to Chandragupta) and avenged himself by helping Chandragupta Maurya to overthrow the Nanda dynasty.
whom they advise. In evoking these legendary figures in the memory-bank of the people, N.T. Rama Rao skilfully issued a warning to those concerned without mentioning any names.

The edge that N.T. Rama Rao has over vulgar political leaders lies in his presentation of issues and problems in terms which are meaningful to the people. The vast masses of the people of India are not literate but they are extremely knowledgeable about their cultural heritage through the oral tradition. N.T. Rama Rao has become a winner by appealing through these traditions.

13. The allegation is that some of the senior civil servants alienated the Telugu Desam Party from Government employees by rushing into various disciplinary measures (such as the closure of the Secretariat canteens except from the launch of half hour) without prior dialogue with the people. Besides the "Secretary of Brahman," there are the Sakunis and Chalintas among party workers who intrigue to bring about tension between NTR and his senior colleagues or those who in the name of educating the people isolated the party from the electorate. The Deccan Chronicle, (Hyderabad), July 26, 1987.

thirds of the population of the state being illiterate (64%). It is not surprising that the emotional response of the people to the westernized social—background and jargon of the socialist and communist parties (who should be the logical alternative to the Congress) is not warm. Thus it is that N.T. Rama Rao merely dismantled the ruling Congress, but for good measure also wiped out the opposition parties in the January 1982 election.

Since the achievement of Indian independence Andhra Pradesh remained the stronghold of the Congress party through thick and thin. Even when the party received a rude but deserving jolt and stepped down to be the opposition at the national level with the Janata party holding the reins of Government, Andhra remained a loyal Congress pocket nurturing and nourishing the hope of Congress returning to power. Before long the Janata Party with its internal bickerings surrendered power to the Congress party thus proving categorically that no other political party has the potential to give the country a stable government.

The party's triumph at the centre ushered in an era of political deterioration in Andhra Pradesh. No doubt the
party came to power in Andhra Pradesh with overwhelming majority but, for obvious reasons, it could not function effectively and assert itself. It turned out that the elected representatives of the people in Andhra could not choose their leader. The Congress High Command from Delhi dictated every move even of internal administration of the state. Three Chief Ministers were enthroned and four, dethroned within a short period of five years. Even these Chief Ministers had to choose their colleagues in Government under the direction of the party High Command. The political leaders of the state including the Chief Ministers were insulted and humiliated by the power-wielders in Delhi and were ever kept on their toes. Occupied with safeguarding their positions the rulers of Andhra Pradesh neglected the state administration came to a standstill, development activities came to a point of stagnation, thus making the emergence of a new regional party a historical necessity. This is evidenced by the fact that a maliene idol of the silver-screen could launch a political party and a party programme, could gain popular support, sweep the polls, form a government and thus wrench political power from a party which could boast of a century old tradition and a galaxy of political leaders—all within about nine calendar months.
The hero of 300 films, N.T. Rama Rao was at the peak of his screen career when he launched the Telugu Desam party to restore the prestige of the six crores Telugu people. He declared that he was by entering political repaying the debt of gratitude for all that the Telugu people had done for him in his 35 years film career. Ignoring the criticism of the rival parties, unhindered by the arduous nature of the task, he moved forward resolutely and proclaimed his manifesto. The manifesto coming from the hero who had lived the role of Sri Rama, the Hindu symbol of truthfulness and Sri Krishna, the 'Eternal Guardian of the Cosmic Law' mesmerized the people, and his election to the highest office in the State was almost unanimous.

The election promise of N.T. Rama Rao were incorporated into his 15-point programme which he called the 'Pragati Patham' and announced a month and a half after assuming office, on March 1st, 1985. The emphasis of the programme is on the bettering of the lot of the poor, the down-trodden and the other weaker sections of the society. While the principal beneficiaries of the programme are the rural poor, the other
Weaker sections are not left out of its purview. The implementation of the programme would certainly lessen poverty, especially in backward areas because the programme envisages rural development, generation of employment opportunities, increasing the purchasing power of the poor and transferring to them productive assets of land, livestock etc. It has been detailed as an overall plan of development and pinpoints areas of special thrust which will show immediate and tangible results. The popular scheme of Rs. 91 per kilo of rice, supply of chutis and sarees at subsidized rates, supply of drinking water to the people in rural as well as urban areas, improving the lot of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other backward classes under various self-employment schemes, pucca houses for the poor and other weaker sections, helping the farmers with minor and medium irrigation facilities, helping the energising of pumps, helping the installation of biogas units and providing quality seeds and fertilisers are all schemes that the poor, the downtrodden and other weaker sections.

The party has other schemes for the benefit of the poor and among them can be mentioned pension for widows and the landless, organisation of a youth force in order to
develop a cadre of volunteers who are motivated to help the community different areas of developmental activities. The government's determination to eradicate social evils like untouchability, child marriage, dowry system and bonded labour. One of the much acclaimed programmes of the party is that relating to the introduction of Telugu as the language at all levels of activity. These measures when fully implemented are sure to lead the weaker sections towards new frontiers of progress. They provide a new thrust to the basic philosophy of welfare and lay a firm foundation to the task of elevating the lives of 40% of the population above the poverty line.

The 15-point socio-economic programme of NTR richly compares with the 20-point programme of Late Srimathi Indira Gandhi. Though the main stress of her programme was on the elimination of poverty (Garibi Haata) it failed to do much for the common men. The zeal and sincerity with which the programme was enunciated can never be doubted. The fact is that the programme was sabotaged by the richer sections of the community. Thus the benefits of the programme were monopolised by a few. As a result, the socio-economic condition of the rural population remained static.
The 15 point economic programme of N. R. Rama Rao to be supplement to and a complement of the 20-point programme of late Mrs. Indira Gandhi. But this programme has also run into insurmountable difficulties in the actual process of implementation. The Government had to discontinue some of the programmes as they ran into rough weather.

The success of any Governmental programme in a democracy depends upon the strength of the political will of the man at the helm of affairs. The people’s cooperation and participation and essential for the success of developmental programme. The people who are entrusted with responsibility of implementing these programmes should go about their work with honesty and sincerity.

Various forces are involved in making a programme successful and laudable. When different elements in different directions in the development and the welfare of the people that suffers. The failure of any programme of Telugu Desam Party should be understood in the light of the facts mentioned below.

The mid-day meal had to be modified and ultimately discontinued for obvious reasons. The Congress Government first introduced the programme as an election gimmick. The
The motive behind this was only appease the common man and cash on his sympathy. Therefore the programme became a white elephant and turned out to be unmanageable. It was revived and reintroduced by the Telugu Desam Government for the benefit of children between 6-11 years. The nutritious meal programme of Tamil Nadu could be a success whereas the mid-day meal programme in Andhra Pradesh met with failure. Sarpanchs, Mahila Mandalas and other voluntary agencies who were assigned the task of cooking food and feeding the children were not properly activated and money went down the drain without the beneficiaries getting the benefit. Food that was unhygienic was served to the children. In some schools cooking and serving became the main occupation for the Headmasters and the teachers. Consequently education was given the go-bye. Proper thought was not bestowed on the programme and the necessary infrastructure was lacking. The programme would have been a great success had the Government patterned this on the model of the nutritious food scheme introduced by our neighbouring state of Tamil Nadu.

Another feature of the programme was that the scheme was aimed at providing food only to the children belonging to a few sections of society. This kind of discrimination
and segregation, even for their own good, created psychological imbalance. Therefore, the programme had to be discontinued.

The Rs.2/- kilo rice scheme has become very popular in the state and for that matter Andhra Pradesh is the only state that has introduced this kind of programme which covers nearly 105 crores card-holders guaranteeing 5 Kgs of rice per head with a maximum of 25 Kgs per family whose income is Rs.6000 per annum. The State Government has to face innumerable hardships in the implementation of this programme. From time to time the Central Government increase the price of rice and the State government has to incur a lot of expenditure.

Another difficulty with this scheme is that it had led to the illegal procurement of green cards. Though this programme is meant for the benefit of poor, it is actually catering to the idle rich. Unless people are vigilant and the government is careful, this programme too may face disaster. It is the considered opinion of a few that this programme kills the initiative of the beneficiaries. But it is not correct. It is not an exaggeration to say that this programme has been hailed as a singular one even by
Congress (I) ruled States. But the success of the scheme depends on the co-operation given by the Centre to the State government. The public distribution system has to be overhauled and loopholes plugged.

One of the most laudable schemes of the Prayati Parishad was the construction of pucca houses for the rural areas which are socially and economically weak. This housing scheme has been there even under the Congress Government. This constitutes a part of the 20-point programme initiated by our former Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. Food, clothing, and shelter are the inalienable minimum of human wants. But unfortunately millions of people are left without shelter. The poor people in the villages live in thatched houses under unhealthy conditions. Whenever there are floods due to cyclones it is this section of society that suffers to the maximum. And therefore, the successive Congress (I) governments undertook this task of providing pucca houses at a cost of Rs.600/- per house in the weaker sections. But the performance of the Congress (I) government in this direction was far from satisfactory. The net result was low targets and badly built houses. The contractors became rich bycornering the money allotted for the scheme and it
in the government that has to be blamed. But the Telugu Desam Government undertook the scheme on a war-footing and during the five years of its tenure it has succeeded in reaching the target set forth. The Telugu Desam achieved good record not only in number of houses constructed but also in the quality of houses built.

This scheme, instead of giving security and satisfaction to the depressed classes, has become a source of unhappiness. The houses are being constructed on the outskirts of the village, and thus the Harijans and Orijans are being segregated. This phenomenon, if it is continued would only do harm to the depressed classes. They can't develop themselves if they are made to live in isolated places, away from other communities. For centuries they were made to live like that, and even now this situation continues. Therefore atleast from now onwards the Telugu Desam Government should bear this in mind while launching the construction of fresh units.

The Telugu Desam Government had set into motion a series of measures to improve the lot of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes. The government should strive to bring about an overall development of the common man. It should provide the atmosphere and
infrastructure where in the individual can improve himself socially, economically and politically. Unfortunately the benefits of the schemes do not reach the persons to whom they are intended for. The middle men prosper; the officials of the Government prosper but the fate of the common man remains the same. The average individual is not aware of all these schemes and their usefulness. So the government should see that the benefits of all these programmes do not go into wrong hands. The government should be vigilant about those who sabotage these programmes. The Telugu Desam government should also undertake the task of educating the common man on a massive scale about various schemes and institutions which are meant for his benefit.

Corruption was institutionalised by the successive Congress(I) regimes. They never bothered to use her value based in politics. Whatever they did, they did with an eye on the next election. Whatever they did to the common man, they did with a view to grab his votes. The development of the State suffered due to the corrupt and inefficient leaders and administrators. There are instances when the government has virtually supported corruption and sided with the people who indulge in it.
Corruption has become an accepted phenomenon. If this is allowed it would eat away the vitals of our society and may completely destroy the very soul of it. As soon as it came to power the Telugu Desam Government declared that it would root out corruption. In partial fulfilment of this promise the TDP government has appointed a ‘Dharmamahamatra’ and a ‘Lokayukta’. However, all these measures become ineffective and the situation continues.

The Telugu Desam government should also undertake the task of providing land to the landless poor. Land reforms were not taken up by Telugu Desam Government in a vigorous manner and thus the gulf that separates the rich and the poor is getting widened day by day.

Another disturbing factor is that the land given to the poor is grabbed by the cunning rich by certain devious means. The government should take stringent measures against the land grabbers. The good done by the government should not go unnoticed.

The Telugu Desam Government has done marvellous service to the people of the state by aboliing hereditary village offices. This has been colonial legacy and unfortunately the Congress(I) government could not do away with this
phenomenon. The Telugu Desam government should be appreciated for taking this bold step of abolishing village officers.

The rest of the programme fall into the broad category of schemes for the development of rural areas, particularly in agriculture, and success to the village poor, and strengthening the small scale industrial infrastructure on the one hand and elimination of some social and economic evils on the other.

The notable achievement of the present government in the initiation of the Telugu Desam project. This ambitious project will provide irrigation to the parched lands of Vayalaguda and will also supply drinking water to Madras city from Krishna river. It is a symbol of inter-state cooperation and unity.

The Telugu Desam government allotting 30% of the jobs to women is indeed a great step in the direction of improving the lot of women. The Mahila University was started with lot of zeal and enthusiasm. The widows-pensions scheme is another laudable thing done by the present government, but the government should also take some measures to see that the benefits reach unfortunate women.
A system of monthly progress report has already been established by the state government, which provides for a quick assessment of how the 15-point programme is progressing by collecting critical information of them.

However, the success of the Pragati Patham and the various schemes under this programme announced by the Telugu Desam Government depends on the co-operation of the officials in implementing them. The government instead of wasting time and money on certain unproductive things like introducing Telugu Medium at university level must attend to the immediate task of implementing sincerely the developmental activities. On the whole, the Pragati Patham, programme, though an old wine in new bottle, has succeeded in achieving some of the objectives and goals. All these schemes under 15-point programme have definitely put the state on the path of progress, and when they are fully implemented they are sure to make the Andhra Pradesh State economically and politically strong on the map of the Indian Union.

Nothing is more unpredictable than politics. However, it can be safely said that, having achieved a miracle by unseating the Congress (I) rulers from their seemingly impregnable fortress, he is sincerely trying to do
something. Most of the measures he has taken so far have been welcomed all around. Some of the decisions have been criticized not because they are bad in themselves but because he took them in a rather tactless manner and incurred the wrath of the vociferous sections of the community. His critics say he is going too fast, rather in the fashion of a reckless driver. His well-wishers feel there is no need for such speed and fear that his haste may prove to be his undoing. Politics is not cinema, they argue. It is not enough to take decisions that are expected to do good to the people at large. It is necessary to take the people along with you, to convince them that what you are doing is meant to do them good.

There has been criticism that Rama Rao takes important decisions without taking the concerned ministers into confidence, that his legislators are feeling alienated because he has no time to spare for them; that he is too emotional and tends to be self-centred; and that he is encouraging members of his family to enter politics; that he is unimpressive and theatrical; that he likes to dominate the show and has all the limelight; that he is dictatorial and that he breaks no criticism.

When his son-in-law Chandra Babu Naidu resigned from the Congress (I) days after his defeat and sought to join Telugu Desam in January, 1983, there was an uproar at a party meeting. He was not readily admitted. However, Congress (I) maintains that Naidu has already been admitted secretly to the party and that he is wielding power as an elected constitutional authority and collecting funds for the party. Hostile comments were made when Dr. D. Venkaiah Naidu, another son-in-law, was made convener of Telugu Yuva Vedasikam the party's youth wing, while attributed more motives than Jayasridha, Rama Rao's eldest son, signed a lease deed for a building hired for the party's headquarters in Hyderabad. Rama Rao did come up with seemingly valid explanations about Venkaiah Naidu and Jayasridha.

It is very common in India that close relations of people in power usurp all constitutional authorities and tend to browbeat officials and ministers and misuse authority for personal gain. Several good men have paid a heavy price for not being able to keep their relations away, one point of criticism that Mrs. Gandhi faces all the time is that she had first groomed her son Sanjay and is now encouraging Rajiv to succeed her. Whether this is true or not is a moot point. What is true in that this business
of sons and sons-in-law meddling in politics is a very sensitive issue in Indian politics. A leader like Rama Rao has to be extremely careful in matters of this kind. As long as his sons and sons-in-law dabble in politics, he will continue to be vulnerable to unnecessary criticism. However, competent and dynamic such relations may be, they stand to do more harm than good to a political leader in the long run. They should display their talents in spheres other than political. In the polluted political atmosphere of today, so much indiscriminate meddling takes place that some of the mud is bound to stick. Nobody bothers to check the veracity of allegations about misuse of power. N. T. Rama Rao, who played the role of Rama Rao—hero of the Ramayana—in six films, knows Rama's predicament in matters of this kind only too well. It was an illiterate washerman who had doubted Sita's fidelity while she was Ravana's captive in Lanka. Yet Rama was obliged to disown his pregnant wife and order Laksmana to kill her. There is no way that Rama Rao can keep his relations in politics and yet ensure his image of an uncorrupted leader in tact. Before their involvement gets too deep, he should consider openly advising them to keep off politics.
N.T. Rama Rao is basically a good man, a sincere, god-towering man who means well by the people. He will soon overcome his weaknesses and emerge as a leader who will play a crucial role in Indian politics. Unless he makes stupid mistakes, there is no way the Congress (I) can recapture Andhra Pradesh from him for a long time to come. The fact that he took many bold and innovative steps almost immediately after coming to power indicates his certain potential of statesmanship in the man.

N.T. Rama Rao had started on a promising note, with a small cabinet emphasizing the values of austerity and economy in Governmental expenditure, punctuality, and quick decisions. Reduction in the number of state corporations, anti-corruption drive against higher officials, restrictions on employees in the interest of efficiency, passing a resolution on abolition of Legislative Council, reducing the retirement age of the employees, ban on capitation fee in educational institutions, introduction of Tamil as official language in administration, signing of relief Ganga agreement all these were undertaken in a few months. However, several of the measures have bogged down in administrative and legal problems, while N.T. Rama Rao opened too many fronts for fight displaying vast organised
section such as urban and rural, Government servants, doctors, powerful management of educational institutions. It may be that N.T. Rama Rao has not been sufficiently cautious that institutional restraints such as federalism, court cases and other variables account for the extent to which parties can carry out their programs.

In trying to wean the party away from Congress (I) culture, Telugu Desam Party directed its MLAs not to stay in Hyderabad when the Assembly is not in session giving scope to the criticism of "stiffling atmosphere". Cancelling pensions to former legislators, imposing restrictions on defectors and N.T. Rama Rao's own authoritarian personality streak soak the party even in the initial stages. The party structure continues to remain very centralized and the distribution of power inside it is top-heavy. The members show passivity and disaffection to the leadership. The importance of building the organisational structure was realised midway and Chandra Babu Naidu, the number two man in the party, assiduously built it from the village level with over thirty three lakh members. Training camps to party workers were set up to train them in party ideology and develop organisational skills. On the ideology of the party, N.T. Rama
new pronouncement "you cannot get any ideology from the dusty books in a library. If you have eyes to see and ears to hear, you can discover our ideology in the hungry faces of the poor. Our ideology is to work for providing food, clothing and clothing to the country's poor."

One significant development in the Congress Party at the state level seems to be breaking of ranks among the influential leaders and their joint bid to oust the ruling Janata Party. Within a year of N.T. Rama Rao's coming to power, congressmen like J. Vengala Rao, who were outside the state politics, entered the fray. And right from the beginning, Congress in the unaccustomed role of opposition to the state concentrated on violent criticism of the Chief Minister, and systematic obstruction in the legislature. The attitude of the local party is represented through their party's central ministers belonging to the state. NTR had to reorient the purpose, scope of opposition unity from time to time, as many of his ideas are not acceptable to the other parties. His idea for starting a loosely knit federation of regional parties.

still remains a pipe dream. Instead of Bharat Ka Dharma, he seems to have veered around to the idea of a forum of opposition parties, with co-ordination and joint action on issues, to which they had common approach. N. F., and the Janata Dal MRD campaigned vigorously for Asom Janata Parishad's victory in December 1985. He employed in his charter (Vehicle tour around the constituencies) again in Haryana elections in June 1987

with the slogan "Congress Kesa, Dush Bachao" (Just the Congress (1), save the country). His plea on behalf of regional party (NNDP) does not seem to have had any impact on the electorate of Nagaland, as Congress (I) won the 18 elections comfortably.

The most conspicuous change from the previous Government seems to be that under the Congress Government, heavy investments were made in irrigation and power sectors while Indian Desam has put up much higher allocations to social services. Though at one level, the Congress (I) criticized the 'populist welfare measures' (rice at Rs.2

per kg, permanent houses at a cost of Rs.8000, distribution of cloths etc.). the Congress claimed to have implemented them before N. F. and its Government and Kaila Gandhi tried to

18 Ibid., p. 61.
convey the impression that the Central Government has been subsidizing most of the welfare measures. As the Twenty Point Programme (sponsored by the Central Government) and Panchayat Parishad (sponsored by the Andhra Pradesh Government) have many common features, and the State Government has been interested in implementation of welfare programmes under the latter rubric, the Central Government has accused the State Government of slapping down in the implementation of development programmes. T. T. Ramana Government preferred to implement such programmes where they don't have to provide matching grants.

N. T. Rama Rao Government had inherited a difficult financial position as his predecessors squandered public money at will. In his search for additional resources to implement various new schemes, he took hasty decisions which troubled him politically and administratively. He requested Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam (TTD) board to deposit its funds with the Government treasury. After appointing a Commission to review the Religious Endowment Act, the Government initiated reforms to take over the administration of all the temples in the state and abolish hereditary priesthood. The property in different forms owned by the temples would be under the State custody.
Abolition of village councils changed in the administrative set up of district had brought in its wake numerous administrative and legal problems. Dissolving the Assembly in November 1969, claiming "to cleanse public life, uphold value based politics and strengthen democratic principles", N. Rama Rao came back with massive victories in the parliamentary elections and the subsequent Assembly elections.

N. Rama Rao regards Telugu Desam as a firm anti-Congress, anti-political force in the country which would like to cooperate with combination of regional parties. He always stood for strong states and has called the Centre "a misconceived myth". He asserted "It is the people of the country who elect the State Governments and automated them authority on subjects such as defence and foreign policy to the Centre so that there is no overlapping in the discharge of powers by the Central and state governments. In its memorandum to Sardesai in September 1969, Telugu Desam Party refuted the arguments in favour of strong centre under the existing Constitution. He challenged the ruling party at centre for "promoting the wrong theory that the same party should rule at the centre, Pravulla Raja, 1983.4.12."
Centre and States. The theory is wrong because ours is a federal constitution which envisages different parties coming to power in different states through democratic means. The continuous propaganda that these parties are a threat to the country's unity is an insult to public opinion."

There appears to be an unescapable and increasingly salient relationship between nepotism and corruption in most of the contemporary states. N.T. Rama Rao chose not to condone corruption and mildly reproached the "diseased twin" during the early years of his government. As he so richly, N.T. Rama Rao felt he would not need any more riches and he threatened in act like 'Yama' in pursuit of corruption. He dismissed a minister who was trapped while accepting a bribe and in the 1984 Mahanadu, he commented that "MLAs and Ministers are eating grass" (meant to say that they are corrupt). He was earnest in instituting 'Lok Ayukta and Dharmamahapatra' which indicted few officials and politicians on charges of corruption.

Whenever a person of N.T. Rama Rao community is appointed to any position of significance, allegations were made that they were given the posts without merit.
made it the effort that he is cast in. He was able to maintain a kind of parity in the Ministry among the various dominant and backward castes. His second son-in-law, Dr. D. Venkateswara Rao, who was with him at the time of founding the party, was given a party post, elevated as an M.P. and in 1980 elevated to the post of Minister in the cabinet. N. Chandrababu Naidu, his third son-in-law, coming in to the party through back-door, not entrenched himself in the party after 1984, is frequently accused of the "larger constitutional authority" in the party and Government. In March 1987, N.T. Rama Rao dramatically announced in a press conference that he is being pressured by the party men to bring Balakrishna, his son, into politics. N.T. Rama Rao's moves caused much consternation among the partymen and intellectuals noted one more instance of promoting the dynastic culture in the Indian democracy.

Throughout the 1987, N.T. Rama Rao has been making frontal attacks on the corruption in Congress. N.T. Rama Rao concentrated on scandals such as Bofors, Fairfax and submarine deals, relocating the local issues like drought, floods, shortage of drinking water to the background in the annual meeting of Telugu Desam. The party consistently
maintained his demand that the Prime Minister must come out with all facts and help remove the public suspicion that those leading the nation might be guilty of corruption.

The politics, administration, elections and political behavior in Andhra Pradesh, the fifth biggest state in the country, is suffused with over dramatization. Though action is common to both politics and drama, the actions seem to be oblivious to the differences in complexity, content and purpose. N.T.Rama Rao, who survived a few crises, continues to dominate the Government and Janaja Janam Party. Using a combination of charisma gained through him, and populist slogans and unheard welfare schemes, the resident leader has, benefitted from floundering opposition leadership. His pronouncements that only his party could protect the interests or image of Telugu had managed to get sufficient sympathy from public. Though he has come to politics from nowhere, N.T.Rama Rao has learned ways to recoup support from among the masses, even when analysts see the constant dwindling support. N.T.Rama Rao’s views on political parties, separation of powers, federalism and welfare of the poor, even if naive on occasion, are united and integrated. That there is a tension between what he
aspire for the people, and what he is able to achieve is
saying the obvious. To be a non-Congress (I) state and not
complain of discrimination from the Centre may not happen
in the near future.