CONCLUSION

Socialism is not a state of perfection but rather a movement trying to satisfy demands for equality, freedom and dignified efficiency. Socialist thought was a product of its own time and environment. It came to India as to many other countries as a borrowed idea which had to be applied with modifications and adaptations.

Socialism descended upon Europe as a utopia, an utopia that was promptly incorporated into political practice stimulating a collective action in a goal oriented society and creating an idea that we can determine our future impressively and tried to activate the present to make it a future oriented system.

FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS

(A) Socialism imported in India from the west, emerged as a new religion, attached itself with anti-colonialism and by doing so the sharp edges of western socialism were rounded off and a progressive phenomena altered the India political scene. In fact the combination of socialism with nationalism clearly demarcated the ideological considerations and laid emphasis on the difference between socialists and communists, eliminating any chance of being guided by Marxist Leninist Russia. This also helped Indian socialism to move away from Marxism, total nationalization and violent revolution. As Ashok Mehta pointed out, socialist policies relevant to the stages of economic growth have to be worked out by Asian socialists themselves.

AS AN IDEALOGY

(2) In course of time, the congress socialist party which was established in 1934 as a major political instrument repeatedly faced ideological challenges. Sometimes Gandhian appeal moderated it and major time the splits and mergers moderated its ideology. The quest for socialism took its leaders along diverse ambitions and very often contradictory paths, leaving the movement to spend itself out. Masani joined Swatantra party, Ashok Mehta back to congress and J.P. Narayan dedicated himself to Bhoodan movement, so as a distinguished comrade in arms Achyut Patwardhan, left politics mid way in his life creating intellectual vaccum of some magnitude in the socialist movement.

One major dilemma which dented the prospects of socialism in India was the magnitudnal role played by Nehru. Being at the top of Congress, kept on infusing socialist ideology into Congress’s programmes, thus actually took the wind off the sails of the socialists. This would better be counted as political strategy in order to weaken the space for socialist movement. Awadhi resolution (1955) defining the socialist pattern of society was a major blow to any exclusive catering domain claim by socialist leaders.

(A) Looked at from one political angle, the idea of socialism has little presence left in comtempory India. No Socialist political formation in its pure from has come anywhere close to what they had set out to achieve, but if looked from another side socialism is the reigning ideology of contemporary India for it is nothing less than an all pervading presence in India public political discourse. The preamble proclaims us as Socialists, ruling parties swear by socialism. Even while moving away from it all political
parties, be it at the right or the left of the spectrum invoke socialism of one sort or another to legitimize their political programmes. Themes like poverty exploitation, social justice, social change dominated not only the political but also the legal administrative, social and cultural discourse.

(B) Socialism in India is not really a single idea. It is better seen as a label for the package of loosely related beliefs and positions which happened to come together at a particular point of history.

(C) In Indian context the package contained among other the following ideals. Militant nationalism, anti imperialist policy, support for public sector, nationalization and planning in the domestic economy a public policy aimed at welfare and distribution justice, technique of class mobilization and struggle and opposition to religious communalism, casteism and other obscurantist ideologies, a modernist progressive and cosmopolitan outlook and of course a metanarrative of history. Accustomed as we are, to see all these ideas together in a single package. One needs to be pragmatic in recognizing that they are not necessary related and that they can be combined with unfamiliar permutations and combinations.

Socialism today is no longer an ideology of real social transformation in India rather its element has been pushed to the background by the ideology of modernity and progress. The ideology of state welfare of course is riding high, bent its faith in the institution of state for the elimination of exploitation. While assessing Socialist movement in India the deviation from the orthodoxy should not be looked at as negatives rather the
specificities of Indian society conceptualized Indian socialism the way it is.

SOCIALISM AT THE PERFORMANCE LEVEL

In India the choice of socialism as both a strategy of mobilization and a set of goals to be achieved is inexorably dictated by factors such as extreme inequalities hierachisation of society, economic deprivation and the need of the state to regulate and intervene. Thus India opted for the socialist variant called democratic socialism, a brand with strong impact of Marxism, Gandhism and Nationalism on it. It got manifested itself in aspects such as:

(a) Objectives of national planning
(b) Policies of national development
(c) Constitutional placement
(d) Congress party programmes
(e) Organization of socialist groups (Pol. Parties)
(f) Legislative enactments.

These above said areas ranged from pre-independent modulations to the post-independent imbibing of socialism as a working political ideology and a set of programmes.

(b) After careful analysis of all actions, policies and programs connected to socialist vision it appears that the socialism as a working political ideology failed to cut the ice. It is not successful in countering the forces of growing monopoly of capitalism, unable to prevent the growth of poverty, inequality of income and urban-rural gap. And it is in implementation that planning has failed rather than its conceptualization and formation of strategy. The elitist mindset of the bureaucracy also resulted in apathy toward programmes such as land reforms, tenancy act or even the
Zamindari abolition act. The benefits were mainly reaped by the already well off section of the society. Thus socialism was accepted in its broad form while the smaller details were left at their own to be adjusted which led to the half hearted attempts and a half baked cake for the masses to swallow down.

**SOCIALIST MOVEMENT – MATTER OF RELEVANCE AND PRESENCE**

Socialism came to India soon after liberalism gained popularity in post first world war era and took the form of a movement by the energetic molding of the leaders such as JP, Lohia, Acharya Narendra Dev etc along with the setting up of the Congress Socialist Party in 1934. According to Huntington Political parties develop along lines of political and social cleavages in society. Socialist movement under all sort and names of socialist parties kept on changing its “defining cleavage. At first under the leadership of Lohia and JP, the movement aimed at forming the political organizational set up of Indian Democracy on socialistic lines. They faced a touch resistance by Nehru’s Hijacking of socialist agenda and thus by 1967 settled for Non Congressism as the prime tool for the success of socialist movement.

(a) Horst Hartmann described the history of the socialist movement as being one of “Splits and Mergers”. The socialist movement witnessed a long saga of splits, unifications, reunifications and so as the nomenclature of the parties representing socialist ferment kept or changing. From congress socialist party 1934 , socialist party 1948 Kisan Mazdoor Praja party 1952 , Praja socialist party 1953 , Lohia socialist party1955 , Samyukta Socialist party 1962 , SSP Lohiawadi 1972 to Samajwadi janta party of 1988 and finally more visible than other factions, Samajwadi Party under Mulayam Singh yadav in 1992.
The era from 1934 to 1989 for socialist movement failed to leave any long lasting impact on the political scenario of India. Glitter here and there despite of having an enforcing ideology, went to the fractional way, lost its energy and charisma and even in post 1989 era, lacked any noteworthy achievement as a Third force.

(B) Issues such as lack of action oriented mass mobilizing policy failure in institutionalization the political processes and procedures, weak organizational back up, personal ambitions overriding Leadership, radical elitism, lack of political training failure in understanding the politically prudent fashion misuse of explosive democratic energies at the grassroot level politicization of social base, impatience toward transformation time and most essentially, the failure in translating the ideology into a political strategy haunted the socialist movement in India, paving way for it structural disintegration.

Madhu Limay in his book socialist communist interaction in India commented.

“Lohia’s policy of Non congressism of course demonstrated that is could destroy the congress monopoly of power, but it also bred opportunism and lust for power and contaminated the strings of idealism and sacrifice on which the edifice of the socialists movement has been made.

(Kumar, Kuldeep. Divisive and fractured, July 2004, Seminar -539, Page 33.)

The socialist movement in India is largely affected with deideologization and political malaise, where socialists can be found in almost all parties. Not denying the fact that the breaking of congress dominance in 1967 paved way to a whole new set of alternative mobilization strategies and so as socialist movement was joined by a whole new breed of politicians like Laloo Yahav, Chandra Shekhar, George Fernandes, Sharad Yadav, Ram Vilas Paswan, Nitish Kumar and Yes, the
noteworthy Mulayam Singh yadav. This brand of politics was quite different from the previous stint, having almost no fire branding in terms of ideology rather used ideology as an effective working instrument in the power struggle. They based their support structure on the basis of primordial appeal to caste and lineage alignments. Adhocism replaced the urge of party building in Janata family. Infighting political wrangling all impacted upon the combined formations of coalition era, the National Front of 1989 and the United Front of 1996. Where the democratic upsurge unleashed due to Mandal Mandir wave led to the Ethnification of Indian party system and the different factions of the erstwhile socialist brand banked upon the social cleavages of Indian society for electoral gains. This of course is not to deny their role in giving voice to the marginalized social groups, which were anxiously waiting on the fringe sides of Indian political bill board, reflects a new brand of socialism interpreted by one and all in their own political meaningful sense.

SAMAJWADI PARTY AND SOCIALIST MOVEMENT

Lohia emerged on the socialist sense with utmost shine, who laid down pragmatic aspects of Indianized socialism, where caste appeared as the distinguishing feature. Moving ahead of rhetoric of communists, Lohia emerged as the strong votary of mobilization of downtrodden, backward and SC\ST's which provided a theoretical foundation and justification to the emergence of caste cleavage based leaders like Madhu limay, Charan Singh and most dominantly Mulayam Singh yadav.

If a single party can indeed represent the interests of multipolar social groups in the corny times SP is a strong contender of the position.
SAMAJWADI PARTY AS A REGIONAL PARTY WITH DIFFERENCE.

Regional parties are those parties, who have a base in specific regions or states, would typically appeal to a narrow, parochial sentiments of the people, emphasizing regional over national loyalties and stressing affiliation to caste, religion and language. Of course this omnibus level of regional party can further be devided into two interpretations. On one side the parties that consciously appeal to a regional identity and apparently not interested in extending themselves geographicaly like DMK and AIDMK, thus not even seeking to appeal to voters in the north.

On the other side there are parties like Samajwadi party which appeals to a constituency that is largely caste based though, of late, it is trying to reach out beyond this constituency. The fact that support for the SP has remained by and large confined to Uttar Pradesh is not on the account of Party’s unwillingness to spread its wings in other parts of the country, which it even tried in Maharashtra or Delhi, but actually in practice been unable to exert its influence beyond UP region.

The reason for this distinction stems from the factors that have contributed to their emergence and growth. It is the social churning and the polarization of the UP society along religious and caste lines, happened due to Mandir- Masjid dispute and mandalization, which sparked off a sharp polarization of which SP emerged as one of the most prominent beneficiary.

ALLIANCE MAKING STRATEGY

(3) In terms of alliance making strategy the whole understanding can be viewed from pragmatic prism, the reflection of which should better be interpreted not only
on the basis of its ideological position, but also under the light of political electoral exigencies and compulsions.

(a) As being trained largely under Lohia and C. Charan Singh, Anti Congressism was the main plank which guided Mulayam Singh Yadav and Samajwadi party around the years of 90’s. This reflected in 1996 and 1999, whereas in 1996 Congress didn’t share the power but only supported the United front government and in 1994 where SP’s refusal to congress led to the formation of NDA government at center.

(b) This followed by the dilution of Anti Congressism and its acceptance for a coalition of left and secular parties in congress and turning its tide against BJP, a communalist outfit largely. In an interview to a national press Mulayam Singh Yadav made it clear,

_The Non-Congress phase was used to challenge the one party dominance in the nation, while the non-BJP phase based on a more firm ideological grounds since the erosion of the congress monopoly rule is complete. There is no space of non Congressism. This is the time to check the communal rise of the BJP._

_However, still SP cannot afford to be a permanent ally of congress, there appears a threat to its OBC base in case of desertion of lower OBC and MBC’s to Congress, and secondly in the recent years, where SP is trying to be more inclusive, voicing upper castes, they would end up turning to Congress instead of SP. So as the non committed Muslim community’s flexibility keeps Mulayam Singh Yadav and SP to maintain a respectable distance from Congress._

**ECONOMIC ASPECT**
Socialism of Indian brand is more in the nature of sporadically benevolent capitalism than of a conscious and even distribution of social wealth, restructured set of economic relationships in which the means of production are socially owned and the social product is equitably distributed. Hence pockets of affluence remains, surrounded by vast areas of under development.

(E.M.S Namboodiripad Economics and politics in India’s Socialist pattern, New Delhi people’s publishing house 1966).

The Samajwadi Party having the support of powerful rural and urban economic interests, has attempted to infuse a socialist policy into a capitalist socio-economic framework and resulted in a certain measure of welfares and social reconstruction of the society and the economic polity moving ahead from Lohia’s ideal. The ideological position of SP and Mulayam Singh Yadav seems to have adjusted itself to the broad socio-economic policy paradigm, the policy of liberalization and globalization. Though basically a party formed on the social cleavage of caste division, party has gradually shed its castiest tone and adopted a populist welfarist platform: representing its image of a party with a new vision transforming state via hand of development, making Uttar Pradesh the most favored destination for investors as exemplified by the role played by Amar Singh.

**SAMAJWADI PARTY AND IDENTITY POLITICS IN UP**

In UP identity politics occupied the space which was available due to the receding of the prospects of repaid socio-economic transformation. In fact the growth and assertiveness of caste and community politics required to be analysed against the backdrop of complete failure of successive UP governments in promoting economic development adequately and equitably. It should also be located in the exclusion of majority of classes, castes, communities and groups from political power.
and governance. Infact the socialist movement in UP acquired a new action-based reorientation, manifested itself in the oppositional mobilization of which Samajwadi party and Mulayam Singh Yadav, despite of all opportunist characteristics, appeared to be the flag bearers.

Followed by Lohia’s dictat of non congressism, who is best known as the flag bearer of socialist movement in India, the new designs of Indian politics known as Mandalization of Indian politics and communalization of polity and society fabricated the whole ideological spectrum of Indian democracy. Her Mulayam singh yadav sensed the opportunity and by mobilizing a composite coalition of Muslims and backward castes changed socialism into an action oriented slogan especially in UP.

**CASTE AS A METAPHOR FOR POWER**

Mulayam Singh Yadav is known as the largest beneficiary of backward caste mobilization. The wake of Mandal commission implementation paved the way for Samajwadi party and later on the complete polarization of UP politics, out casting both the national parties. One notable feature which appeared on the scene was the fact that the political assertiveness and empowerment brought about by the rise of OBC was preceded by many major ideological changes and has not been the result of any long drawn out struggle for social change on the grassroots level. The mobilization of OBC’s in UP was quintessentially politically governed and driven largely by the logic of political power and not even remotely touched by any pure socialist ideological element. Infact since it is largely driven by the cleavage perspective it appeared quite alarming for an egalitarian aspect of society.

Nonetheless clearly reflected the lack of political will on the part of dominant parties to tackle the issues of equality and justice except at a populist level backward caste movement.
urge for reservation clearly consisted the potential for changing the social economic order based on domination thus clicked the rational of being an extension of socialist tendencies in Indian politics where the framework of social justice changed its route, now from caste upliftment and not the other way round as espoused by traditional socialist tendencies.

Echoing the causes from which the Socialist movement is passing through, Mulayam observed

“Samajwadi party is an expansion of socialist movement of the past. It is true that if the socialist agitation had not deviated ideologically and had we remained united after Lohia’s death, India would have a difficult face today. The heroes, the welcomes the honors have become history. Then the people were ready for mass work and consistent struggle. The ego clash among its leaders was one of the reason why this moment was shelved. The conciousness aroused by JP movement resulted in the origin of a New India policy of which I was also a part, dissapointed the people, more by not providing any strong programming. Indian politics is today passing thought critical phase, This situation calls for a attitude best suited to the politics of change.

(Devi Dayal Dubey 1997 for a secular alternative Lucknow, Ram Manohar Lohia trust.)

Mulayam Singh yadav is not a sophisticated intellectual in politics and has consciously embraced much of Lohia’s thought as his own, A hardworking survivor as people know him more clearly. His constant and direct touch with the masses has enabled him to have a clear understanding of the political, social and economic realities. Undeniably, Mulayam Singh Yadav appeared on the Indian Political scene very aggressively, representing a new brand of politics with undisputed leadership of Samajwadi party, played the most crucial role in the demise of Congress especially in Uttar Pradesh.
As Gillian Wright has correctly remarked the rise of Mulayam and the decline of Congress, mostly known for his persistence and hard work, rose from the dust of Safai to become the chief minister of the politically, most sensitive state, UP not once but thrice. Envisioned a social coalition of backwards classes and Muslims. The Mandal uproar which exactly democratized the Indian polity provided Mulayam Singh Yadav an opportunity to reached up to the crucially important space among all the socialist faces. With 2004 electoral results the SP under Mulayam Singh Yadav should be given credit for evolving and retaining a solid social base vetting across all social denominations and economic groups not to deny the fact that the politics of caste and identity has marked some curtains on politics of socialism but political pragmatism should be held responsible factor for this. Mulayam Singh Yadav still retain a bit of Lohia’s Policy and then ideology cannot be treated as a constant, rather, there are several transformations by which the ideology has also reached to a different form.

While assessing the electoral performance of the SP under Mulayam Singh Yadav we must also keep in mind the fragmented nature of the UP electorate and the multipolar competition in the state. This put certain limitations on the electoral performance of all parties whether the SP can spread to other states or not, it is sure to play a dominant role in the polities of the UP and by due implication in politics at the all India level. Under the leadership of Mulayam Singh Yadav, it is fast becoming an example of a party which is continuously engaged in the formation and consolidation of a cleavage as well as in overcoming that cleavage also. It seems to have adopted a multi layered strategy to overcome the constrains of cleavage politics, on one hand bypassing the cleavage by seeking the support of the upper caste and on the other, it consolidates that cleavage by trying to unite the OBC’s.
Thus, Along with this New version of practical socialism one should also keep in mind the words of Madhu Limay,

“The time is running out for the forces of socialism. There is a need to get rid of ideological shibboleths. The socialists, to whichever party they belong to at present, should quickly liberate themselves from the coil of power politics. Unless they do so the marginalization of socialism in India would continue to cast its spell.”