CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION
It was proved that he was a Statesman. He took steps and through keeping welfare of future generations. A man of unusual gifts and force of character Pattabhi rose to eminence from poverty and obscurity through uninterrupted public service for over half a century. In the movements in which he participated, he was a key figure. The indelible impress of his personality can be seen in the institutions founded by him. An orator, a prolific writer, who became the ‘official historian’ of the Congress, a pioneer in the fields of education, banking, co-operation, and insurance in Andhra Desha, Pattabhi was a pragmatist who accomplished with amazing success what he considered good to the community. He realized that a State could have no greater asset than the initiative and enterprise of the individual.

He succeeded in every field of activity that he chose in the service of the people. When he gave up medical practice in 1916, it was widely said that was a great blow to the profession. It was said that had he continued as a Doctor of Medicine, he would have achieved greater fame and prosperity and his diagnostic abilities would have been of immeasurable diagnostic abilities would have been immeasurable value to the people. When he declined the offer of Editorship of the ‘Bombay Chronicle’ and when his English Weekly ‘Janmabhoomi’ went out of existence in 1931, it was lamented that the Fleet Street was poorer by it. When he declined Rajagopalachari’s offer of membership of the Senate of the Andhra University, with a hint that the would be elevated to its Vice-Chancellorship, there was considerable disappointment in the academic community. Indeed he was a constructive Statesman. He always remained as highly balanced leader. The remark that Pattabhi had a ‘fatal flair for missing offices’ seemed apt. Rajagopalachari summed up Pattabhi’s attitude when he once jocularly said to the latter : “it may be that you will even refuse Congress President ship if it were offered.” Pattabhi, however, was not ‘the man to shed a tear over sundered ties or lost opportunities.’ The ‘National Herald’ rightly observed that “in spite of the tragedy of National honors not equaling national renown he has lost nothing of his buoyance or zest for work.”
He took to politics not only because politics seemed the best way to give display to his talents, but because he felt that educated men had a vital role to play in arousing political consciousness. Because of his success in private enterprise such as banking and co-operation, he always held that there should not be much dependence on Government. That was why he became a believer in Gandhian philosophy and a staunch opponent of the Socialists.

Pattabhi was an intellectual whose rise in public life was due to his intelligent participation in public affairs. His being an intellectual was an advantage. The late Sri Prakasa, a veteran Congress leader, wrote to Pattabhi: “you have always appeared to me to be ‘bursting’ with knowledge of everything. I have always been amazed at the amount of information you carry” A close associate and follower of Pattabhi said that Pattabhi had ‘an analytical brain’ and that ‘he would analyze men and matters drawing conclusions and give expression to them Without fear or favour.’

Like Gokhale, observed a writer, Pattabhi was a graduate at eighteen and like Chintamani he was a walking encyclopaedia. Those that came in contact with him could not but be impressed by his intellectual abilities. He had “a mind,” wrote Homi J.H. Taleyarkhan, “as sharp as a razor blade and as clear as a blue summer sky. During practically a whole evening I spent with him I could not see a wisp of could in his arguments, nor a trace of hesitation in his massive and masterly marshaling of facts.” He was an authority on a variety of subjects ranging from Khaddar to economic imperialism, Congress history to a constructive Programme, and from medicine to Gandhian philosophy. His speeches were marked by clarity, vigor and deep knowledge. One, however, notices that they occasionally smack of a metaphorical style. In his attempt to make complicated issues simple he sometimes resorted to analogies and similes. On the whole, they reveal his sharp memory and rare ability to present problems in a simple way Pattabhi’s success lay in that he proved how intellectuality and pragmatism could be combined.
If his being an intellectual was an advantage to Pattabhi. It also proved to be a handicap in some ways. Intellectuals suffered from many handicaps in Indian politics. As William Robson observed: "In India, the intellectuals seem somehow to be relegated to the sidelines, partly by their own choice but mainly by the decision of others." There has been in India a "wide-spread failure to recognize the role of the intellectual in society." If Pattabhi did not get the recognition he deserved, it was partly due to the fact that he suffered from the trappings of an intellectual. Conformity with the Gandhian standards seemed to him more important than the expectation of rewards. That he chose to be an unswerving 'No-Changer,' whereas all his colleagues changed their positions during 1936-37 indicates the importance he attached to principles. In certain matters such as his attitude towards Council-entry, Pattabhi had, what Lewis J. Edinger would call, "a dogmatic personality with a closed belief system."

When asked to explain why in spite of his abilities he could not occupy high governmental positions, Pattabhi replied that leadership meant (1) catering to the tastes of the followers, (2) ambition to get it, (3) advertisement of oneself irrespective of modesty, and (4) money for all these purposes. He said that he possessed none of them. Among the qualities, listed by Lewis J. Edinger, necessary for successful leadership, Pattabhi possessed was only a few. One such quality which Pattabhi possessed was 'strong motivation and the drive and energy to pursue firmly held goals.' A dominating feature of Pattabhi's personality was his strong will power.

A drag on Pattabhi's political career was his 'candour and blunt manners.' His frankness on which he prided himself brought him a number of enemies. He was also, like the Andhra Brahmin leaders, an individualist, though in the national politics he often suppressed his individualist streak for the sake of Party discipline. But his mind was too independent to submit itself to the machinations of Party politics. He himself admitted: "I do not drill with the Party. An independent mind is an inconvenient factor in Party organisation." His
spirit of independence harmed only himself. Even though he disagreed and crossed swords with the powerful men in the Party, he never rebelled against the leadership when he was ignored or insulted.

Being a South Indian was considered a handicap in Indian politics. It used to be said that Pattabhi would have occupied higher positions if he were not an Andhra. It must, however, be said that this factor was not so much of a handicap in the case of Pattabhi as it was in the case of some other South Indian leaders, notably T. Prakasam.

Pattabhi did pioneering work in the Andhra movement and the State’s People’s Movement. But he did not get popular recognition for the work he did. It was because he was a leader without charisma. In the Andhra movement, Prakasam was a household name. In the State’s People’s movement Nehru was hailed for his support to the State’s People. But much before Prakasam in Andhra and Nehru in A.I.S.P.C. stepped in, Pattabhi had already done solid groundwork. In a society in which images count more than intellect with the large majority of people, no leader without an image can hope to get popular support.

A true democrat, he believed that democracy like Non-violence was not an end in itself but a means. Democracy is an endeavour, an attitude and spirit. “It must dwell in each layer of authority, in every act of administration, in all symbols of power.” Hard work, respect for human dignity and an awareness of one’s obligations to society were the ideals, he cherished. To him the fulfilment of one’s Responsibilities was more important than the assertion of one’s rights. Self-effacing Pattabhi, as Sri Prakasam, another stalwart of the older generation, observed, was one of those who stress on integrity in public life. Although he advocated a separate Andhra State, he had high regard for all regions, languages and faiths. He spent many years in Madras and enjoyed the confidence of several Tamil leaders. He presided over the meetings of the Karnataka Maha Sabha, delivered a convocation address in Sanskrit, and on
some important occasions made his speeches in Urdu and Hindi. A staunch nationalist who stood for Hindu-Muslim unity, he believed in the oneness of India. He felt that India’s heritage and moral supremacy were the real strength of India and believed in a synthesis of the past and the present. India should not sacrifice her high ideals for the sake of material prosperity. He praised Nehru for keeping India nonaligned. Modern India was shaped by Gandhi, whose “teachings constitute forever the new Decalogue of Indian democracy.”

Our heaven, said Pattabhi, is democracy and Swaraj must be transformed into Ramraj.

One of the senior Congressmen, Pattabhi was uninterruptedly associated with the Congress from its earliest times till his death in 1959. His loyalty and disciplined service were well-known. He was once called the ‘sage of our struggle for freedom.’ In the pre-Gandhian era, he was known as a Congressman with ‘the head of a liberal and the heart of an extremist.’ As a Congressman, Pattabhi’s role was mostly in the Committees, particularly in the Working Committee. He was ‘an outstanding Right Wing leader’ and lent strong support to his colleagues like Patel and Rajendra Prasad. At a time when the relations between the Party and the Government were being redefined, he, as Congress President was of considerable help to both of them. Politically, he was close to Rajendra Prasad, Patel, Rajagopalachari, Maulana and Azad and Shanker Rao Deo. Like Deo, he was an orthodox Gandhian. He lacked the gentleness of Rajendra Prasad, the tact of Rajagopalachari, the ruthlessness of Patel and the charisma of Nehru. As a follower of Gandhi, he not only publicized the Gandhian discourses but ‘translated precept in terms of concrete action’ and willingly bowed down to Gandhi’s rulings. “The book of Gandhi’s life,” Pattabhi wrote, “within whose sphere I have been an atom floating about……is of course my main guide and inspiration.” He took to the Gandhian programmes at a time when few devoted attention to them. Personally he was close to Rajendra Prasad.
The sacrifices and services made by many great men ennobled the struggle for freedom. The leaders bore many a burden cheerfully. They had indeed stoic fortitude and remarkable ability to laugh with others as well as at themselves. For example, humor was the forte of Pattabhi. He had robust common sense and a devastating repartee. At a meeting of the Congress Party, once discussion turned to the question of daily allowance. Rajakumari Amrit Kaur suggested that it should be reduced from Rs.45/- (as it existed) to Rs.22/- Dr.P.C. Ghosh seconded it and Kripalani and his wife Sucheta supported it. Pattabhi got up and said that the mover (Amrit Kaur) came from a Royal family, the person who seconded it, Gosh, was a bachelor and the Kripalani were without children and all of them were therefore, not competent to speak on daily allowance. Amidst laughter, the question was dropped when the Constituent Assembly announced the names of three well-known lawyers, S. Varadachari, Alladi Krishna swami Iyer and B.N. Mitter, as members of the Committee to prepare a section on Citizenship. Pattabhi suggested that to the Committee of three lawyers of eminence, might be added a man of Commonsense. When this Committee in its report later took note only of those born after the Union came into being, Pattabhi quipped “what about those born before the Union?

Pattabhi Sitaramayya fought ‘his way to his vast responsibilities with rare courage’ and put into practice what he believed would be useful to the people. His constructive work, be it in the small town of Masulipatnam, where he first launched his schemes of social and political reconstruction or in national organization like the Congress, was of immense value. But whenever he heard or felt that he should have scaled greater heights in the political and social life of India, Pattabhi used to console himself by taking a detached view, the typical of a true Hindu. After thorough investigation of his works and qualities it is proved that he was real Statesman.