APPENDIX

REACTIONS TO THE RESERVATION FOR OBC:
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FOUR STATES

I

INTRODUCTION: THE PROBLEM AND HYPOTHESES

It was stated in the preface that the main objective of this report is to explain why the Uttar Pradesh and Bihar Government Orders of 1977 and 1978 providing for job reservations to the Other Backward Classes provoked a violent and virulent protest and backlash, and why the similar measures in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka were generally accepted by the forward castes. More specifically, we are examining why the forward castes in Bihar and U. P. had not only the willingness and anger to strike back, but also the capability to do so, and why their counterparts in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu did not have the willingness to resort to violent protest, and even if they had, lacked the capability for violent protest. This pattern of caste conflict is only a part of the general canvas of the caste conflicts which are being increasingly waged in the country. Conflicts among the various castes and caste groups on the single issue of reservation of seats and jobs are only a particular kind of manifestation of the general struggle and competition for ascendancy in the socio-political and economic realms. These struggles and competitions are the pervasive features of the Indian politics, although there exist considerable regional variations. In some States like Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh they are at a low key and in some other states like Bihar, Karnataka, U. P., they are intense. In some states as in Maharashtra, the struggles may not be centering around the issue of job and seats reservation, but manifest themselves in the form of
resentment and atrocities. The struggles may be confined to the control of political party or they may extend to other areas as well. Again they may be violent or non-violent. But, like the atrocities on the Harijans caste struggles, attended by violence, for and against the inclusion of the castes in the other Backward Classes categories under Articles 15(4) and 16(4) of the constitution, will have to be considered as the more acute forms of such conflicts.

The traditional hierarchization of the Hindu society along the caste lines more or less corresponded with the political and economic ones. Those groups, which had a higher ascriptive social or ritual status, were also generally high in terms of political power and economic strength, which meant mainly land in the pre-British India. This kind of a social organisation has been described by Dahl (1961) as one of cumulative inequalities. It was also an inherently stable order, since the various kinds of advantages and deprivations coincided with one another. In terms of the concept coined by Galtung (1972), we can say that in the social ordering in the pre-British India did not have rank disequilibrium. That is there was no caste, generally speaking, which was very high on social power, but very low on economic power, or very high on economic power but low on the ritual status. This is not to deny that this inherently stable order was highly inegalitarian and morally reprehensible. Also, this hierarchization was not totally rigid and inflexible as it is often made out to be. As Kothari (1970) has argued, even in the pre-British India the lower and tribal sections could make an entry into the middle order caste groups. The military prowess on the part of some of the castes enabled them to wrest a higher caste status. In many parts of India the Bhakti movement sapped position of the Brahmins and other upper castes. But such instances of secularization were few and far between and never overturned the hierarchization of the Hindu society.

With the advent of the British rule the seeds of enormous changes were sown and this had many far reaching consequences. The impact of the British
rule, consolidation of the political regime, introduction of the Western oriented educational system, opening up of many avenues of occupation and profession has been competently analyzed by many scholars like Kothari (1970), Srinivas (1966), Beteille (1965), Singh (1973), the Rudolphs (1967), Rao (1979), etc. The British rule produced many structural disturbances in the Hindu caste structure, and these were contradictory in nature and impact. In the first place, the British rule accentuated the disparities in the distribution of economic and political power, particularly in regard to the upper and intermediate castes. The Brahmins in most parts of the country, being the literati caste, responded promptly to the western liberal education and entered in big numbers into the government service and the professions. By the turn of the century, they also came to dominate the national movement. In those provinces of India, where for historical reasons, the Brahmins did not possess in abundance the advantage of being the sole literati caste, the other castes like the Kayasthas took to the western education and modernization. The preponderance of the Brahmins of the Madras Presidency and the Princely Mysore State among the literates, and particularly the English knowing population, has been well established by Irschhick (1969) and Manor (1977). The Brahmins in these and other areas had another advantage. As Irschhick argues, the Brahmins in Madras had sizeable landholdings, although they did not constitute the dominant element of the landed gentry. The Brahmins particularly in South India were successful in converting their landed resources into more paying resources of the government service and professions. Their links with the land became increasingly tenuous, as they became absentee landlords or sold out their lands to educate their children. They became increasingly urban oriented.

Thus, the British rule and the modernization it entailed aggravated the status differences between the various castes, particularly, the Brahmins, Kayasthas on the one hand, and the landed gentry castes on the other. Secondly, the British rule, the egalitarian system of justice and the liberal education injected into the system, new ideas of equality, equality of
opportunity, etc. In the beginning the ideas of equality of opportunity, or meritarian principles of justice came in handy for the literati castes, who almost, monopolized the government jobs and professional opportunities in the name of full and free competition. They knew that they had left the landed gentry castes like the Vellalas, Vokkaligas, Lingayats, Rajputs and Bhumihars lagging far behind. But the meritarian principle of justice was soon challenged as the equal treatment of the unequals. The distributive aspects of justice started appealing to the non-literate caste leaders. Again, the parity-pollution concepts and social disabilities suffered in varying degrees by different castes came under severe criticism. Thus, the Western ideals of social equality, equality of opportunity and treatment and distributive justice in terms of not merely economic but other social values provided a powerful impetus to many caste groups to get organized and demand a fairer dispensation. These values were totally inconsistent with the hierarchically organized Hindu system, in which the distances between certain upper castes were widening, rather than narrowing. This explosive mixture of contrary impacts produced different results. It gives rise to genteel social reform movements aimed at eliminating caste disabilities, education of women, abolition of sati, upliftment of the Scheduled Castes etc. These were generally led by the enlightened members of the forward castes themselves, at least in the beginning. In due course of time, more militant, aggressive reform movements appeared, seeking to reject the Brahminical culture and dominance, as in the case of the Non-Brahmin movement of Jyotibha Phule of Maharashtra and, more recently, the self-respect movement of E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker in Madras. The Shri Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam movement of the Izhavas in Kerala was less militant, and more inward looking (Rao, 1979). But, the urge for equality found a most powerful expression in what Srinivas has called Sanskritization, which reached its peak in the first two decades of this century. Sanskritization indicates the phenomenon of backward castes imitating the mores, customs and rituals of the forward castes and laying claim to a forward caste status.
When this process was at its height, the census commissions of the British Indian provinces were bedevilled by the plethora of claims to higher caste status.

Thirdly, the British rule saw the establishment of countrywide communication networks, like post and telegraphs, railways, and mass circulation of newspapers. These facilities penetrated the isolated caste structures and enabled caste or similar caste groups to come together and form caste associations. This to a great extent erased or diluted the sub-caste distinctions and the castes assumed a new role, un-envisaged by the Hindu ethic Sanskritization, militant reform on rejection movements were facilitated by the modern communications.

Thus, the various impacts of the British rule on the Hindu caste system, viz., near Monopolization of jobs, education and professions by the literati castes, the Western concepts of equality and justice undermining the Hindu hierarchical dispensation, the phenomenon of Sanskritization, genteel reform movements from above and militant reform movements from below, emergence of the caste associations with a new role set the stage for the caste conflicts in modern India, two more ingredients which were very weak in the British period, viz., politicization of the masses and universal adult franchise, became powerful moving forces after the Independence.

As Rao (1979) has shown in his comparative analysis of the Yadav movement (which was stronger in North India than in the South) and the Izhava movement of Kerala, the backward classes movements have varied in their support basis, extent of relative deprivation, goals they were seeking, and the means they adopted. These variations were strongly determined by the different types of cleavages produced by the inherited social structure and the impact of the British rule. He has identified four types of such movements. In Madras, Karnataka and Maharashtra, the Brahmin-Non-Brahmin cleavage appeared and the movements had the aim of reducing the dominance of the Brahmins in politics and professions. The second pattern is noticed in the
north, where the cleavage emerged between the generally forward and twice-born castes of Brahmins, Bhumihars and Kayasthas, Rajputs on the one hand, and the intermediate castes of Ahirs, Kurmis, etc. on the other. The third pattern indicated by Rio is that of a conflict between the depressed castes and the forward castes. The Izhava movement in Kerala and the energetic movement of the Nadars in Madras, the movements led by Dr. Ambedkar and the more recent movement of the Dalits in Maharashtra are the examples. The tribal movements constitute the fourth type. This otherwise powerful conceptualization on the part of the Rao does not recognize the full role of politics as a mechanism for the upliftment of the backward castes, the variation through time in the complexion of the movements, particularly in regard to the opposition reference groups, and the internal tensions within each camp. As we shall see later, the self-respect movement started by E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker in 1925 infused fresh ideology into the moribund justice movement. By the 1970's the non-Brahmin coalition disintegrated in Karnataka and a second phase movement of the smaller backward castes against the landed gentry castes of the Lingayats and Vokkaligas emerged. The Bihar politics till recently was characterized by the Bhumihars and Rajputs conflicts, and the backward castes have not made a successful entry into politics there.

It has been argued that only after the independence and introduction of the universal adult franchise, the Indian society and polity, which has grown independently of each other, were introduced to each other. But this phenomenon of the Hindu social structure and the new political regime interacting with each other did not suddenly begin only after the independence. Only that the ingredients of politics, franchises and mass production, which were present even before the independence, assumed tremendous proportions after the independence – at least in some parts of India like Madras, the Princely Mysore State, Bombay, Sanskritization lost its charm and utility to many backward castes. After all, the process had offered
only symbolic reward and satisfaction to the members of these caste groups. It
did almost nothing to reduce the relative deprivation in terms of jobs,
professional and educational opportunities. The higher caste status, grudgingly
given by the British census commissioners, or pompously adopted by the
castes themselves, did not enable the backward castes to make a dent into the
upper caste hegemony in government jobs, education, professions and the
nationalist movement. The backward castes too had to try to convert the
existing resources into job opportunities, or generate new resources toward
this end. The genteel reform movements from the top had done little to fulfil
their expectations. Hence, many backward castes, within the limits of
available mass mobilization, franchise restrictions and access to governmental
decision making centres, tried to demand a share in the case of job
opportunities and educational facilities. In this endeavour, the newly formed
caste associations or their confederations played an important role. This
process began much before the independence, at least in some parts of India.

The most striking success was achieved in this field by the Justice
Party of the Madras Presidency. The party, formed in 1916, was mainly led by
the Vellalas of the Tamil areas, Kammas, i.e., Maidus, Reddis, Velamas of the
Telugu areas and the Nairs of the Malayalam speaking Malabar district. All
these are only just one rung below the Brahmins and controlled the landed
resources (The Tamil Christians too played a role, which was only marginal).
Similarly, the Praja Mitra Mandali led by the non-Brahmin elite castes of
Vokkaligas and Lingayats in the Princely Mysore State wrested job and
educational reservations after 1921. In Bombay too certain reservations came
to be provided by the Government for the intermediate castes like the
Marathas. All these successes were due not only to responsive British
Government (or the Prince of Mysore), but also to the new organizational and
mobilizational capabilities developed by these castes.

But, with the rising crescendo of the nationalist movement and its mass
base, these castes groups realized that they would be isolated if they stand
aloof. In the twenties and thirties of this century, these intermediate caste groups joined the national movement and the Congress Party. In fact the Congress Party's rural thrust acquired a new momentum by development. As Roy (n. d.) has argued, when the avenues and opportunities of upward mobility were limited, politics promised the necessary ladder. "In other words, the political system has to discharge not only the strictly political functions but also the social functions. Political system thus becomes in effect an extension of the social system where battle for upward mobility is carried" (Ibid.; p. 163)

The entry of the intermediate and backward caste groups into politics and the struggles to dominate the Congress party, or at least to claim a proper share in the structure of the party and government were further accelerated by the advent of independence and the establishment of the universal adult franchise. Once again in Dahlian terms, the structure of inequalities started becoming dispersed, but only to some extent. Those caste groups which were low in terms of the ritual and social status, and advancement in jobs and professions, at least started acquiring political clout and leverage. They sought to transform the latter into the former. This in essence is the structure of caste conflict. According to the concepts of Galtung described above, the situation become inherently unstable due to increasing rank disequilibrium. The conflicts started centering around the distribution of political spoils and patronage and the implementation of Articles 15(4) and 16(4) of the Constitution, providing for protective discrimination in favour of the socially and educationally backward classes and Scheduled Castes and Tribes.

The roots of Constitutional provisions regarding protective discrimination in favour of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes go back to the decades of the freedom- struggle. In fact, the freedom movement itself was strengthened by the commitment on the part of the national elites to the welfare of these Castes and Tribes. Enabled by Articles 15 (4) and 16 (4) of the Constitution the Union and the States have reserved government jobs, and seats. In educational institutions in favour of these groups, generally in
proportion of their population. The national consensus in this regard among the contemporary elites and political parties is so strong that they vie with one another, at least ostensibly, in support of these measures. At the grass roots level, many sections do resent these provisions. This resentment takes many forms. The reservations for the Scheduled Castes and Tribes were provided, not because the Castes and Tribes were powerful and assertive, and possessed bargaining power, but because of the national consensus which was hammered out by Gandhiji and Dr. Ambedkar.

But, the Constitution provides for protective discrimination for the "Socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes". The phrase 'socially and educationally backward classes' has provoked intense political controversies and conflicts, and an enormous amount of constitutional litigation. What the framers of the Constitution meant by this phrase is abundantly clear. The Indian society contains many sections whose economic position and social status are almost similar to those of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes, although they may not strictly be stigmatized by untouchability. Hence, these sections have been called 'other' backward classes. These are also in need of the same kind of protection that is given to the Scheduled Castes and Tribes. In spite of the many judicial pronouncements on the meaning of the Phrase, 'socially and educationally backward classes', the states in India have not adopted any common criterion of this backwardness. The criteria have changed from time to time even within a State. The competition among the various middle order castes for being included in the backward classes lists constitutes an important part of the totality of the political struggles and conflicts that are being waged in the country today.

When we look at the four States under study, viz., Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, we find striking variations in the reservations for the OBC's and inclusion of different castes in the OBC list. As we will see later even the Tamil Nadu list has undergone many changes, but
has not provoked any protest or overt resentment on the part of those classified as forward, which include not only the Brahmins but other intermediate castes. The only trouble arose when in July 1979, the M. G. Ramachandran government superimposed an income criterion of Rs. 9,000 on the OBC list. This led to a vigorous protest, led mainly by the DMK. Finally, the order has been rescinded. In Karnataka, the reservation G. O.'s have been embroiled in tortuous litigation and protest. As long as the Lingayats had been classified as backward there was not in the Havanur Commission Report (1975) and then in the G.O.'s based on the Report have provoked the ire of the community. But this ire has not manifested in any violent agitation. The willingness to strike back is there, but not the capability. In U. P. and Bihar the reservation G. O.'s were first issued in August 1977 and November 1978, by the Yadav and Thakur governments, respectively. What these two governments did was to follow not Mysore (Karnataka) model of 1956 and 1960, which classified almost all the castes except a few as backward, but the Debrai Urs model of 1977, in which substantial and dominant castes were left out of the classification. In the game theoretical concepts, the Thakur and Yadav governments sought to establish smaller, coalitions of caste groups to enlarge the gains. This provoked an avalanche of protest and agitation on the part of the adversely affected caste groups of Brahmins, Rajputs, Bhumihars and Kayasthas. Processions, bundhs agitations, boycott of classes, attacks on public property became the order of the day (it must be recorded, however, that the forward caste agitators did not dare attack the intermediate caste members personally). There were counter demonstrations also, organised by the youths of Ahir, Kurmi and Koeri castes.

To seek to explain this phenomenon of backlash in U., P., and Bihar, its absence in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka the following hypotheses have been formulated. An attempt has been made to test them with the help of qualitative and impressionistic data gathered from documents, published books and articles, interviews with ministers, legislators, and other politicians,
academicians, journalists, civil servants, and other knowledgeable persons in these states. Each hypothesis has not been verified separately to avoid repetition.

Hypothesis-1

If the communal reservation scheme has had a long history, retaliation by the forward castes is likely to be absent.

The historical timing of the introduction of the scheme has a tremendous bearing on the reaction of the groups adversely affected by such schemes. If the reservation schemes come to existence at a time when the levels of political organisation and mobilization of the groups are low, they are likely to be accepted as a kind of *fait accompli*. The groups kept out of the reservation schemes are likely to learn to live with the disadvantage and try to overcome them. The reservation schemes are introduced at a time when the level of political mobilization and organization are very high. Then such groups are likely to resort to resistance.

Hypothesis-2

If the forward castes are divided against themselves, the chances of retaliation are less.

Obviously, cohesion or unity on the part of the forward castes, which are kept out by the reservation schemes, increases their capacity for retaliation. If such forward castes themselves are divided politically or by the reservation scheme itself, their capacity to mount resistance and retaliation will be less. If a reservation scheme divides the forward castes along the sub-caste lines and includes within the purview of reservation and excludes the others, the unity of such castes is tremendously affected. In other words, the fact whether the whole clusters of castes have been taken into account for forward/ backward classification or their sub-castes have been taken into account for forward/backward classification is a crucial one.
Hypothesis-3

If the Backward and Scheduled Castes are not getting on well together the retaliation on the part of forward castes are not getting on well together, the retaliation on the part of forward castes is likely to be high.

It has been discussed above how the various kinds of cleavages have affected the emergence the nature of the backward class movements in different parts of the country. If the intermediate castes can make a common cause with the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and forge a common and united political phalanx, then the backward class movement is likely to be very strong. If for some reasons, the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and other minor castes like the potters, the weavers, the carpenters etc. feel threatened by the intermediate castes also having a stake in the land like the upper-castes, the backward class movement will be considerably weakened. There are many states in India where the weaker landless minority artisan castes and the Scheduled Castes look to the upper castes and not to the intermediate castes for their protection. Also, if the artisan castes and the Scheduled Castes feel that the operation of the democratic processes in the last 30 years had benefited the intermediate castes, they are likely to be less enthusiastic in the joining hands with the intermediate castes in the backward castes in the backward class movements.

Hypothesis-4

If the backward classes are also politicized and organized, the retaliation on the part of the forward castes is less likely.

Either of the two following conditions is necessary for the viability and success of a reservation scheme. In the first place the Government has to fully back it and standby the commitments. This happened, for example, in the case of the Madras Presidency and the Princely Mysore State. The British Governors Executive Councillors and ICS Officers of the Madras Presidency were fully persuaded that the Brahmin domination in the services and the
professions must be reduced. They were sympathetic to the cause of the Justice Party from the beginning. Similarly, the then Maharaja of Mysore was also inclined in favour of giving the non-Brahmins a fairer deal. In the absence of such support from the top, a second condition has to be fulfilled. If the backward classes have fully penetrated into the dominant party and the various corridors of power and have been politicized and organized, they are in a position, or they have the potential to mount a counter retaliation in case the disaffected forward castes agitate against a reservation scheme.

Hypothesis-5

If the upper castes are suddenly faced with the prospect of losing their political and economic position, i.e. if a reservation scheme is likely to bring about a sudden rank disequilibrium then the chances of retaliation on the part of such castes are very high.

In the United States much of the white backlash against the protective discrimination and other facilities given to the blacks has been spearheaded by those poor whites who were faced the threat a sudden loss of status and prestige. Similarly in India, if the upper castes face a similar sudden threat to their position, they will be tempted to amount resistance and retaliation. If for some reasons the upper castes continue to maintain their mobility and status in some other ways and avenues, they are likely to feel less threatened by the reservation schemes favouring the intermediate and the backward classes. It is quite possible that in a couple of states under study the upper castes felt that the intermediate castes which have been included in the backward classes list are getting prosperous economically and also will have the added advantage of job and professional opportunities. In such a situation of rank disequilibrium, they are likely to retaliate against the reservation schemes.
Hypothesis-6

If the forward sub-castes persons can pass off as backward castes persons, the likelihood of retaliation is less.

On the face of it, this hypothesis may sound implausible. No matter what a person does, he cannot shake off his caste label. But, if an OBC classification takes into account the sub-castes of the various major caste categories and classifies some as forward and some others as backward, it will be relatively easier for a person belonging to a forward sub-caste to pass off as one belonging to a backward sub-caste. While in the rural areas the village officers or the tahsildars may identify a person's sub-caste accurately and place him as either forward or backward, in the urban areas it become very difficult for the government officers to disprove that a person does not belong to one sub-caste and prove that he actually belongs to another sub-caste. Particularly in the South Indian States of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka it is said that many applicants for jobs can manage to obtain any kind of certificate.

Hypothesis-7

If the State as a whole has experienced a kind of revivalism, or is mobilized against outside symbols, the backward class movement against the forward castes is likely to be less powerful.

As discussed in the theoretical sections of this Chapter, an appropriate cleavage between the upper castes and lower castes is a necessary precondition for the mobilization of the lower castes into a backward class movement. It is quite possible that historically speaking such cleavages may appear first. But they are likely to be blurred if a sub-nationalist revivalistic movement develops in that area. These cleavages between the upper castes and lower castes need not be very durable ones. As some non-Brahmin castes get the advantage of reservation and political power they may improve their social and economic position considerably. We then should expect a new cleavage to appear, i.e., between those who have not gained from the
reservation. But this cleavage may be prevented from surfacing if any kind of a sub-nationalist or revivalistic movement distracts the energies, attention and the sense of relative deprivation of the really disadvantaged lower castes.

Hypothesis-8

The capacity on the part of the backward castes to retaliate is a function of (a) their numbers (b) political consciousness (c) dominance, and (d) perceived lack of alternative opportunities.

It stands to reason that if the castes which have been classified as forward have considerable numerical support and are possessing a high degree of political consciousness, then their capacity to retaliate is likely to be high. Similarly, if they are dominant economically and politically and are in control of the various positions of power, patronage and economic surplus, they are in a better position to resist the introduction of reservation schemes. Again, if the members of these castes feel that they have no other alternative employment and occupational opportunities than the government jobs, they are likely to feel driven to the wall and will engage themselves in resistance.

But if they perceive that they can go out of the state or pursue other job opportunities, their frustration will less and they are less likely to mount retaliation.

Hypothesis-9

If the non-government tertiary sector is expanding, the retaliation on the part of the forward castes is less likely.

This hypothesis is organically related to the preceding one. If in a State the non-governmental sector is expanding, the members of those castes classified as forward may turn to such sectors. If the economy of the state is growing slowly and if the government is the only or the predominant employer of the young graduates, then members of the castes classified as forward will feel deeply threatened and will be disposed to retaliate.
TAMIL NADU: FROM THE NON-BRAHMIN MOVEMENT TO TAMIL REVIVALISM

The runaway lead taken by both the Tamil and Telugu Brahmins in the field of education in the erstwhile Presidency of Madras has been well documented (Irshick, 1969; Arnold, 1977). By the turn of the century the male literacy rate among the Tamil Brahmins was 73.6 per cent as against a similar rate among the Vellalas. The Brahmins had established a near monopoly of the government services and the professions. As far back as 1851, the Madras Revenue Board had instructed the District Collectors to restrict the number of the Brahmin entrants into the services. In spite of this, the Brahmin domination of the government services and the professions went on unabated. The caste’s domination in the Provincial Congress Committee had been well established. Alerted by the Advent of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms and dyarchy, the non-Brahmin elite castes took the lead in establishing first the South Indian Liberal Federation, and secondly, the Justice Party in 1916. After coming to power in 1920, the party extended in 1921 the scope of the 1881 order, by requiring all the heads of the departments to distribute appointments of all the grades among the various communities. But for the first time in the history of the communal G.O., in Madras, a clear cut reservation procedure was laid down by the order of 1927. The following compartmental reservation of posts was provided:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Posts</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Non-Brahmin Hindus</td>
<td>5 of 12</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Brahmins</td>
<td>2 of 12</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Muslims</td>
<td>2 of 12</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Anglo-Indians</td>
<td>2 of 12</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Depressed classes</td>
<td>1 of 12</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

100% (rounded)
This scheme of reservation was in operation till 1947. The adversely affected caste of Brahmins was too weak numerically to resist this scheme. Many of the Brahmin leaders had also acknowledged that they indeed had obtained a lion's share of the jobs and educational facilities. As the youth of the Brahmins community felt the squeeze of the operation of the 1927 order, they started migrating to the other metropolitan cities of India, particularly Bombay, which has continued even till today. As can be seen from the G.O. the Scheduled Castes were earmarked only 8 per cent of the jobs, far less than warranted by their share in the population. In view of the strength of the non-Brahmin and of the need to broaden the base of the Congress party in the thirties by inducting more and more non-Brahmin elites into the party, the first Congress ministry in the province headed by Rajaji did not even touch the G.O.

In the Tamil areas of Madras, the 1927 G.O. represented a victory for the Vellala Castes, particularly the Modaliars. In these areas, they had provided the leadership of the Justice Party, although there were leaders from other non-Brahmin castes as well. The Justice Party leaders were drawn from the landed classes and were not much keen on broadening their base by including the landless castes within their ranks. In fact, they began to show a marked disinclination for social reforms and amelioration of the conditions of other weaker and backward castes. A slow erosion of the ranks of the party and defections to the Congress had already begun in the twenties, and the non-Brahmin strategy was to infiltrate into the Congress and capture the organization from within. By the thirties the Justice Party had served its historic purpose of reducing to a great extent the sense of deprivation on the part of the zamindar interests, particularly in the fields of government jobs and education. As the Brahmin youths moved out, the upper caste youths started replacing them. The reservation scheme had come to stay in the political consciousness of the Tamils and became all accomplished fact. Hence, the
party also started losing its base and elan. It was too much tainted with the association with the British rulers to survive the rising tide of nationalism.

E. V. Ramasami Naicker, a Balija Naidu, had begun his political career with the Congress. Angered by the domination of the Brahmins in the party, and also annoyed with Gandhiji’s espousal of a purified Varna ideology, he revolted from the party. He left the party around 1925, to start the self-respect movement. The movement aimed at nothing short of a rejection of the Brahminical religion and culture, which Naicker thought was the prime instrument of enslaving the Tamilians. By 1939 Naicker was demanding a separate Dravidistan (Nardgrave, 1965). As Irschick has pointed out, "The Self-Respect movement concentrate almost entirely on the Tamil Districts, primarily on groups of low in the caste hierarchy, including the untouchables, for whom the social reform platform would have the most appeal" (1969; p.334). But for the self-respect movement the elite non-Brahmins of Madras would in course of time, have been as isolated from the lower caste groups, as the Lingayate and Vokkaliga leaders in Karnataka came to be at the end of the sixties. In 1944 the Justice Party was reconstituted as the Dravida Kazhagam, which was imbued with not only an anti-Brahmin, anti-North, anti-Hindi ideology, but also with separatist, sub-nationalism.

Naicker ran the DK pretty autocratically, which was not liked by the younger elements of the party, led by C. N. Annadurai. When Naicker married in 1949 a girl much younger to him, Annadurai and his friends walked out to form the Dravid Munnetra Kazhagam, which, while subscribing to the DK ideology, developed parliamentary ambitions.

The Communal G.O., of 1927 prevailed till 1947, when it was revised as follows:-
Non-Brahmin Hindus 6 jobs out of 14, i.e., 43%
Backwards Hindus 2 jobs out of 14, i.e., 14%
Brahmins 2 jobs out of 14, i.e., 14%
Scheduled Castes 2 jobs out of 14, i.e., 14%
Anglo-Indians and Indian Christians 1 job out of 14, i.e., 7%
Muslims 1 job out of 14, i.e., 7%

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100%
(rounded)

The 1947 G.O. is an historical one because for the first time in the non-Brahmin castes were bifurcated into non-Brahmin Hindus and non-Brahmin backward Hindus. This bifurcation was done on the basis of the then existing caste lists for educational concessions. Obviously the non-Brahmin Hindus consisting of the forward Vellala Naidu, Chettiyar, Reddi etc. castes did not resent this bifurcation, since they were given a compartmental reservation of 43 per cent of the jobs. After the inauguration of the Constitution of India this compartmental reservation was struck down by the State Supreme Court. Then the 1947 scheme was converted into the following scheme by an order of September 1951. This order provided for the following scheme of reservation:-

Open competition-12 jobs out of 20 i.e., 60%
Backward classes-5 jobs out of 20 i.e., 25%
The Scheduled Castes-3 jobs out of 20 i.e., 15%

100%
In the light of the population figures of Scheduled Castes and Tribes as per the 1951 Census and after separation of Andhra Pradesh, the Madras Government promulgated in 1954 the following reservation scheme:

- **Open competition**: 59%
- **Backward classes**: 25%
- **S. Castes & Tribes**: 16%

100%

The 1954 order made only marginal changes. Those non-Brahmin forward castes: like the Adi Salva-Vellalas, Karghata-Velialas, Modallyars, Kama-Naidus, which had provided the leadership to the non-Brahmin movement two decades ago, were now compelled to compete along with the Brahmins for jobs and seats in the open competition pool. These non-Brahmin forward castes did not feel any threat on being shunted to the open competition pool. They had consolidated their political power and sufficiently penetrated into the services with the help of these resources. They could get more than their share even with the Brahmins open competition pool where even the Brahmins, could not offer any kind of serious competition to them. Also, as it will be discussed later, because of the peculiar system of forward-backward classification along the sub-caste lines, there was a rampant misuse of the classification. In short, when the communal reservation scheme came into force in the new form, the non-Brahmin forward castes had become sufficiently powerful to hold on to their benefits and did not have to resort to any kind of a protest or backlash. Following the recommendation of the Tamil Nadu Backward Classes Commission (1970) the reservation scheme for the purposes of both Articles 15(4) and 16(4) was revised in 1971 as follows:-

- **Open competition**: 51%
- **Backward classes**: 31%
- **Scheduled Castes & Tribes**: 18%

100%
Even this reduction in the share of the open merit pool and increase in the reserved pool meant for the backward classes did not provoke any ire on the part of the non-Brahmin forward sub-caste groups.

As indicated above almost every major community or caste group in Tamil Nadu has been divided into forward and backward sub-caste sections and groups. Christian coverts from the Scheduled Castes are backward; Other Christians are forward. Labbal and Deccani Muslims are backward; and Urdu speaking Muslims are forward. Adi Saiva, Karghata, Kalaveli-Vellalas are forward; and Thuluva, Vellalas, Sozhia Vellalas are backward. All Reddys are forward except Ganjam Reddys. Gavarn and Vadugar Naidus are backward; but the Kamma Naidus are forward. Similarly the Chettiyars are also divided into forward and backward sub-caste groups. Until 1975 the Gounders or Komgu - Vellalas had been classified as forward, but the Karunanidhi government included them as backward. Even if some of these non-Brahmins forward castes had felt any kind of a resentment against being pushed into the open merit pool, their capacity for protest or retaliation would be very less, because they could not have made a common cause with their sub-caste counter-parts who were on the other side of the line.

The Tamil Nadu Backward Classes Commission has conclusively proved that nine castes in the other backward classes list, constituting about only 11.70% of the total backward classes population, have cornered 37.3 per cent of the non-gazetted and 48.2 per cent of the gazetted posts. Other minor and weaker backward classes have not been able to utilise the reservation scheme. In other words; the government services and, the educational, seats have come to be dominated not only by the forward non-Brahmin sub-castes mentioned above, but also by the nine other backward castes. These nine are Vadugas, Veerakodi-Vellalas, Gavaras, Sourashtrans, Thuluva Vellalas, Devangas, Sozhia-Vellalas, Aghamudiyans and Sadhu Chettis. The Tamil Nadu Backward Classes Commission, out of discretion, did not identify these names in the Volume-I of the Report (1979). But, these have been
unmistakably inferred from the other sections of the Report. The Commission, in view of the gains having been cornered only by a handful of castes suggested that the compartmental reservation should be introduced for the different kinds of the other backward castes: but the Karunanidhi administration did not heed these suggestions at all. Mr. Karunanidhi, in his interview with the author on 19-11-1979, said the matter had to be looked into, in spite of the obvious proof given in the Report. In his letter dated May 2, 1976 addressed to the then Governor of Tamil Nadu, Mr. A. N. Sattanathan, Chairman of the Backward Classes Commission, urged the former to look into the matter. Mr. Sattanathan says, “It could not have been the intention either of the Central government or the State government that backward classes list once framed should continue in perpetuity. There are judicial pronouncements that these lists should be under constraint review and the limited resources of the State should be extended and support given only to those who are genuinely backward socially and educationally. I humbly commend, for your consideration, that the time is now opportune for such a review”. Nothing seems to have come out of this letter. The main question here is: why did the weaker and minor backward castes constituting 88.7% of the backward classes population not feel the resentment against the benefits of reservation going to only a handful of castes? They could very well have combined with the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and mounted pressures on the government. As we shall, see, in the Chapter on Karnataka, when the Scheduled Castes, non-Brahmins, non-Lingayats and non-Vokkaligas castes discovered or felt that the gains of the reservation, and of the operation of the political systems had gone only to the Lingayats and Vokkaligas, they felt a deep sense of resentment. Devraj Urs capitalising on this resentment carved out a new political base for himself from these castes. He reduced the power of the Lingayats and Vokkaligas in the Congress structure and corridors of power. Later, the Havanur Commission excluded most of the Lingayats castes from the reservation scheme, which was implemented by a. G. O. Why did
such a political movement on the part of the weaker, minority backward caste
not arise in Tamil Nadu? The answer to this will have to be found in the
peculiar Dravida Kazhagam culture, which has been inherited both by the
DMK and the AIA-DMK. As long as the Tamil cultural revivalism continues
to grip the State and as long as the anti-Hindu anti-North, anti-Aryan issues
dominate the minds of the people, a real backward classes movement
espousing the cause of the really backward class will not emerge. The same
factors continue to provide a cohesion between the various non-Brahmins
castes. The DMK leaders particularly are not interested in anything which will
weaken the ethose of the Tamil movement.

A unique feature of the Tamil Nadu method of classifying the castes
into forward and backward has been referred to a couple of times above. The
sub-castes of some major Hindu non-Brahmin caste groups have been used for
the purposes of classification. This has opened the floodgates of abuse on the
part of those classified as forward. The Sattanathan Commission Report has
extensively and conclusively demonstrated this misuse. It is difficult for a
person belonging to one sub-caste, say Kargatha Vellala, to claim and obtain a
certificate that he is a Kaikolan, which is a totally different caste. But, it is
relatively easier for him to claim and obtain a certificate that he is a Sozhia
Vellala. For, Sozhia Vellala means a Vellala from the old Chola country. In
his letter dated May 2, 1976 addressed to the Governor of Tamil Nadu, Mr.
Sattanathan once again pointed out to the inexact wording and classification of
the OBC list and the rampant misuse it has generated. Mr. Sattanathan wrote:

The terms 'Gavara' and 'Vadugan' have been extensively used for
schooling, college admissions and 'reserved' appointments by almost all
Telugu speaking people calling themselves either as 'Naickers' or as 'Naidus',
though they may not belong to the specific divisions of the Vadugans and
Gavaras.
Again,

In fact, it could be said that excepting Brahmin community, many of the other 'non-backward' or forward community can by some means, or other, claim to be 'backward' in view of the large size of the list and inexact wordings frequently used in the list.

The Sattanathan Commission was prevented by its terms of reference from suggesting inclusion or deletion of any castes in the OBC lists. But the Report did indicate that something should be done especially for the 'sluggards' among the backward classes. In spite of this castes like Gounders or Kongu Vellalas, Sozhia Vellalas and Karuneegars, and groups like Deccani Muslims were added to the OBC list, which must be adversely affecting the most vulnerable backward castes.

There is an under current of some disappointment on the part of the weaker castes, particularly the Vanniya Kula Ksthatriyas against (a) the dominance of the Modaliers and Naidus, (b) the nine top backward castes concerning the benefits, and (c) inclusion of otherwise powerful castes in the OBC lists. But this disappointment has not assumed the proportions of resentment and protest. It has not been, and it is not likely to be politically mobilized. None of the Tamil Nadu political parties have had any intention mobilizing them on this issue. The M. G. Ramachandran G.O. of imposing the income criterion on the OBC list came nearest to it, but he too shied away from splitting the backward classes along these lines. Once again, we have to fall back on the explanation that as long as the Tamil sub-nationalist ideology prevails in the State, these issues will not become critical. The hegemony of the non-Brahmin forward castes and the more successful among backward castes is not likely to be challenged. Until then the question of resistance or backlash on the part of these castes will not arise.

The Scheduled Castes and Tribes constitute, about 18 per cent of the Tamil Nadu population. As we shall see later, in U.P. and Bihar relationships between the Scheduled Castes, on the one hand, and the inter-mediate castes,
like the Jats, Yadavas, Kurmis, Koeris, etc., are pretty strained. In Tamil Nadu, there have been some instances of atrocities on, or ill-treatment of the Schedule Castes. Beteille (1970) quotes Hutton's account of conflicts between the Kallas and the Adi-Dravidas in the thirties. Thevaras and Harijans too have been clashing with one another now and then. The Kilvemani atrocities in 1967 on the Harijans at the hands of Brahmins, Naickers and Mukkulthors attracted nationwide attention. Recently, in 1978 the Thevars and Harijans clashed. But on the whole, these are isolated instances. The State-wide cleavage between the non-Brahmins and the Harijans has not got consolidated in Tamil Nadu, overturning the Brahmin-non-Brahmin cleavage. Because Tamil Nadu is a non-Sanskritic cultural area, the four fold Varna system has less applicability there. The Harijans promptly responded to Ramaswamy Naickers Self-Respect movement. Hence, these relationships between the backward non-Brahmins and Harijans neither threaten the forward non-Brahmins nor help them. The energetic Nardars have improved their position considerably. Others too do not expect much of a threat to their rank or status.

Even if some non-Brahmin forward castes feel squeezed by the reservation schemes, the expanding Tamil Nadu economy may have come to their help. The forward Naidu boys have begun going into industry, business, etc. As we have noted the Brahmins have almost written off the Tamil Nadu government service. To a great, extent this has taken the pressure off these communities.
KARNATAKA: A TWO-STAGE BACKWARD CLASSES MOVEMENT

The present Karnataka State was constituted in 1956 out of the following erstwhile areas: (a) 9 districts of the Princely Mysore State (after 1950 part B State); (b) 4 districts of the Bombay State; (c) 2 districts of Madras State; (d) 3 districts of former Part B State of Hyderabad; and (e) the centrally administered district of Coorg. Of these five areas only in the Mysore and the Bombay areas, backward classes movement in the form of a non-Brahmin movement developed during the decades before the Independence. The Bellary and South Kanara districts, which formed part of the Madras State till 1953, and 1956 respectively, did not contribute significantly to the non-Brahmin movement in that State. In the Hyderabad areas, due to the autocratic nature of the Nizam's government and the relative domination of the Muslims, the Brahmin-non-Brahmin backward cleavage did not surface until after 1956, i.e., when these areas were merged with Mysore.

After about, fifty years of direct British control, the administration of the Princely Mysore was handed back to the Prince in 1981. During this period and the subsequent couple of decades, the important government posts came to be filled by Brahmins from Madras. This gave rise to a lot of resentment on the part of Mysore Brahmins, who raised the cry of 'Mysore for Mysoreans' (Kuppuswamy-1978). During the first two decades of this century the Mysore Brahmins started gaining in upper hand and completely established their ascendancy. In the Princely Mysore State the Brahmins constituted 3.8 per cent of the population, Kokkaligas 20.4 per cent, Lingayats 12.0 per cent depressed classes 15.1 per cent.
At the turn of the country as the 1901 census revealed 68 per cent of the Mysore Brahmins were literate whereas, only 14.1 per cent of the Lingayats and 4 per cent of the Vokkaligas were literate. Similarly, whereas 10.2 per cent of the Brahmins were literate in English only 13 per cent of the Lingayats and .07 per cent of the Vokkaligas were literate in English. Like their counterparts in Madras, the Brahmins had established a run away lead over the two dominant landed gentry castes of the Lingayats and the Vokkaligas. During the next 40 years, the percentage of English knowing Brahmins increased from 10.2 per cent to 36.2 per cent, whereas the similar percentage among the Lingayats increased from .13 per cent to 2.34 per cent and among the Vokkaligas from 0.7 per cent to 1.09 per cent. Although to some extent the literacy gap was bridged among the castes that of English Literacy was not bridged to the same extent. In the urban areas the Brahmans constituted 38 per cent of the total workers in the literate occupations (Monor, 1977). Almost contemporaneously with the rise of the Justice Movement in Madras in the second decade of the century, the Lingayats and Vokkaligas of the Princely Mysore State became agitated over the Brahmins predominance in the government service and education. Like the Vellalas and Reddys of the Madras Presidency, they too possessed the important resource, i.e., land. As the Brahmans; turned increasingly urbanward, the Lingayat and Vokkaliga gentry bought up their lands. In the first decade of the century their castes associations appeared and by 1917 under the leadership of C. R. Reddy Praja Mitra Mandali was established to voice the claims of the non Brahmans. Again, just as the British civil servants and governors lent a receptive ear to the grievances and complaints, of the Justice leaders in Madras, the Mysore Prince and the courtiers surrounding him were sympathetically disposed to the non-Brahmins. The matters came to a head during the Diwanship of Sir Visweswaraya when in 1918 a committee was appointed under the chairmanship of Sir Lesley Miller, Chief Justice of the Chief Court of Mysore "to consider steps necessary for the adequate representation of communities in
public service". After collecting voluminous data of employment in the government-service in various grades, the Miller Committee vindicated the complaint of the non-Brahmins that the civil service in Mysore was dominated by the Brahmins. The Committee made the following recommendation: within a period of not more than seven years not less than 1½ of the higher and 2/3 of the lower appointments in each grade of the service and so far as possible in each office are to be held by members of communities other than the Brahmin community, preference being given to duly qualified candidates of the depressed classes four are available.

Following the Miller Committee Report, the Government of Mysore abolished the competitive examinations for the jobs and the recruitments made by nominating the rankholders of the University examinations, but keeping in mind the goal of bringing up the non-Brahmins. Unlike in Madras there were no compartmental reservations. All the appointments were looked after by one man Public Service Commission.

Meanwhile the Praja Mitra Mandali disintegrated and its place was taken up in 1928 by yet another party of the non-Brahmins, Pralapaksba. The party consisted of younger elements belonging mainly to the two dominant castes and who had considerable exposure to the caste conflicts in the neighbouring States. In fact many of these leaders as students in Madras had actively participated in the Justice Party movement. Owing to a very conscious implementation of the -- Miller Committee recommendations, the percentage of the Brahmins in the services was very slowly reduced. The Prajapaksh also had to face the rising tide of nationalism in India, which did not leave the Princely Mysore State unaffected. The Indian National Congress also had begun organising the people of the Princely States on parallel lines to obtain democratic concessions. Although many of the non Brahmin stalwarts-had held themselves aloof from the Congress Party, they were persuaded or impelled by the circumstances to join the Congress Movement. In this way the entry of the Vokkaligas and Lingayats landed gentry into the National
Movement considerably intensified the Congress Movement in the State. After the merger in 1947 of the Princely Mysore State into the Indian Union and the introduction of responsible government, the Vokkaligas started controlling the State apparatus and Congress Party, while the Lingayats constituted their junior partners. In the Bombay-Karnataka area also there were stirrings of the non-Brahmin movements. Due to various historical reasons the non-Brahmin movement in the then composite Bombay Presidency did not gather momentum. The Lingayats constituted the bulk of the population in the 4 Kannada districts of Bombay, and they started many educational institutions to develop education in their caste. The Lingayats in the Bombay area did not enjoy the advantage of the caste reservation until 1941 when they were grouped along with the Marathas into an intermediate group which was given some job concessions. But this reservation scheme also did not last long in the Bombay Presidency. The leaders from the Lingayat castes were also resentful of the Brahmin domination in the Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee, whose jurisdiction included Princely Mysore State as well. The Lingayat leaders too started entering the Congress Party in the 1930’s and came to dominate the Bombay-Karnataka region fully within a few years after the Independence. The Lingayat leaders from the Bombay area felt very much constrained because of the control of the Gujaratis and Maharashtrians in the Bombay administration. Also they did not very much like some of the progressive reforms which had been introduced in the State. They were very vocal in the agitation for the formation of a unified Karnataka State, about which the Vokkaliga leaders from Mysore were less enthusiastic.

The formation of the unified Karnataka State in 1956 altered the caste balance considerably. Lingayats constituted 15 per cent of the population in the entire State, and Vokkaligas about 11 per cent. The political centre of gravity shifted from the old Mysore area to the newly integrated regions, particularly the Bombay-Karnataka. The first four Chief Ministers of the expanded Karnataka State belonged to the Lingayat caste. The community
dominated not only land but also other sources of political patronage. 4 to 5 ministers in the New Karnataka Government used to belong to this caste. In other words, there was a very perceptible change in the balance of power between the Lingayats and Vokkaligas and among the various communities. After the reorganisation the State in 1956, the new leaders found expedient to extent the communal reservation scheme to the entire State. By an order passed in July 1958 all persons except Brahmins were declared as backward and 57% of the jobs were reserved for the backward classes, in addition to the 18 per cent for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Only 25% of the jobs were left for competition. Although the bifurcation of the Madras non-Brahmins into non-Brahmin forward and non-Brahmin backward had occurred in that State by 1947, no such bifurcation of the non-Brahmin castes appeared in the Karnataka till 1960. When the 1958 reservation order was struck down, the Government issued yet another order in classifying all castes except Brahmins, Baniyas and Kshatriyas as backward. This too was struck down by the High Court. In the same year the government issued an order dividing the population of Karnataka into 14 groups and making compartmental reservation of jobs and education seats for each of them. This order also met the same fate at the hands of the judiciary. In 1960 the Government of Mysore constituted a committee under Nagan Gowda for the purpose of determining the criteria for the classification of the backward classes in the State. The Committee used literacy as criterion for social backwardness and the number of students per thousand population in the last three years of the high school classes as the criterion of the educational backwardness. Following the interim report of the Nagan Gowda Committee 22 per cent of the jobs and seats were reserved for the OBC's and 18 per cent for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, leaving .60 per cent to open competition. After the consideration of the final report of the Committee, the government raised the percentage of the backward classes reservation to 30, thus leaving 52 per cent for open competition. Here the government fixed the reservation at a much
lower level than recommended by the Committee. The Committee, had also suggested compartmental reservation for the backward classes and the more backward classes, which was not followed in the government orders.

The final report of the Nagan Gowda Committee raised a lot of controversy. On the ground that the number of the Lingayat students per thousand population in the three high school classes was slightly higher than the State average of 6.0, the committee did not include this dominant community, which had only recently acceded to power in the backward classes list. A member of the Committee wrote a powerful note of dissent against the non-inclusion of the Lingayats in the backward classes list. The political leaders belonging to the Lingayat caste also brought pressure to bear on the government and the latter finally yielded. It included the Lingayats in the backward classes list and by an order of 1962 provided for the following scheme of reservation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open competition</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Backward classes</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Knowledgeable sources revealed that the non-Lingayat backward classes did not very much resent the inclusion of the dominant Lingayats into the backward classification as long as the percentage of reserved jobs and seats was raised. This scheme of classification was struck down by the Supreme Court in 1963 in the famous Balaji case. After the decision, the Government of Mysore issued yet another order reserving 30% of the seats in the other backward classes and 18% for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Not the castes but the individuals belonging to certain kinds of occupations as cultivator, artisans, petty business, inferior occupation based on manual labour and earning less than Rs. 1,200 per year were supposed to be eligible for the reservation. This ostensible scheme of reservation began 1963.
continued till 1977, but in reality jobs and the seats went on the basis of the political dominance of the different communities, particularly the Lingayats and the Vokkaligas.

In the 1960's resentment started welling up among the non-Lingayat and non-Vokkaliga minority castes that the operation of the entire political system and the processes after the reorganisation of the State has redounded to the benefit of Lingayats, and to some extent the Vokkaligas. The Vokkaliga leadership also felt disappointed at being relegated to the second position in the politics of the State. One important politician of Mysore is on record for having said that for a long time to come no non-Lingayat would become the Chief Minister of the State. The gathering storm of this resentment coincided with the 1969 split in the Indian National Congress, and soon the Parliamentary and Assembly elections followed. Devraj Urs, who rose as the leader of the Congress (I) party very carefully and sedulously cultivated the non-Lingayat non-Vokkaliga communities. Both on the basis of the Indira wave of 1971-72 and also on the basis of the new coalition he had established, Urs rose to power in 1972 and continued till 1980, but for a short interregnum of a few months in 1978. In 1972 he constituted the Karnataka Backward Classes Commission under the Chairmanship of Mr. L. G. Havanur. The Committee presented its report in 1975 which was placed on the table of the Legislature in May 1976. The Report was approved by the Cabinet and a new communal reservation scheme was announced in February 1977.

Even the constitution of the Havanur Commission gave rise to misgivings on the part of the Lingayats. Mr. J. B. Mallaradhya, President of the All India Veerasaiva (Lingayat) Mahasabha, did not go to depose before the Havanur Commission. The Lingayat leaders saw in the appointment of the Havanur Commission a sinister move to isolate their community. To them it was yet another stratagem on the part of Devraj Urs to reduce their power and influence. The Commission undertook its own survey and taking into account various multiple tests such as economic, residential and occupational,
classified the Karnataka backward population into 3 groups: (1) Backward Communities; (2) Backward Castes; (3) Backward Tribes, and recommended compartmental reservation for each of these backward classes. The Commission seems to have deliberately ignored the Supreme Court injunction that the reservation should not exceed 50 per cent. On the basis of its tests and surveys, the Commission did not include the Brahmins, Bunts, Lingayats, Kshatriyas, Jains into any one of the backward classes. Later on the High Court of Karnataka ordered the deletion of the Arasu caste for the purposes of both Articles 15(4) and 16(4) of the Constitution. They also struck down Balija, Devadiga, Ganiga, Rajput, and Satani from the list of the backward classes under Article 16(4). In February 1977 the government issued the orders providing for the following reservation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open competition</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backward Communities</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backward Castes</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backward Tribes</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Groups</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Castes and Tribes</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The special group consists of those persons belonging to the self-employed, artisan and other occupations having all income of not more than Rs. 4,800 per year. A criterion of Rs. 8,000 was imposed on the backward classes. In the subsequent orders the percentage of reservation earmarked for the special group has been raised to 15 per cent, and the income limit has been raised to Rs. 10,000.

It must be noticed from the reservation scheme that some sub-castes of the Lingayats have been classified as backward, while majority of the sub-castes have been classified as forward. Also, while the Vokkaligas have been
classified as a backward community, their erstwhile senior partners in the politics of the Karnataka State, the Lingayats, have been classified as mostly forward. For those reasons the Lingayat community finds itself divided on the issue of the reservation scheme, based on the Havanur Commission Report. Also, on this issue an alliance of the Vokkaligas with the Lingayats cannot take place as they find themselves in different camps of the backward and the forward. This is in total contrast with the Bihar and Uttar Pradesh situation where all the major forward caste groups, viz., the Brahmins, the Kayasthas, the Rajputs and the Bhumihars have been classified as forward and can find a platform to unite upon.

The members of the Lingayat community have been, however, considerably disturbed and by the Havanur Report and the subsequent based on the Report. Some of their leaders, alleged that Mr. Havanur, Minister of Social Welfare and Law in the Urs Cabinet of 1978-80 issued a secret circular to the government officers, advising them not to let the Lingayats get qualified even in the open merit pool. In August, Lingayat member attempted symbolically to set fire to the Havanur Report on the floor of the Assembly. The members of the community, particularly the youth, held demonstrations in different cities of Karnataka, protesting against the Report and the orders. Quite a few Swamijis the Lingayat Mutts joined in the protest. (for the details, see Desai, 1979). Mr. J. B. Mallaradhya, a retired I.A.S. Officer, and President of the All-India Veerasaiva (Lingayat) Mahasabha, has been leading a crusade against the orders (1977; n. d.). A conference of all the castes adversely affected by the Havanur Report was held in July 1979. The Mahasabha started mobilizing the Lingayat community by appointing organizers in the districts. There were reports of the Lingayat legislators holding meetings to discuss the Report and contemplate further action. But some knowledgeable circles denied that there were any differences in the government on this issue. As a powerful backward class minister in the then cabinet stated, the Lingayats had become apprehensive of competing against the Brahmins in the open merit pool.
The Lingayat agitation against the Report, and the new reservation scheme did not go unchallenged by the members of the other minority castes. When Professor K. Ishwaran, a Toronto-based anthropologist, criticised the methodology of the Havanur survey in an article of the India Express (March 1, 1979), it invited counter-critiques by other teachers and journalist belonging to the minority castes (Ishwaran et. al., 1979). There were counter demonstrations in support of the Report. All this shows the extent to which the majority castes had been successful mobilized on this issue, in the preceding years.

The coalition of minority backward castes forged by Devraj Urs had been pretty powerful and durable. It has survived the exist of Urs as Chief Minister. As we shall see later, the political strength of the backward castes in the legislatures of U.P. and Bihar has been waxing and warning. In Karnataka, on the other hand, the 1972 elections constituted a critical water-shed. There has been no weakening of the political strength of the minority backward castes, who are generally united, now behind the Congress (I). The Scheduled Castes generally going along with the minority castes.

The Karnataka non-Brahmin movement, in the decades following the twenties, failed to produce any overarching revivalist Kannada ideology, which might have prevented the cleavage among the non-Brahmins from emerging to the surface. As we have seen, this more recent cleavage has displaced Brahmin-non-Brahmin cleavage. The Kannada Chaluvaligur movement is too weak and too confined to Bangalore to provide a platform for all the people to unite.

There is some evidence to show that the private sector employment in Karnataka has continued to expand. This sector earlier absorbed the Brahmins. Many of them have been migrating outside the State. One wonders whether the private sector can absorb the Lingayata youths also.

Like the Brahmins, Kayasthas, Bhumihars and Rajputs of U.P. and Bihar, the Lingayats, the Brahmins and Bunts of Karnataka, have been kept
out of the reservation scheme. The Karnataka Brahmins are so weak that even if they join hands with the Lingayats, it will not make any difference. The Brahmin leaders feel that they have been slightly better off in regard to the jobs and seats since 1972. For all these reasons, the forward castes anger is muted in Karnataka and has not assumed any violent forms.
Betoille (1970) has argued that in Tamil Nadu, the Hindu castes can be divided mainly into three groups: Brahmins and Harijans. In his non-Sanskritic area, the cleavage between the Brahmins and other overshadowed the other cleavages and the peculiar Dravidian ideology has been muting the cleavages among the non-Brahmins, and between the non-Brahmins and Harijans. In the absence of such an ideology in Karnataka, which is more Sanskrit than Tamil Nadu, the non-Brahmin movement got differentiated and new cleavages appeared. In contrast, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh are two states in the Sanskritic cultural area, where there was no scope for non-Brahmin castes to unite under one movement. The twice born castes in --- these two States, i.e., Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas are found fully differentiated among themselves and also from the backward castes and the Harijans. The Kayasthas provide another element in the twice born group. Historically speaking, they emerged in these areas as the chief literati caste, and even surpassed the Brahmins, in 'anything connected, with the pen' and in taking to modern education and profession. They were also in the forefront of the nationalist involvement. In Bihar, the political struggle within the Congress till the middle of the sixties was characterized by the conflicts and competition among the twice born castes. After the sixties, without these cleavages being significantly eroded the conflicts between these caste groups and the lower peasant castes and between the lower peasant castes and the Scheduled Castes have come to prevail. The politics of the present Bihar reveals caste conflicts, at two levels simultaneously between the forward
castes and the upper peasant castes; and between the upper peasant castes and the Scheduled Castes.

The caste and communal composition of Bihar is as follows—The forward castes of Brahmins, Bhumihars, Rajputs, and Kayasthas constitute 13 per cent of the population; the upper backward castes of Banias, Yadavs, Kurmis and Koeris constitute 19.3 per cent; the minor artisan and landless castes like Dhanuk, Mallah, etc. from 32 per cent; Muslims and the Scheduled Castes/Tribes form 12.5 per cent and 23.5 per cent, respectively (Bihar: 1980). The Banias in Bihar have not played as significant role in the Bihar politics as they have in U.P. In Bihar, their position, social status-wise is low and most of them have been classified as backward according to the G.O. of November, 1978.

Excepting the Kayasthas of Bihar, the other twice born castes of Brahmins, Bhumhars and Raiputs have had a heavy stake in the land were princely houses belonging to each of castes, and, owning to the zamindars belonging to these castes had established a thoroughgoing political and economic control in the countryside, unparalleled in the ryotivari areas of the Madras and Karnataka. By 1931, 31.8 per cent of the Kayasthas were literate. As compared with this, 19.5 per cent of the Brahmins, 13.6 per cent of the Bhumihars and 12.6 per cent of the Rajputs were literate. The upper backward caste had a literary rate of around 0.5 per cent (Roy, N. D.). Both in Bihar and U.P. the Brahmins could not, unlike their counterparts in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, establish any runaway lead over non-Brahmins in taking to the modern education and professions. The Kayasthas had taken the lead in the formation of a separate Bihar State. As Roy (1967) argues, "the separation of Bihar from Bengal in 1911, in a way, symbolized the fulfillment of the aspirations of the Kayasthas" (p. 418). The Kayasthas and the Muslims gained disproportionately from the expansion of the civil service.
As the Congress movement spread and the party came to control the local bodies, the Bhumihars, Brahmins and Rajputs were alerted by the Kayastha domination. The Bhumihars particularly were better placed to lead the other two castes against the domination of the Kayasthas in the national movement. Their leaders particularly Sir Ganesh Dutt and Sahajenand Saraswati, had developed considerable organizational skill and capacity in mobilizing, their castemen for the goal of claiming the Brahmin status. The incidence of literacy was higher among them than among the Rajputs. They were more rural oriented than the Kayasthas. Thus the twenties marked the beginning of the ascendancy of the Bhumihars in the Congress politics, which continued till the death of Shri Krishna Sinha in 1961. With the introduction of the provincial autonomy the character of the Congress party began to change. The party was increasingly compelled to strike roots in the social milieu. The social cleavages, particularly among the forward castes, were politicized and inducted into the political realm. Thus the downward penetration of the party inevitably led to what Roy (n. d.) has called the fragmentation and parochialisation of politics. The Kayasthas tried to bolster their sagging position by supporting and encouraging the Rajput group. The Brahmins too entered the Congress in big numbers and have steadily increased their strength since then (Roy: 1070; 1967; n. d.). They, however, suffered a temporary setback in 1977. The Bhumihars, Rajputs rivalry reached its peak in the fifties. Though the rivalry between Shri Krishna, Sinha (Bhumihar) and Aruaraha Narain Sinha (Rajput) to some extent cut across caste lines, bulk of their support was drawn from their respective castes. The Brahmin legislators generally want with Shri Krishan Sinha.

Among the upper backward castes, the Yadavas and Kurmis had begun, to organise themselves along the caste lines during the first decade of this century (Rao, 1979). The All-India Yadav Mahasabha has its headquarters at Patna, and the Bihari Yadavas, along with their counterparts in Punjab and U.P., formed the backbone of the Indian Yadava movement. Ultimately, the
Yadavas in the other States in India could not attain the same level of political mobilization as the Bihari Yadavs did. Both the Bihari Yadavs and Kurmis have for a long time been much obsessed with Sanskritization, while with the other backward classes elsewhere, this came to be abandoned sooner (But, some leaders belonging to these castes, particularly Nagamani, a Kurmi, have urged their castemen not to resort to Sanskritization).

In the early decades of this century, the Yadavas aimed at ridding their caste of dowry, alcoholism, meat eating, and took to Arya samaj in big numbers. Their claims to done the sacred thread met with resistance on the part of the twice born castes, some times attended by-violence. They also sought to increase the educational facilities for their youth, although the Yadava dominated educational institutions started growing many years after the Independence. They appealed to the British authorities for a better share in the jobs.

The political fall out of the Yadava, Kurmi and Koeri movements were, however, limited in the beginning. When the associations of these castes had got going for sometime, an attempt was made in the 1920s to bring the castes together into a political party called the Trivani Sabha. The Trivani Sabha contested the 1936 elections in Shahabad and Patna districts with disastrous results and soon withered away. This is in sharp contrast to the Justice Party of Madras and the Praia Paksha of Mysore. It is true that both the Justice Party of the Madras and the Praia Paksha of the Mysore non-Brahmins could not survive the rising tide of nationalism. But, the politicized segments of these caste groups could infiltrate into the Congress, and were to tilt the balance in their favour later on. But in Bihar, the entry of the Yadavas, Kurmis, and Koeris into politics in general, and the Congress Party in particular, was almost totally controlled and governed by the extent of rivalry among the forward castes. Discussing the entry of the peasant castes into Bihar Congress. Roy writes, "At the time of their entry into politics, most of these castes groups functioned as appendages of the main contenders in the
upper castes: leaders from the upper castes co-opted men from the lower castes to leadership position." (n. d.; p. 26). Each of the peasant castes entered the Congress divided. Roy further argues that in due course of time they became autonomous. This does not, however, mean that all, or even most of the backward caste legislators or party office holders united behind one leader. At most, several leaders arose each with a handful following. As the data collected by Roy (n. d.) reveal, between 1934 and 1960 the percentage of the Kayastha members in the Bihar Pradesh Congress Executive Committee declined steeply from 53.84 per cent to 4.76 per cent; that of the Bhumihars increased from 15.38 per cent to 28.50 per cent. The Rajput and the Brahmin representation, after registering some increase, declined. The backward castes (both upper and lower) began appearing around 1948 and held about 14 per cent of the posts around 1960. As Blair (1980) shows, the percentage in the Congress legislature party in 1962 of the Backwards was just 24.9 per cent, an overwhelming bulk of whom were the upper backwards. This once again contrasts with the success, of the non-Brahmins in South India in ousting the Brahmins from the Congress and politics in general. In Bihar, the forward castes have been too well entrenched in politics and the economy to be ousted by divided and imperfectly mobilized backwards. In 1963, for the first time in the history of the Bihar Congress legislature party there was contest between a forward caste leader (K. B. Sahay; a Kayastha) and a backward caste leader with considerable ability (Birchand Patel a Kurmi). It is interesting to note that not only the backward caste legislators but also those belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Tribes, were divided between the two contestants. In fact, more backwards voted for Sahay than for Patel (Roy, n. d).

As Blair (1980) shows, the strength of forward M. L. A.s after 1962 has undergone a decline but not a very steep or durable one. Similarly, the strength of the backward M.L.A.s has increased, which too is neither steel) nor abiding. In the years before 1967, this controlled induction of the backwards into the Congress, convinced the socialist leader Ram Manohar Lohia that the
Congress could be defeated only if all the backward castes could be united in one political party. In the sixties the Samyukta Socialist Party started assiduously wooing them. The Congress debacle of 1967 marks an important stage in the upsurge of the backward castes. In these elections, to the Vidhan Sabha the Bania, Kurmi, Koeri and Yadava candidates were returned in big numbers and constituted 31.6 per cent of the M.L.As. Most of them belonged to the SSP. This pattern repeated in the mid-term polls of 1969 also. In the 1962 elections, the Congress rode back to power and the share in the Assembly of the backward castes MLAs declined below the level of even 1962. The share went up again in 1977, when the Janata Party won. In fact, in the Assembly constituted following the 1977 elections, the share of the seats held by the backwards was the highest ever achieved, but also this was at the expense of the Kayasthas, Bhumihars and Raiputs did not suffer any decline (Blair, 1960). As the subsequent events have shown, the 1977 elections did not in any way signify the permanent and durable resurgence of the backward castes in the Bihar politics. Like their rise in 1967, their upsurge in 1977 was a temporary and transient one. Contrast this with the Karnataka elections of 1972 and 1978, which vindicated the durability and invincibility of the new backwards castes coalition.

One of the reasons for, the imperfect mobilization of the backward castes into politics could be found in the political economy of the rural Bihar. Following Gandhiji’s efforts to give a rural bias to the nationalist movement, the question of peasantry and land reforms started looming largely in the minds of the Congressmen. Due to the worst kind of zamindari system in Bihar, the State gave rise to a peasant movement. The Kisan Sabha attracted many young Congress enthusiasts. The agitation received considerable fillip from the Bakasht movement, aimed at restoring the land to those tenants, who were dispossessed during the depression of the thirties (Sengupta, 1979). Although the land holding interests had acquired a considerable say in the Bihar Congress, the zamindari Abolition Act was passed in 1950. The
intermediary rights were vested in the State. But many landlords were allowed or managed to resume cultivation. In the villages Jannuzi (1974) has studied, the Brahmins reported that the abolition of zamindari and intermediary rights has neither helped nor harmed them. But, it definitely helped the Koeris. It can be generally said that the tenants of the upper peasant castes benefited from the legislation. They also welcomed the prospects of decline in the social prestige and economic power of the upper caste groups, and an accession their prestige and power (Ibid). Although Bihar is not known for its agricultural breakthrough, a considerable agricultural inputs have been channeled into the countryside and the rise in prices of agricultural commodities has increased the viability of many farmers. The Kurmi, Koeri and Yadav peasant proprietors have been in a better position to take advantage of these factors. Whereas forward castes are averse to actual cultivation, the peasant castes work very hard on their lands and also drive their labourers hard (Sheth, 1979, Malhotra, 1980; Blair 1980). If the agricultural labourers show restriveness, or political resistance, they do not hesitate to commit atrocities on them. This factor is at the root of the reprisals on the Harijans at Belchi, Pathada, Gopalpur, Bishrampur, Parasbhigha, etc. Some distinguished politicians were of the opinion that it was the Kurmis who had become aggressive. The power structure in the Bihar countryside has not been as neatly settled elsewhere it has been. Excepting the Kayasthas, the other forwards still have a stake in the countryside and went to continue their semi-feudal control. "The relatively prosperous upper peasantry castes want to match their economic gains with an appropriate, share in the professions and government jobs. These castes also resent the concessions and reservations that have been given to the Scheduled castes. Hence, this acute Case of rank disequilibrium.

In 1951 the Bihar government issued a G-O listing the other backward classes in two Annexures. Annexure-I contained 79 castes who were deemed more backward than the 30 castes contained in Annexure-2. Following the Balaji decision of 1963, in the Supreme Court, the Patna High Court held in
1964 these two lists unconstitutional. Then the Bihar government imposed a ceiling of monthly income of Rs. 500 on the lists and it was decided not to make any distinction between the two Annexures. In 1971 the Bihar Backward Classes Commission was constituted under the chairmanship of Shri Mungeri Lal. The Report (1976) found the following position in regard to educational concessions. Some reservation was given to those applicants belonging to either Annexure-I or Annexure-2, whose annual income was less than Rs. 300. The social welfare department gave fee concessions etc. to the OBC students. There were no reservations for the OBCs in industrial training institutes. The OBCs had no reservation in the jobs. Way back in 1953 Bajnath Singh had introduced in the Bihar Assembly a non-official bill seeking to reserve 25 per cent of the jobs to the OBCs, but under the pressure of the party leaders it was withdrawn. The Backward Classes Federation and particularly leaders like Dev Saran Singh, a Kurmi, represented for job reservations for the OBCs. This was not seriously entertained by the Congress. In the sixties, as Rao (1979) shows, the Yadavas concentrated their efforts on persuading Central government to set up a Yadava government in the army.

The Mungeri Lal Commission prepared its own list of other backward classes and most backward classes, taking into account social status, educational backwardness, adequacy of representation in government service and adequacy of the share in trade, commerce, industry etc. Its list of Backward classes contained 128 castes and the list of most Backward another 93 castes. It recommended 26 per cent reservation in jobs and 24 per cent of educational seats. The Jagannath Mishra government did not take any action on these recommendations obviously in view of its support bases of the forward castes.

The Karpoori Thakur government, which came to power in June, 1977, acted on the Report and in November 1978 issued the G.O. accepting the classification of Mungeri Lal Commission. For the purposes of recruitment to jobs, it announced the following reservation scheme:
The prevailing ceiling for income-tax exemption is the income criterion for all the categories.

Thakur was only pursuing the Lohia line of further mobilising the backward castes. He thought that he could successfully graft the Karnataka model on Bihar. The G.O. provoked widespread backlash as the part of the forward castes. The Universities and colleges came to be closed. Trains and buses were attacked. The government property was damaged. All this has been extensively reported in the Press.

Urs had astutely divided the two dominant castes of the Lingayats and Vokaligas by putting the former (generally) in the forward group, and the latter in the backward list. He saw to it that an alliance between them could not take place. Thakur did not resort to any such measures. The forward castes felt that many of the newly rich peasant castes would under report their income. The 3% reservation for economically backward irrespective of caste, is too small to divide and, weaken the forward castes.

Between 1972 when he assumed office and 1978 when the G.O. was issued, Urs had tirelessly endeavoured to mobilize and politicise the many small and economically weaker backward castes. As we have seen, the mobilization of the backward classes in Bihar has been a belated and fragmented one. The backward castes had emerged divided. Even the socialists were divided along the caste lines. Ramanand Tiwari had led the forward castes and Thakur had led the backward castes. The upsurge of the backward castes meant really the upsurge of the Yadavas. This fact is not likely to enthuse the other weaker landless backward castes. As we have seen,
there is no love lost between the peasant backward castes, on the one hand and
the Scheduled Castes and Tribes, on the other. Thakur had no ideology to
unite them. It may even be said that when the chips are down, the Marijans
and Girijans may prefer the forward castes as lesser evils to the upper peasant
castes. In short, the Thakur G.O. came without an adequate mobilization and
unification of the backward. Perhaps, he thought that the 1977 Janata victory
represented a viable and durable resurgence of the backward castes, which was
not the case. The January 1980 elections proved this. The Scheduled Castes
and minor backwards went back to the Congress fold.

The youth of the forward castes in Bihar are very much dependent on
government and semi-government jobs. As the private sector employment is
not expanding they feel the squeeze of the G.O. all the more. They are averse to
migrate outside the State. Their English is generally poor. If they go to
southern Bihar, they run into the ire of the tribals. Hence they perceive very
few alternative opportunities. The power of the forward castes in the
government service and their semi-feudal (Pradhan, 1979) hold on the
countryside is still strong. All these factors enabled the forward castes to
mount a protected protest and backlash.
UTTAR PRADESH: BELATED AND IMPERFECT
MOBILIZATION OF THE BACKWARDS

As in Bihar, in Uttar Pradesh too the caste system is found well differentiated in terms of the Varna model. According to the 1931 census, the forward twice-born castes constituted about 20.30 per cent of the total population; the Brahmins formed 9.23 per cent of the population and Raiputs 7.28 per cent. The upper peasant castes of Yadavas, Kurmis, Jats, Lodhs and Koeris formed about 16.4 per cent of the population. The Muslims then constituted 13.6 per cent. It can be seen that the percentage of the population classified is forward for the purposes of the G.O. of 1977, and thus kept out of the reservation scheme, is higher in U.P. than in any of the three other States under study. The eastern U.P. is almost an extension of Bihar, and has been witnessing in recent years all forms of caste conflicts between forwards and backwards, between Rajputs and Brahmins, and between the Scheduled Castes and the backward castes. In the western U.P. districts, the Brahmin element is absent and the conflicts are between the rural Jat and Muslims, on the one hand, and the urban elements particularly the Banias, on the other. The Brahmin and Rajput hegemony prevails in the Avadh area. The hill districts and the Bundelkhand areas are very underdeveloped areas and are generally free from the caste tensions.

The Brahmins and the Kayasthas were the first to take to modern education. The Kayasthas particularly started dominating the public services as well as the professions. Later on, around the forties, the Banias too started taking to the modern profession of law, teaching and medicine. One very interesting feature of the modernization of Uttar Pradesh is that the dominant landed gentry, the Raiputs, never felt threatened by the Brahmin-Kayastha
monopoly of education, profession and government services. Before the abolition of the zamindari system, the Raiputs, formed the bulk of the zamindars in the State. In the Avadh area particularly, their dominance was striking. As Brass (1965) points out, they owned more than half of the lands in most of the districts. We have seen earlier that in the Madras Presidency, the approach of the dyarchy in 1919 threatened the interests of the landed gentry castes of the Vellalas, Goundars, Naidus and Reddys who were quick to organize themselves into a political party and a movement. The Rajput zamindars of U.P., who too were considered as the staunch supporters of the Raj never felt threatened by the Brahmin dominance in the services and the national movement. At most, the poorer among them aspired for jobs in the police department and got them. The cultural distance between them and the Brahmins was not much. Also, the Rajputs had, in their own areas of dominance, a secure, feudal and, semi-political dominance, which their South Indian counterparts lacked. Moreover, in the State as a whole they have been numerically inferior to the Brahmins. Their own consciousness of a high status and the ritual distance between them and the backward castes, which they relished, did not dispose them to lead any protest movement against the Brahmin-Kayastha domination. The Brahmin too, did not tend to leave the country side and flock to the cities as the Tamil Brahmins did. The zamindari Abolition in 1952 did not completely upset the political economy of U.P. As in Bihar, the Brahmins and Rajputs in U.P. still have considerable stake and share in the rural power structural and dispensation. To use Sheth's (1979) phrase, there has been no neat power arrangement as in Maharashtra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. There is yet another important reason why the cleavages among the forwards as in Bihar, or between the forwards and the backwards as in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu did not appear in U.P. During the twenties and the thirties, the United provinces was an important stronghold of the Muslim League. The Hindu-Muslim and Congress-League cleavages
overshadowed every other cleavage. Right till 1937, the Muslim League was hopeful of sharing power with the Congress in the State.

Some scholars and politicians (like the late Shri C. B. Gupta) claim that the state did not have any caste tensions or politics until many years after the independence. This is not wholly true. During the pre-Independence days there were ramblings of discontent among the backward castes. Leaders like Swami Achutananda of Kanpur, Swami Ram Charan Mallah, S. D. Singh Chaurasia were trying to politicize the backward castes. Swami Bodhananda Mahasthavir started the adivasi Hindu League in the twenties. Many delegates from U.P. have been attending the depressed classes conferences. E. V. Ramaswami Naicker presided over the conference held at Kanpur in 1946. The U.P. backwards, staying in the Hindu Sanskritic heart-land, and surrounded by the famous shrines and places of pilgrimage, could not be persuaded to reject Brahminism.

The role played by the All-India Yadav Mahasabha in organising the community members has been discussed in the Bihar Chapter. In the forties the peasant castes of Yadavas, Kurmis, Koeris, Jats developed a high degree of affinity among themselves. It is said that the Yadavas of the eastern U.P. and Bihar consider themselves to be equivalent to the Jats. Out of this affinity among them arouse the AJGAR (an acronym for Ahir, Jat, Gujar) movement. The caste association meetings were not just biradari gatherings. As Rao says, "The annual conferences of the (Yadav) Mahasabha also whipped up opposition to the Thakurs, Kayasthas, Banias, Bhumihar Brahmins and Brahmins, who were seen as the exploiters of the Yadavas, illtreating them and thwarting their attempts at progress. Political mobilization and agitations were directed against these groups (Rao, 1979: p. IV)". The demand for the reservation of jobs was there from the thirties, but the top Congress leaders were not favourably disposed. A top leader is supposed to have said that the Brahmins of South India were wandering here and there due to the reservation scheme, and asked if this should happen in U.P. also.
Despite these stirrings on the part of the OBCs, a unified political platform could never be forged for the OBCs and the Schedule Castes. The impact of the Arya Samaj movement has been considerable on the Jats, Yadavas and others. The Yadavas and Kurmis have been too much in the grip of the process of Sanskritization. This drive for equality with the Savarna astes particularly produces the ability of the upper backward classes to land the smaller and weaker artisan castes and the Scheduled Castes and Tribes. Only a few backward castes can aspire for social mobility in the form of Sanskritization. The latter process requires some preconditions. A backward caste should have experienced some measure of economic prosperity and produced a few articulate and educated elites. They should be in a position to dig into the puranas or remote history to adduce proof that their caste had once upon a time a higher status. This is not possible for the millions belonging to the artisan and landless castes. To the extent the upper peasant castes have resorted to Sanskritization, they have generally been unable to make a common cause with the lower backward and the Scheduled Castes. This is yet another reason why the backward class movements in U.P. and Bihar have not attained their full momentum and strength. Shri Cheddi Lal Sathi, during his interview with the author, fully supported the argument that the phenomenon of Sanskritization has hindered the backward classes cohesion and movement.

Whereas in Bihar the Brahmin-Rajput cleavage had started affecting the Congress circles from the thirties, the U.P., Congress circles did not show any such bickering along the caste lines. As discussed above, the Hindu-Muslim cleavage in politics prevented any other cleavages from emerging. The state had produced Congress leaders with national stature. From 1937, when he first became the Prime i.e. Chico Minister under the provincial autonomy scheme, till he left the State in 1954 to become the Union Home Minister, Pandit Gobind Ballabh Pant bestrode the U.P. Congress like a colossus. He had the full support of the Congress High Command, of which he was an integral part. The people of the plains considered him more a Pahari
and less a Brahmin. His elevation to the Centre marks an important phase in the State politics (Masaldan, 1967). Hence between 1937 and 1954, there was no question of the Congress leaders resorting to competitive and controlled induction of the backward caste leaders into the Congress circles. The Congress Socialist Party, which had been formed in 1934 within the Congress’ espoused the cause of agrarian reforms, but never acquired a casteist orientation. After the elevation of Pandit Pant to the Centre, factional feuds started raging within the Congress, but they generally cut across caste lines.

The weakness of the mobilization of the backward castes, particularly the upper backward castes can be seen from the caste composition of the various ministries since 1937, which has been analysed in the Uttar Pradesh Backward Classes (Sathi) Commission Report (1977). In the 1937-39 cabinet the Brahmins held three out of six posts, and the OBCs were not represented even among the parliamentary secretaries. The same pattern prevailed till 1952, when Shri Charan Singh, a Jat, was taken into the Cabinet. In the Sampumanand, C. B. Gupta and Sucheta Kripalani ministries also, half or nearly half of the ministers belonged to the Savarna forward castes. For the first time in the post independence history of U.P. three Ministership go to the upper peasant castes (including Yadav and Kurmi) in the 1967 S.V.D. Ministry headed by Shri Charan Singh. This was due to the fact that the backward classes made considerable gains in the 1967 elections. The decline of the Congress also meant to decline of the forward caste representation in the Assembly. The second Charan Singh ministry of 1970 and T. N. Singh ministry of 1970-71 also gave considerably more representation to the upper peasant castes and induced for the first time the artisan castes. This increase in representation to the upper peasant and other backward castes does not represent a durable 2nd abiding resurgence of the OBCs in politics. Because in the Tripathi, Bahuguna and Tiwari ministries, the representation of the forward castes went up. In the Assembly also between 1967 and 1974, the share of the forward castes declined from 50 per cent to only 42 per cent. The
share of the upper peasant castes went from 5 per cent to only 20 per cent. In the Assembly elections of 1977 June, when the Janata Party won, the share of the Jats and OBCs increased considerably. Like Karpoori Thakur in Bihar, Ram Naresh Yadav mistook this increase for a durable rise of the backwards and was emboldened to issue the famous communal G.O. of August 1977. The 1980 elections disproved the assumption of a critical change in the balance of power.

The factors of political economy in the country-side have changed since 1947, but not so significantly as to add to the political clout of the OBCs. The Jats of the Western U.P., have registered tremendous progress in agriculture, and the emergence of the Bharatiya Kranti Dal was a political manifestation of this Jat upsurge and affluence. Due to the abolition of the zamindari system, the Thakur, Brahmins and Muslims were affected, not too adversely. The tenant and sharecropping castes of Yadavas, Kurmi, Lodhs, Gujars, Koeris, became owner-cultivators, and industrious as they are, they are better qualified to take advantage of the modern agricultural inputs. Unlike the umbrella farmers of the forward castes, they are autonomous in their agricultural operations. Like their counterparts in Bihar, they drive their agricultural labourers very hard. While striving to socially catch up with the forwards, they resent the rising political consciousness among the agricultural labourers.

For the purpose of educational concessions in 1945 the United provinces government had prepared a list of 37 Hindu and 21 Muslim backward castes. The order of 1950, while reserving 10 per cent jobs to the scheduled castes, only said that the interest of the backward classes shall in general be borne in mind. In 1955, two lists of other backward classes, i.e., castes were prepared, one of 15 castes for recruitment to jobs and the other of 59 for the educational concessions. In 1958 the government again prepared two lists of the OBCs, one a Hindu list of 37 castes and the other a Muslim list of 21 castes, for jobs and educational concessions. No reservation scheme was
proposed. The U.P. Backward Classes Commission was appointed in October 1975 and submitted its final report in June 1977. On the basis of the criteria of poverty, illiteracy, dwelling, profession and demeaning profession, caste, social inequalities, representation in government, inadequacy of representation in trade and commerce the Commission prepared three lists of the OBCs. List A consisted of 36 castes, mostly having little or no control over land. List B consisted of 18 peasant castes having some connection with land, which includes Yadavas, Gujars, Kurmis, etc. List C included 23 Muslim backward castes. (It should be remembered that the Jats have never claimed to be backward. That would be below their self-respect). The Commission recommended a compartmental reservation scheme. 17 per cent reservation in jobs and seats for List A; 10 per cent for List B; and 2.5 per cent for List C. This total reservation of 29.5 per cent would be in addition to 20 per cent already in existence for the Scheduled Castes and Tribes. The Yadav government, in its G.O. of August 20, 1977 provided for the following scheme of reservations under Article 16(4) for class I and II Services:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Castes</td>
<td>18%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scheduled Tribes</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically Handicapped</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependants of Freedom Fighters</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex-military Officers (emergency commissioned)</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Backward Classes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>50%</td>
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The same pattern was instituted under Article for industrial training institutes.

The story of the backlash on the part of the backward castes need not be described in detail. Even the government servants in some areas of U.P.
joined in the agitation. The gravemen of the, appears to be stagnant. The U.P. youth feel caste should be the criterion of social and economic backwardness. Although the agitation has died down, the issue is still upper most in the minds of the people. Substantial sections of the forward caste voters swung away from the Janata and Janata (S) on this issue. Mrs. Gandhi's anti-caste slogans clearly went home to them.

It requires tremendous political or organization, mobilization and cohesion on the part of all the backward classes and Scheduled Castes, if their leaders want to keep about 20 per cent of entrenched forward castes out of the reservation scheme and to compel them to compete for only 50 per cent of the jobs in the open merit pool. Such organization, mobilization and cohesion have not been there. Like Karpoori, Thakur, Ram Naresh Yadav too tried to telescope the backward classes mobilization into a span of less than one decade. Unlike Devraj Urs, they did not try to divide the forward castes with the help of any well conceived strategy.

The Janata victories of 1977 constituted only deviant castes. Under U.P. and Bihar classification schemes hardly any forward class youth could pass for a backward. Only the Muslim community was divided.

The private sector employment in Uttar Pradesh appears to be stagnant. The U.P. youth feel the crunch all the more, because they generally do not go out of the State for jobs. From U.P., and Bihar, more than the educated youth, the illiterate villagers migrate to Bombay, Calcutta, Punjab and Haryana for unskilled jobs.

Due to the belated and imperfect mobilization of the backwards, this attempt to combine the AJGAR MOVEMENT with reservation for the backwards has failed.