CHAPTER - IV

DRAVIDA MUNNETRA KAZHAGAM
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E.V. Ramaswamy, the leader of Dravida Kazhagam, was not interested in electoral politics; his one passion was to vindicate Dravidian culture as against Aryan culture and spread the gospel of Atheism. But the younger members of his Dravida Kazhagam movement ardently desired a political outfit which could challenge Brahmin supremacy, fight the imposition of Hindi and seek greater autonomy for the state.

When E.V. Ramaswamy remarried and took as his wife a woman much younger than himself, thus going against his own principles, Annadurai and scores of young men left the Dravida Kazhagam in protest and founded the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam in the year 1949.

Fiery orator, keen and intrepid patriot of Tamil Nadu, inspired educationist, journalist, playwright, poet, statesman and actor, Canjevaram Natarajan Annadurai was born on the 15th day of September 1909.
the only son of middle-class parents. He was educated at Pachiappa's College, Madras. He stood first to the university in B.A. (Hons) in Economics. He was awarded an Honorary doctorate by Annamalai University and a Fellowship by the Yale University, where he gave a discourse on Tirukural during his visit to the U.S.A.

He had an immensely moving voice and pen; was an overwhelming literary genius and was widely admired, not only in Tamil Nadu but in India, for decades. His writings have enriched the Tamil literature and given it a new life.

The simplicity of his style, his rich imagination and his astute analysis of problems in social, economic and political spheres gave him an almost unique position. He was admiringly called the Bernard Shaw of South India by Kalki Krishnamurthi. His lyrics and dialogues have an irresistible and universal appeal and kindled the imagination of the younger generation of his time.

He wrote several books on various subjects. He
displayed the strength of his pen in *Arya Mayai*, his imagination in *Kambarasam*, his economic concepts in *Panathottam*, his splendid style in *Ramapuri Rani*, his Puranic analysis in *Neethi Thevan Mayakam*, his social reformist ideas in *Velaikari* and so on.

He developed a new style of Tamil with its own rhyme, rhythm and alliteration, through his journal Dravidanadu. He brought about a renaissance in Tamil language, through his writings.

His eloquent tongue was ready to launch on any subject. "Learned professors like Somasundrabharathiar and R.P. Sethu Pillai openly accepted their diffidence at the eloquence of Annadurai on Kamba Ramayana's debate."¹ He could silence parliamentarians by his sharp arguments.

As a student he grabbed several meritorious prizes and epomiums in debates and oratorial contests. He evinced a keen and sensitive interest in socio-economic and political fields in his college days and he was very much attracted by the programmes and policies of
the Justice Party. As a voracious reader he acquired a grasp of various subjects.

He was deeply influenced by E.V. Ramaswami's rationalistic, atheistic and Self-Respect Movement. He first met Periyar in 1935 at Tirupur. He accepted him as his political Guru. He was proud of saying that he took training at Erode under the able and subtle guidance of Periyar. Periyar was his leader till his last breath. He never accepted any one else.

Annadurai, after working as a middle school teacher at Padduvaickenpet for a short time, became an ardent and sincere follower of Periyar in the Self-Respect Movement and joined the Justice Party in 1935.

He was attracted towards Periyar's critical reformist spirit in eliminating and eradicating the age-old social inequalities in Tamil Nadu. He was known to have played a key role in bringing about the much-needed split in the Justice Party which was then an abode of the favoured few and the privileged classes.
of society. It was converted into a mass movement under Periyar's leadership by renaming itself as 'Dravida Kazhagam' at the Salem session in the year 1944. It was Annadurai's achievement.

The Salem resolution was drafted by Annadurai himself, and was known as Annadurai's Resolution, which eventually brought down the Justice Party from its high pedestal and called the Dravida Kazhagam later.²

The younger generation in Dravida Kazhagam had found in Anna a more simple and practical leader; while the old guard stood by the venerable patriarch. Nevertheless, the party lacked political direction and ideological cohesiveness. It steadily grew till 1949 through its reformist policies.

The stubborn patriarch was keeping the party off parliamentary politics to prevent its degeneration into a power-hunting caucus with all the temptations any party system offers.
The atmosphere in the party slowly changed and they hoped to participate in the system to be ushered in on the basis of adult franchise. Periyar adhered to only social reform. "The younger generation in the party felt that Periyar's rigid control on all sides was that of a dictator and paid no heed to the ambitions of the party members. He centralised all powers within him."

There was a general opinion that Periyar and the party did not pay attention to the affected party workers. The families of the deceased workers were becoming orphans. A bitter feeling developed amongst partymen against their leadership at the time of the death of Alagia, a sincere worker of the party.

The propaganda sheets controlled by Annadurai and his admirers were all praise for Periyar, but at the same time sedulously built up the supremo image of Annadurai. During his earlier career as a social reformer in the party, he had edited the Tamil dailies like Navajeevanam, Kudiarasu and Viduthali in 1942 at
Erode and received Rs.45/- p.m. from Periyar. The journals caught the imagination of all classes of people throughout Tamil Nadu and became highly popular. Periyar did not agree to inaugurate a function at which Anna presented a purse of Rs.25,000 to Bharathidasan.

The difference of opinion between Periyar and Annadurai slowly developed inside the party. On the day of India's independence on 15th August 1947, Periyar called for a boycott. But Annadurai's sense of independence defied Periyar's directives. He hoisted the national tri-colour flag on his residence in Conjeevaram on the independence day. "He also refuted the directives of Periyar in Dravidanadu and his own approach and views on the celebration stirred the mind of partymen and public." Later Annadurai deliberately and wilfully kept off the Tuticorin session of the party.

As a shrewd observer, Periyar sensed Annadurai's mind and made him President of a special party conference in Erode which passed the famous anti-Hindi
resolution. The popular description of the event was that it was handing over the key and lock to Annadurai on 23/24-10-1948.

Annadurai had availed of the right opportunity at the 'Muthamig' conference at Coimbatore in the end of May 1949, requested Periyar to explain the secret talk which took place at Tiruvannamalai between him and Rajaji. "Periyar answered that it was a personal and private discussion and it has nothing to do with party affairs."

Periyar, then 72 years old patriarch, took a decision to marry Maniammai, his 26 year old Secretary and a loyal functionary. The reason for this marriage offered by Periyar was that "none are reliable and believable in the party. Therefore, Maniammai will be adopted through marriage to look after the property of the party and to handle the party in future." Annadurai urged Periyar to give up the idea in view of the wide disparity in their ages as Periyar and the party had been campaigning and preaching against unequal marriages in the past.
Nevertheless the marriage took place and it was the last straw that made Annadurai think of parting ways. Annadurai began rallying support for a new party and the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam was born on 17th September 1949.

Annadurai gave his partymen the concept of Duty, Dignity and Discipline. He also provided the monotheistic faith of 'One God and One Society!'

With his monotheism based on rationalistic concept, Annadurai freely and frankly declared that his new party, the D.M.K. was to found the new society based on "the three cardinal principles of : Democracy, Rationalism and Socialism." In order to achieve this goal the party felt it necessary to resist the domination of the North and to work for the formation of a separate independent sovereign federation of Dravidian Socialistic Republic comprising of the existing four southern states of Tamil Nadu, Andhra, Kerala and Karnataka. Annadurai laboured to mobilise support and sympathy for his philosophy from the general public and the masses.
Annadurai gave a new flag comprising of "two colours, black and the top and red at bottom of 2' x 3' size. The black colour indicates the darkness of the Dravidians in political economic and social activities. While red colour indicates, the new light to eliminate the darkness in the above mentioned fields." This flag was accepted as the official D.M.K. flag.

There was no enthusiasm for the new party as Periyar's leadership could not be easily displaced. Annadurai was unanimously elected as the general secretary with 113 members in the general council. The new D.M.K. party was an off-shoot of the Dravida Kazhagam and followed its rationalist and reformist doctrines. Initially D.M.K. worked as a social organisation complementary and supplementary to the Dravida Kazhagam. Annadurai himself once said that these two parties were a "double-barreled gun" that will serve to eradicate the social degradation and the economic backwardness of a sizeable but vulnerable section of Tamil Nadu in the wake of vehement criticism of Periyar on newly born D.M.K. Annadurai also declared in spite of Periyar's ridicule of them as Kanneerthooligal (drops of tears) that the new party was dedicated to the reformation of a
society steeped in ignorance, illiteracy and superstition.

Besides the setting-up of a new social reform group in the D.M.K. Annadurai had to face the wrath of the party in power viz., Congress party as evidenced by the following incidents. Tamil Nadu government sued Annadurai for his propagation of Dravidanadu and for his book.

_Arya Mayai_ was prohibited from public circulation and he was charged at Tiruhi Court. Annadurai toured the length and breadth of Tamil Nadu. He won followers from every nook and corner, besides the huge district conferences conducted at Madras on 21-1-1950, at Coimbatore on 29-1-1950, at Tirunelveli in August 1950, at Kovilpatti in the month of September 1950 etc. Annadurai and his followers staged a black flag demonstration to Shri R.R.Diwakar, a cabinet minister of the Indian Union on 10-9-1950. A similar black flag demonstration was held at Susinder to Rajaji on 24-1-1950.

The demonstrators were charged under IPC 151 and
and arrested under Section 144 in Kundathur. The black flag demonstration was also extended to Nehruji on 15-7-1951 at Kolar Gold Field, on 17-7-1951 at Coimbatore and on 21-6-1951 at Madras, as also to Mr. Jagajivanram on 15-7-1951 at Salem.

The general mood that prevailed in Tamil Nadu was one of despondency against the government. The Tamil Nadu government had no insight and sense of judgement, and it had taken the people for granted. It utterly failed to understand the situation. The majority of the communist leaders were in jail or had gone underground after their 1948 adventures. There was no other alternative party worth the name in Tamil Nadu. The D.M.K. endeavoured its best to fill the vacuum with coherent talk of socialism, communism, revolution, North Vs South and so on.

The virile and vigorous speeches of the D.M.K. leaders from platform was derided by a critic in his book as follows - "The D.M.K. leaders claim to be disciples of all the great thinkers of all times. Its soap box demosthenses kept up a spate of tub-thumping
oratory from a 1,000 street corner meetings quoting practically every thinker from Socrates and Plato through Machiavelli and Ingersoll to Lenin and Hitler in the same breath. Along side the party's efficient agit-prob machinery was trying to promote the Annadurai cult. One by one the party's top leaders entered the filmdom as script writers and the cinema because the party's major medium for propaganda put across subtly to get around the rigid censorship rules. Besides, the party lined up a glittering galaxy of filmstars on its side.\textsuperscript{10}

The D.M.K. party did not want to contest general elections or capture political power. The party kept itself aloof from the 1952 elections. In its early years, the D.M.K. essentially comprised of educated and semi-literate urban classes, petty traders, unemployed youth and students. The party was not sure of its electoral strength because most of its cadres and followers were yet to qualify themselves to be voters. Ultimately, it decided to support the candidates who were agreeable to the concept of Dravidanadu.

The D.M.K. supported two parties (The Common Weal
and the Tamil Nadu Toilers' Party) and some independent candidates who were committed to support D.M.K's Dravidanadu demand in return for its backing at the elections. Thus the D.M.K. could claim to have helped them get some eight parliament seats, and 43 candidates won the 1952 elections to the State Assembly.

Annadurai called for an August Hindi Agitation to erase the names in Hindi from the Railway station name boards. The MLA's returned to the legislature became turn-coats and joined the Congress. The Congress more or less purchased them. They went back on their assurances and promises given to the D.M.K. before the elections. It was a lesson to the growing D.M.K. on unreliability of the politicians who had no principles and policy, and who sold themselves for the loaves and fishes of office.

The Congress, short of an absolute majority in the 375 member Madras Legislature Assembly, brought Rajagopalachari, the retired Governor-General, back to politics with the hope that he could secure enough defections to tilt the party balance.
The morale in the D.M.K. was low. To restore the morale in the party, the D.M.K. had to plan some programme of agitations which would throw the restive cadre into action. The Dravida Kazhagam was planning its own agitations and the D.M.K. could not afford to be trailing. The Dravida Kazhagam's agitation against Hindi and Brahminism was more aggressive and militant compared to the low-key campaign of the D.M.K. Periyar's black shirt stork-troopers burnt the constitution, the National flag, Hindu relics and idols. Often there were violent demonstrations against Brahmins.

But the D.M.K's agitation was on three fronts:
(1) To protest against north Indian domination, the D.M.K. chose the village of Kallakudi which had a Railway station, serving the cement plant set up by the Dalmias, a Marwari capitalist family. The station was named Dalmiapuram. The D.M.K. wanted the name of the station changed to Kallakudi. The agitation was led by Karunanidhi. (2) The second front to defend the Dravidian honour was an agitation along the rail tracks by various leaders like Mathializgan, Natarajan, Nedlunchezhian and others. The trains were to be
stopped from dawn to dusk. (3) The third front was against the proposed change in the state educational policy to provide for a craft-oriented scheme which in effect was to be a caste-based system under which the child would grow up learning hereditary trades (Rajaji's Kula Kalvi Thittam). Many saw in this scheme, introduced by Rajaji's ministry, an attempt to perpetuate the caste system through schools. The chief Minister's residence in Madras was to be picketed in protest. This agitation was led by E.V.K.Sampath. In the three-pronged struggle, the political offensive of D.M.K. was more than a modest success. The top leaders were taken into preventive custody on the eve of the struggle. At Kallakudi and Tutricorin, Police fired on agitators, killing six persons, and six thousand agitators were rounded up all over Tamil Nadu, which was a fair index of the party's strength. But the main impact of the struggle was on the political fortune of Rajaji and the pattern of policies in Tamil Nadu.

When the three-front campaign was decided upon, the centre had decided to concede the Andhra demand for a separate linguistic state. The Telugu districts of
Madras were to be grouped into a new state on October 1953. The truncated Madras state was to comprise the Tamil districts of Malabar and South Canara.

Rajaji's controversial new education scheme was mooted a few months before the new Andhra state was to come into being. The agitation was gaining momentum. But alongside this, politicking by Kamaraj, a strong man of Tamil Nadu Congress, had started. The three-front campaign actually helped Kamaraj in his attempt to topple Rajaji's government. There were even vague insinuations that Kamaraj had inspired the D.M.K. agitation.

The new education scheme came in handy to isolate the chief minister. The Kamaraj faction launched a frenzied campaign against the scheme, with the active support of the Dravida Kazhagan and the D.M.K. At the Tiruppurakundram session of Tamil Nadu Congress, Kamaraj won his battle and Rajaji quietly resigned for reasons of health in early 1954, and Kamaraj catapulted himself into Chief Ministership.
Kamaraj knew that to survive the challenge of the two Dravidian parties, he would have to manipulate the Tamil national sentiment in his favour by openly identifying himself with the separatist ideology of these parties. Kamaraj took care not "to include any Brahmin in his cabinet and launched a conscious anti-Brahmin policy in education and administration to endear himself to the Dravidian parties."12

Periyar was outspoken in his enthusiastic recognition of Kamaraj's Dravidian bona fides. For the first time a pure Tamilian was heading the State government. The Tamilians had discovered for themselves a true Dravidian Chief Minister at last and a cabinet free from the Brahmin virus.

In the face of the three-front agitation, Nehru in a hot temper burst out and called the senior and elderly leaders of Tamil Nadu like Periyar and others as "nonsensical, childish, barbaric and they must be banished from India."13

Annadurai, in his own modest and lucid style
criticised Nehru's speech. Nehru's attack on Tamil leaders and agitators bordered on unparliamentary language. "Singhmen Rhee, the President of South Korea used similar language to Nehru... 'Nehru is a coward, chicken-hearted man and of a monkey-nature....' I am not happy over these slangs and abuses of Singhmen Rhee. Do those words suit our good Nehruji? It should not be forgotten that every action has its equal and opposite reaction. It does not mean that we are incapable of such intemperate language. Tamilians will not give back in similar words but they will translate them into action."^13

While reorganising Madras, the Tamil areas of Devikulam, Peermedu and a portion of Shencottah were given to Kerala State. To oppose this Annadurai called for a hartal (strike) throughout Tamil Nadu. Annadurai's clarion call was responded to by all Tamilians irrespective of party considerations and a token strike was successful in spite of Kamaraj's appeal to people not to respond to Annadurai's token strike on February 2, 1956.
Annadurai had to enter the election battle with a programme that would give some relevance to his party's role as a parliamentary party. All that it could think of at this stage was to discover itself a tangible anti-North plank to give ballast to its secessionist slogan. A political campaign against the North-dominated centre would have more direct appeal than symbolic burning of the Constitution and the National flag. The D.M.K. was yet to decide formally on entering the battle. It stepped up on the educational campaign against Marwari exploitation and North Indian domination of trade, commerce industry in the South. This found a good response among the rising Tamil bourgeoisie whose interests were coming into conflict with those of the all-India bourgeoisie. The industrial and commercial interests in Madras had found a movement which they could use as a lever in their fight for a due share of the All-India market and the centre's development expenditure. "The D.M.K. accent was on the economic neglect of the south and its exploitation by North."14

It was at the historic Tiruchi Conference in 1956, that the D.M.K. formally decided to contest the elections.
Annadurai said "We realised that we must either be politically capaciated or be ruined by democracy." The decision, curiously was taken by the visitors to the session and not by the delegates. Every visitor was asked to state his preference through secret ballot. The visitors to the session voted 56,942 for election and 4,203 against.

D.M.K. in its manifesto stated that the right to secession was no doubt an issue, but it emphasised on the economic aspect though the party had no socio-economic programme as yet. The manifesto combined welfare state with a subtle appeal to Tamil nationalism. By implication it accepted the constitutional set-up, but wanted more autonomy for the states.

"The Dravidanadu demand was played down but the secessionist plank had not been given up. The manifesto wanted the right to secession for each state. It wanted nationalisation of industry and development of industries in the South, fair mnimum wages and ceiling on land holdings. It wanted free education for all with mother tongue as the medium of instruction while
treating English on par with it. It also wanted a classless, casteless society. The D.M.K. claimed the voters' support to provide an effective opposition to the Congress. The D.M.K. aspired to be an effective opposition to the Congress and was not bidding for power.

Even Rajaji seemed to have visualised this possibility. The D.M.K. came to an understanding with the superannuated veteran. Rajaji was campaigning for an effective opposition to the Congress in one set of speeches. In another set of speeches, he critically said the D.M.K. could provide an effective opposition to the Congress. This meant the "diversion of a few thousand marginal votes to the D.M.K. in almost all the constituencies." But the results proved the D.M.K.'s calculation had gone awry.

The D.M.K. finished with 15 seats and the communist strength slumped from 14 to 4 in the 1957 elections. The total number of votes polled in Madras presidency was 1,16,36,902 of which Congress secured 49,13,374 and D.M.K. 16,53,435 votes. As per statistics Congress
obtained 42%, and 56% of the votes were polled against Congress. Thus D.M.K. secured 15 seats in legislature and Annadurai was elected with 31,861 votes as against 20,718 of his Congress rival. Contesting for the first time, the D.M.K. fared better than expected, polling about 17 lakhs votes.

The Congress improved its strength despite the large scale defection of dissidents. Its representation in the House went up from 133 to 151 and the percentage of votes from 35.3 to 45.3 mainly because the two Vanniya caste parties merged with the Congress. The withdrawal of Dravida Kazhagam support told heavily on the communist strength. The communist vote dropped from 10% to 7.4%. The D.M.K. success, remarkably, was confined to Madras city and districts around North Arcot, South Arcot and Chinglepet. Its most spectacular success outside the metropolis was in backward Vanniya tracts. The Congress government did not get alarmed at the emergence of D.M.K. as a potent rival. In fact the Congress leaders were happy over the D.M.K. victories. Secondly the separatist bogey could be used to bargain with the centre for a greater share of
development spending for Madras.

"The D.M.K. star was rising. The sham intellectualism of its leaders set the trend for a whole generation of students wallowing in misery and frustration. Even the Communists began wooing the D.M.K."16

In 1957, when the D.M.K. party won 15 seats in the Tamil Nadu Assembly, its leader Annadurai made a modest appeal to the chair in his first speech in the legislature. He said "My party will extend its fullest co-operation in maintaining decorum of the House whatever the provocation from the Treasury Benches. The speaker should tend and nurture the small opposition with all care and kindness he would bestow on a frail patient. My party does not have much experience in the practice of parliamentary democracy, but that would not in any way deter the D.M.K. members discharging their duties in keeping with the highest traditions of the House. I appeal to the speaker to 'pull us up' with kindness whenever we of the D.M.K. go wrong inadvertently, just as an indulgent parent would reprimand the child without scaring it."17
A significant and qualitative change had come over Madras politics between the first general elections in 1952 and the second in 1957. The composite Madras State had shrunk into a Tamil state and had lost much of its old glory. Tamil nationalism acquired a new relevance with the two Dravidian parties in the field to exploit the national sentiment to political ends and the Congress abetting progress. The Congress itself had become 'Dravidised' with the new compulsion to identify with the upsurge with which separatism had appeal in Tamil Nadu.

The Municipal Corporation of Madras was under the Congress for two decades. The Congress contested for 100 seats and won 37 seats, but the D.M.K. fielded 90 candidates and won 45 seats out of 100. With the tiny support of the Communist group, it could instal its nominee as Mayor. In return, the D.M.K. helped the Communist nominee to the Chairmanship of the Coimbatore Municipal Council. Though the Congress had a slender lead in Salem, a D.M.K. backed independent could become the Chairman exploiting the Congress dissensions.
In Madurai, an industrial centre like Coimbatore, the Communists had an electoral agreement with the D.M.K. and won all the seats they contested. The D.M.K. won two seats together with some independents. The Communists could have gained control of the municipality but preferred to retain their manoeuvrability by keeping off the power tussle. Of the 55 municipalities in the state, the Congress which held 27 lost 5 of the 1,513 seats. The Congress strength dropped from 709 to 647. The Communists ran 75 candidates, won 30 seats and the D.M.K. which fielded 350 candidates could win only 40 seats mainly in three-cornered contests. In 30 straight contests the Congress routed the D.M.K. The D.M.K. made its debut in 30 of the 54 municipalities where the elections were held but in only seven of them could it have more than 5 members. The D.M.K's stray gains in the municipal elections were no index of real strength because most of its cadres were still below the voting age. The D.M.K. had not found an ideology yet but had gained a foothold in the urban areas, as the municipal election results revealed.

Two years of participation in the legislature had
reduced the secessionist D.M.K. to a respectable parliamentary party, contest with demonstrating its separation through the annual ritual of boycotting the Governor's inaugural address. "The party had not launched any main movement worth the name after the 1957 elections. For all its verbal pyrotechnics in the legislature, the petty bourgeois leadership of the D.M.K. and politically inexperienced proved itself immature." C.Subramaniyam, the Finance Minister, known for his unswerving personal loyalty to Rajaji tried to queer the pitch for the D.M.K. in December 1959.

As usual the D.M.K. boycotted the Governor's address and Subramaniyam seized the opportunity to drive his point home. By functioning as a loyal opposition, the D.M.K. had for all purposes given up its secessionist demand. If it continued to believe in secession even after its legislators had sworn allegiance to the Constitution as required of those entering the legislature, it would be downright political dishonesty and hypocrisy.

Did the D.M.K. recognise the Constitution or not?
C. Subramaniyam asked a straight question. "If you are working under the Constitution, you have to accept the Constitution, as it is worked now and abide by it in letter and spirit. If your aim on the other hand, is to wreck the Constitution, then decency and political honesty demand that you admit your intentions, motives and face all the consequences; he flung a challenge in trying to pin the D.M.K. down on the secession issue."

It could have been politically naïve for Annadurai to have declared that his party repudiated the Constitution, because he was evidently unprepared for all the grim consequences of such a repudiation. "Nor could he openly accept the latter and would amount to jettisoning the secessionist plank. So the floor leader of the D.M.K. tried to wriggle out of a tight situation with an unconvincing theorisation of his party's rickety stand; the D.M.K. wanted nothing more than an amendment of the Constitution through perfectly constitutional methods," to end a set-up which vested extraordinary powers in the Centre leading to its domination of the states. All that Annadurai
seemed to want was a more satisfactory federal equation. The D.M.K. had been soft-pedalling the secessionist demand ever-since it entered the legislature. E.V.K. Sampath, regarded as the heir-apparant to Annadurai, who was the Chairman of the D.M.K's General Council was shocked at the floor leader's clarification. He sent out a letter to party ranks expressing his deep sense of agony and frustration at the unseemly sight of our leadership developing cold feet even at the mild threats to our settled and cozy way of living to frighten us to given up our aim of Dravidastan."22

The D.M.K. had no political purpose if deprived of its secessionist plank. If the D.M.K. leadership was not prepared for a confrontation with the State government and Centre, it would have lost its relevance. "The D.M.K. had not openly repudiated its secessionist stand but Annadurai's cotery, comprising of the 'film lobby' was shy of forcing the issue."23 When the D.M.K. strength was not known, the secessionist demand was not taken seriously. But now here was a movement striking its roots and the party was in control of the Madras City Corporation.
The time had come for a political offensive or legal action to curb it. Annadurai feared a break-up of his party and tried to play safe. "E.V.K. Sampath's whirlwind campaign against Annadurai's volte face caused the supremo considerable discomfiture. He tried to wriggle-out of his indiscretion by reiterating his 'rock-like' faith in the destiny of a Dravidian homeland. He tried to quibble again, on what he meant by amendment to the Constitution; the party should achieve its political goal through constitutional methods of agitation."

E.V.K. Sampath had demanded a firm dead-line for achieving the Dravidanadu goal but Annadurai pleaded that it would be unwise to set a dead-line when they had to prepare the masses for a long-drawn struggle. The road to the Dravida Nadu lay through polling booths. "We must contest more elections, win more seats and that way, win the confidence of the people; and when it is got, we strike and strike hard."^25

In the face of President's declaration of Hindi as official language, in June 1960, the party's
General Council served an ultimatum on the President of India for the unconditional withdrawal of his order declaring Hindi as India's official language. "If the President did not heed to the voice of the South before August 31, the D.M.K. would launch a crippling agitation in 24 hours. If the police were to be let loose on the agitators, the D.M.K. would go in for an all-out struggle stopping at nothing short of Dravida Nadu."26

E.V.K. Sampath was unanimously chosen as Chairman and Annadurai, General Secretary, at the General Council meeting. Annadurai knew the time had come for a trial of strength. When the General Council met again in 1961, Anna's partymen had engineered an anti-Sampath move through film-stars. M.G.Ramachandran and S.S.Rajenderan came prepared with a motion to censure the Chairman. The meeting ended in a free-for-all in which Sampath was "beaten up by hoodlums brought in to intimidate the members supporting the censure motion."27 Sampath resigned from the Chairmanship. Sampath was manhandled again by D.M.K. members at Tiruchi.
Annadurai offered an elaborate apology for the hooliganism in the party after Sampath had gone on a fast to pressurise the party leadership.

A special election conference was held at Coimbatore on December 16th and 17th 1961. Annadurai made an appealing speech to the masses by placing before them all sorts of data, in particular to show how the Congress put up bus owners (at Coimbatore, Conjeevaram, Valvnur and other places) and capitalists, mill-owners, business magnates of the day as candidates for elections.

This was followed by D.M.K's understanding with the Forward Bloc, Muslim League and the Communists. The D.M.K. had its close identification with the Communist group on all economic issues in the Assembly since 1957. The Communists were prepared to settle for an adjustment of seats, if a pragmatic alliance was possible. The Communists were allotted 37 Assembly seats and 10 Lok Sabha seats by the D.M.K. The Communists rushed to the press with their list to forestall a D.M.K. volte face under Rajaji's pressure.
The D.M.K. reached a similar understanding with the Swatantra but within a week Rajaji torpedoed it. "The Swatantra leader was not in town when the D.M.K. - Communist pact was arrived at and found that between them the two allies had taken 150 out of 206 Assembly seats and 19 out of 41 Lok Sabha seats. Rajaji changed his line at once and he kept up the pressure on the D.M.K. for reopening its pact with the Communists. The D.M.K. then published a list of 78 candidates for the Assembly and 10 for the Lok Sabha. It clashed with the Communist list of 10 seats which meant that the pact was off. Soon the D.M.K. - Swatantra pact was also off." But the pattern of the contests disclosed an unwritten agreement between the D.M.K. and the Communists in Tiruchi district.

For 206 Assembly seats and 41 Lok Sabha seats there were triangular contests involving the Congress, D.M.K. and Communists in about 20. An equal number of contests involved the Congress, D.M.K. and Swatantra candidates. But there were few contests involving the Congress, Swatantra and Communists candidates. By concentrating on their strong-holds, the Communists
could use the D.M.K’s cadre candidates against the money-power of the Congress and Swatantra party. The D.M.K., despite its solicitude for the Swatantra party, had to set for its long-term objective a Dravidian socialist federation.

The 50 page manifesto went farther than the Communists in its promises. It was instant socialism including nationalisation of banks (which no State government can carry out under the Constitution), commanding heights for the public sector, social ownership of all means of production, etc. The party’s anxiety through its appeal to reach the lowest section of the people was reflected in the radical objectives listed in the manifesto. The D.M.K. had to direct its appeal to the Brahmins also this time. Its clandestine understanding with Rajaji was enough to dispel the Brahmin’s fears. Region-wise, the D.M.K. tried to expand its base in the deep South and the central districts where the Congress had held its ground in 1957.

The Congress was sure of returning to power and
set itself the task of recapturing every one of the seats lost to the D.M.K. It did achieve that 14 of the 15 sitting D.M.K. legislators lost their seats, including Annadurai and Anbazhagan. Karunanidhi was the only MLA to return to the House but he had changed his constituency and wrested the seat from a Congress­man. His old constituency went to the Congress.

In a House of 206, the Congress won 139 seats and the D.M.K. representation had improved from 15 to 50 seats. The Swatantra got 6, Communist 2; Forward Bloc 3; Samyuktha Socialist 2; and Independents 5. The D.M.K. polled 27.10% of the votes as against the Congress tally of 46%. The Swatantra 7.7%, the Communist Party with 7.69% polled approximately the same number of votes. The D.M.K. thus secured 34 lakhs of votes. Though Annadurai sustained a reverse in the Kancheepuram constituency, his party captured 50 seats in the State. He said at a public meeting at Madras: "My battalion is entering the portals of the Tamil Nadu Assembly. There may be a battalion without a leader..."
A careful analysis of D.M.K. vote in 1962 reveals in its entirely that it did not represent a verdict for secession. It was largely an anti-Congress vote of a people who were for a broad socialist programme. The vote was secured through a clever manipulation of caste factors, local grievances, money power and personal rivalries among the candidates. The Dravidanadu issue was scrupulously kept out of the campaign to make sure that the anti-Congress vote did not splinter. 

"The D.M.K. allies got the worst of the 'heads I win, tails you lose' bargain. The D.M.K. won at the expense of its allies." The Republican Party and Muslim League could not win a single seat but their support proved decisive for the D.M.K. in several contests.

The D.M.K.'s steady growth on the political plane in Tamil Nadu posed a great threat to other political parties. Their mass popularity was a nightmare to them. The D.M.K.'s massive show of strength stirred up vague fears among Congressmen. True the D.M.K. did not campaign for secession but secessionist trends were at work. The Congress could no longer keep up pretence that the D.M.K. could be persuaded to give up the
Annadurai was elected to the Rajya Sabha on 20-4-1962. He realised the need to stress the Party's economic programme to maintain its hold over the middle class and the working class. Undoubtedly, the D.M.K. sweep was a result of the interaction of the Socialist aspirations of the people and their Tamil nationalist sentiment amidst the fear of Hindi domination. Annadurai announced a programme of launching an agitation against the price rise on 27-6-1962.

For the first time, the D.M.K. launched an agitation on an economic issue such as price rise. It staged a demonstration in front of the State Assembly on 30-6-1962, followed by rallies next day. On July 10, there was a token picketing of Collectorates in the districts. The members of the D.M.K. party were arrested throughout Tamil Nadu. Annadurai was kept in the sub jail at Vellore. Prime Minister sent a message to Annadurai to meet him in connection with the Chinese aggression on 3-8-1962 when he was in jail. But Annadurai thanked him in a return telegram through the
Collector of North Arcot by stating his inability to meet him as he was in custody and expressed his faith in Prime Minister's capacity and diplomacy in handling the problem to ease the situation.

Kamaraj and other Congress leaders who thought on similar lines were against an outright ban on the party but wanted a check on secessionist propaganda. The Sino-Indian border conflict in October-November 1962 eclipsed the D.M.K. problem for the moment. The D.M.K.'s indifference to the country's security would have given its critics a chance to brand it anti-national.

On the other hand, Annadurai did not want to make his party-men to be scape-goats at this critical juncture. Diplomatically, he spoke of the threat to the sub-continent's frontiers and the common danger and pledged support to the defence effort. These words showed Annadurai's nationalistic fervour.

However the centre had left the issue to Kamaraj to deal with D.M.K. on the political plane. The only
means it provided him was through an amendment to the Constitution requiring every candidate for election to Parliament or State legislature to swear 'allegiance to the Constitution of India as by law established and to uphold the sovereignty and integrity of India.' The 16th amendment enacted on October 5, 1963 achieved this. "Through this amendment Article 19, Article 84 and Article 173 and third schedule of the Indian Constitution were amended and expressly provided that the candidates will have to take an oath to uphold the integrity of India and they will not propogate for the cecession of any territory from India during the election or afterwards." Under the amendment, the candidates have to take the pledge at the time of filing nominations and those entering Parliament or Legislature should take an oath of allegiance at the time of swearing-in.

The amendment was introduced mainly to pin down the D.M.K. nor Annadurai were agitated over the threat to their right to resort to secession. The D.M.K. did not protest. Instead, Annadurai decided to launch the
anti-Hindi agitation and he announced a 13-month agita-
tion plan whose culmination was to synchronise with the
Republic Day of 1965, when Hindi was to replace English
as the official language. Annadurai convinced his
party men and following that he had decided on anti-
Hindi agitation to get over the embarassoent created by
the amendment. But he refuted this in the party daily
NamNadu. "At this insinuation I am supposed to jump
and declare with bravado that I would agitate against
the anti-secession measure too. But the Kazhagam is a
mature party and I am a mature person. I will not
react the way people want me to do." 

Annadurai said that even when the idea of Dravida
Nadu is conceived, it was to be within the frame-work
of the sovereignty and integrity of India, and not
outside it. He advocated for the state autonomy.
Asked how it was possible to have a sovereign independent
state within another sovereign state, he said, it was
a debatable point. With its secessionist plank
jettisoned, the D.M.K's only relevance lay in its
opposition to Hindi alongside its professed leftism.
He said, "answering a question - we are left, have
always been so and will continue to do so. Let me add that in spite of my known friendship with Rajaji my party will remain and go left. I am positive about this commitment."

In the month of October 1962 in the bye-election from Tiruchengod, Kannappan, the D.M.K. candidate, won the election in spite of the fact that all the fore-front leaders were in jail. C.Subramaniam, the then Finance Minister of Tamil Nadu, had told the people that this election was a contest between the nationalist and secessionist forces. But to his surprise the D.M.K. won.

Annadurai gave his fullest co-operation to the government during the national emergency and openly supported the Prime Minister in the face of the Chinese aggression. As a true patriot, Annadurai broadcast an appealing, inspiring and touching speech on the radio. He conducted a mammoth and panoramic conference at SIAA grounds for collecting war fund. The collection was Rs.35,000 in one day which was handed over to
Kamaraj. Karunanidhi along with others sold enormous quantities of handloom goods worth lakhs of rupees for the fund.

In 1962, the Central Government issued a Gazette notification, carrying an assurance from the Prime Minister that English would continue to be the link language in non-Hindi states so long as the people of these states wanted it. The D.M.K. leadership started soft pedalling and the party gradually became the mouth-piece of the Tamils. The secessionist slogan died down with a whimper in 1963. They stopped criticising the Brahmins. Being a political party, they shifted away from the philosophy of the D.K., a social reform party. The D.M.K. Leaders, including Anna, and Neduncheziyan, were jailed in different places by the Kamaraj government during the Chinese aggression in 1962, for their agitation against unjust and unwanted price rise. Pointing to the Chinese aggression Annadurai said in a patriotic tone at a public meeting at Madras: "We can renew the tiles on the roof only if the house remains. There is a danger to the house itself, and there can be no secession demand. What is happening to-day is an ideological
warfare between democracy and dictatorship. Democracy has got the capacity to bear attacks and to hit back suitably.\textsuperscript{34}

In April 1962, Lalbahadur Sastri introduced in the Parliament the official language Bill which equivocated on the position even after January 1965, the dead line fixed by the constitution for Hindi to become official language of the country. Anti-Hindi feeling was building up in Madras as the dead-line for switch-over to Hindi drew nearer. Yet the D.M.K. trying to live down its secessionist reputation, could not rally the people. The government seemed to have concluded that since the anti-Hindi agitation had flopped, everything was under control. The result of this complacency was its total failure to anticipate the 1965 riots.

Hindi symbolised the Centre's authority over the state and the mass mood in Madras was disquietingly anti-Centre. The Congress stood for Hindi Centre and the people were anti-Congress. At this juncture, Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Sastry shattered the hopes
of non-Hindi speaking people while addressing a Hindi Prachar Sabha meeting at Hyderabad on July 21, 1963. He called upon the D.M.K. to give up its anti-Hindi agitation and firmly stated that Hindi had to replace English. He further said that no language other than Hindi could keep the country united.

Annadurai felt agitated over Shastry's fanatical and imperialistic views on imposing Hindi. Annadurai said: "In the heart of the ruling party a blood-thirsty hound [ illustration ] resides. To quench its hunger the D.M.K. is prepared to shed any amount of blood. We will welcome the troubles and tribulations and we are prepared to sacrifice."35

The Official Language Bill, 1963, was introduced because Article 343 of the Constitution stated categorically that the official language of the Union shall be Hindi after 1965. Being aware of the passionate opposition to such an arbitrary arrangement by the non-Hindi states, the Bill tried to achieve a compromise by ruling that English may also be an official language until such time Hindi could develop into an official
language. In an able advocacy of the case for continuance of English as an official language instead of Hindi, Annadurai said: "In this problem the D.M.K. occupies only a very small place. It depends upon the future of this Bill whether the D.M.K. is to occupy a great sphere or occupy the same sphere, that if Hindi is imposed as the official language, the D.M.K. will unfold its relentless fight, its relentless agitation against this imposition of Hindi, whatever the consequences."

As a lonely voice in the Rajya Sabha, he went to the extent of pleading with Vajpayee. He said, "if he were to learn Tamil and drink deep into the nectar of Tamil classics he will select Tamil alone as the link language." In one of the Rajya Sabha speeches, G.L. Nanda, the then Home Minister, tried to convince the member to accept Hindi as the official language and said: "Oh, I am not a Hindiwala. My mother-tongue is Punjabi and then I adopted Gujarati as my language. No I am converted to Hindi...." But Annadurai splendidly expressed the feelings of Tamilians in a critical style, when he said, "unfortunately, we do not have such experiences. It is very good experience to have a mother-tongue, to get another adopted tongue,
and then to plead for a third tongue."

The then Congress Government of Madras led by Bhaktvatsalam, looked at the forthcoming agitation of January 26 as a serious law and order problem and failed to properly appreciate the explosive situation that was in the making. The Tamil people prepared themselves for a massive constitutional agitation on 26th January 1965 to express their strong resentment against the imposition of Hindi. Annadurai and 3,000 of his party men were taken into preventive custody and were released only on 2nd February 1965. Tamil Nadu witnessed a mass upsurge and mass fury followed by violence in a number of places, the like of which it has seldom witnessed in its history. The principle of self-immolation was against D.M.K. policy. Yet few D.M.K. members like T.M.Sivalingam and O.Ranganathan took to fire-bath on 26th and 27th. The students rose in revolt and about 50,000 students marched to the Fort and expressed their opposition to the Chief Minister. The police fired on the students of Annamalai University and a student lost his life on the spot. The repression that followed served only to infuriate the people further.
Senior leaders like Chagla, Sahuivareddy, N.G. Renga, Sri Prakasa and others warned the Centre that its wrong Hindi policy might end up in the balkanisation of India. Two Congress Ministers, C.Subramaniyam and O.V. Alageson, resigned from the Central Cabinet on the language issue. The student actually took the leadership of the movement, pushing the D.M.K. to the back seat, as the D.M.K. after all wanted the day to be observed as a day of mourning.

The 1965 language riots would have taken place "whether the D.M.K. was in picture or not. It was a question of political leadership in the least. In fact the D.M.K. looked askance at the militancy of the student agitation, dreaded retaliation by the government. At the same time, the D.M.K. found itself credited with leadership of a movement which it did not want to continue." Finally Annadurai said on the language issue, "See to it that we arrive at a solution when English continues to be the official language till we arrive at a stage when there will be multilingualism and one of the Indian languages naturally takes the place of a link language."
In D.M.K's history, the 1967 election was a turning point. The secessionist slogan died with a whimper in 1963. Though the slogan died, the sentiment behind it survived. Hindi symbolised the Centre's authority over the state and the mass mood in Madras was clearly anti-centre. The people were anti-Congress. The students found emotional security in belonging to the D.M.K. With uncertainty accentuated by the fear of Hindi domination, the future was forbiddingly bleak. Hindi was a monstrous challenge to be fought, come what might.

Now the issue had to be clinched at the polls. Those who joined the D.M.K. through their participation in the anti-Hindi agitations were voting for the first time. One out of 8 voters, i.e., about 12% were new voters in Madras in the 1967 election. The D.M.K. aware of its own strength and the mood of the voters, went about the elections cautiously. The people had not forgiven the Congress and the Centre for the 1965 blood bath. Yet nothing was to be left to chance because the bid was for power, this time.
The D.M.K. party members and the students' organisations worked hard and did a whirlwind propaganda in every nook and corner of Tamil Nadu. The D.M.K. supported certain social and economic principles in their election manifesto which appealed to all classes of people; its appeal beginning with the middle class and extending to the lumpen labour class, contained references to, and recollections, with the past and the glory of the Tamils, and the need to capture power.

M. Bhaktavachalam, the then Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, who was provocative instead of conciliatory, only infuriated the agitators. Annadurai, on the other hand, appealed to the students not to continue the agitation and advised them to consolidate the gains. The students promptly responded to his counsel of restraint.

The wrong language policy, the rising prices and the police firings made frustration common and added fuel to the fire. The film actors, M.G. Ramachandran, S.S. Rajendran and others entered the election propaganda. It is no exaggeration to say that M.G. Ramachandran's election tour gained momentum,
playing a crucial role in the replacing of the government. In the words of Annadurai, if M.G.R. once visits all constituencies in Tamil Nadu, the D.M.K. will be sure to come to power; if he tours twice, the D.M.K. will embrace thumping majority.\(^2\)

The country thus witnessed the struggle of Annadurai and his followers to emerge as the ruling party in Tamil Nadu. Senior Congress leaders like C.Subramaniam, O.V.Alagason, Pattabiraman, Mrs.Maragatham Chandrasekharan were defeated. Even Kamaraj lost to a young D.M.K. member by name Srinivasan in his own home town Virudhunagar.

**Annadurai as Chief Minister:**

The charismatic Annadurai - (better known as Anna in Tamil Nadu as well in other places) was unanimously elected to the Chief Ministership by the D.M.K. party in the legislature on 28th February 1967 and he assumed office on 6-3-1967.
Anna's first responsibility was to implement his party's ten-point scheme which contained its promises to the electorate - which had brought them a massive mandate. He had given top priority to a programme that consisted of the restoration of the land to the tiller, setting up of brilliant plans to increase production of food grains, bringing down the prices of commodities, opposition to the imposition of Hindi, nationalisation of bus transport and a special attention to safeguard the rights and the privileges of the state vis-a-vis the Centre.

The long-pending ideals of the D.M.K. party were gradually being implemented. Anna's administration projected the image of his government as truly representative of the man in the street. Though the period of his Chief Ministership was short, his achievements were many in the field of socio-economic justice and towards improving the plight of the backward and weaker sections. On assuming office Anna said that the Government of Tamil Nadu was dedicated to the ideals of Periyar E.V.Ramaswamy. He said "I am ready to propagate and implement the ideas
and ideals of Periyar. The question is shall I do some useful things assuming the charge of the government? or shall I do it at social level with you? I leave it to Periyar to decide." 

Anna had abundant and abiding love for Tamil throughout his life. At the outset, as a token of his commitment to mother Tamil, the centuries' 'Old St. George Fort' name board was replaced by 'Tamizhaga Selayagam' (The Tamil Nadu Chief Secretariat Office) on 14-4-1967. During the Congress regime, the name board was written as 'Madras Government' in English and 'Satyam Eva Jayate' in Sanskrit, and these two sentences were replaced by Tamil – 'Tamizhaga Arasu' (Government of Tamil Nadu) and 'Vaimaiha Vellum' (Truth will win).

"One measure Rice for one rupee." – was one of the salient points of the election manifesto of Anna. As a trial measure, this was introduced in Madras and Coimbatore where low income wage earners were much benefited; but it involved a heavy loss of six crores of rupees. However this was dropped due to sudden
inflation, increase of prices on the governmental grains and for other valid reasons.

Anna abided by the three doctrines of Periyar's intellectual memorial "(i) to have fought along with Periyar as a great exponent of applied sociology (ii) to have created a new style of writing, speech and usage of Tamil and English for contemporary purposes and (iii) to have given the Tamilians his political testament of federalism comparable to the American Federalists."44

As a true votary for Periyar, Anna got legislation passed legalising simple marriages performed without priestly intervention, in keeping with the Self-Respect principles preached by the social revolutionary Periyar, decades before. The state under Anna's leadership also was the first in India to foster and encourage inter-caste marriages by awarding gold medals to every inter-caste couple. To the last, Anna was brimming with gratitude to the Grand Old man. The courts had not recognised earlier the self-respect marriages and the people who contracted marriages in this style were sometimes put to inconvenience. The D.M.K. Governments'
legal validation of Self-respect marriages removed the
laches and lacuna in the transfer of property etc.

The renaming of the State as Tamil Nadu was one
of the inherent desire and aims of Anna. In early 1961,
the Communist leader Bhupesh Gupta evinced a keen
interest by introducing a private member's Bill to
amend the 1st Schedule, entry No. 7 of the Constitution.
The object of the Bill was to rename the Madras State
by its rightful name Tamil Nadu in conformity with the
historical, linguistic and cultural considerations.
Despite of Anna's impassioned and lucid defence in
Rajya Sabha, the non-official Bill was defeated by the
Congress with a thumping majority. When the D.M.K.
was elected to power in 1967, Anna as Chief Minister
of Madras state achieved his objective with the
unanimous backing of both the Houses of the State
Legislature. During Anna's rule, the Tamil Nadu
legislature passed a resolution on the two-language
formula and declared that Tamil is the official
language of the state by eliminating Hindi once and
for all.
The resolution passed in the State Assembly, adopting the two language formula by eliminating the domination of Hindi, deserves to be written in golden words in the history of the D.M.K.

Anna, at the height of his power, died on 3-2-1969. No sooner the news of the demise of Anna spread the people began pouring into Madras city from distant towns and villages, perched on the roofs of overcrowded trains and rickety buses and by walk, (to pay homage to their beloved departed leader). "In one of the worst tragedies of the time at least 28 persons were crushed to death and over 70 persons were injured due to their journey on the roof top, when the Madras-bound Janata Express was passing across the Coleroon bridge between Coleroon and Cidambaram stations." ~

Anna's death dealt strict grief in almost every household not only in Tamil Nadu but also wherever the Tamils lived in other states and other countries. The crowd at the funeral procession was beyond estimation, and some estimate even put it at over 5 million. The Guinness Book of Records had recorded "that the
funeral of Anna was attended by the largest number of people in the world."  

The magnificent Anna Memorial square was erected on the silvery sands of Marina Beach at a cost of Rs. 5 lakhs as a monument to the departed leader by the Karunanidhi government.


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