CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION
The problem of Backward Classes is one of doing justice to the underprivileged sections of society. This problem could be better explained against the historical background. Hence, the correlation between backwardness and the socio-economic phenomenon of caste provides the starting point, for the investigation of the problem. Caste system as perpetuating class distinctions in Hindu society stands out peculiar for its immutability and social isolation fostered among the people professing the same religion. However, caste system was subjected to constant modifications because of practical necessities. Changes in caste system were inevitable. To trace a few important modifications, caste as conceived by the Varna theory was dynamic. Guna or nature constituted the chief determinant of caste. But in course of time, this dynamism gave way to rigidity and subsequently resulted in social discrimination. This is how Untouchability and Unapproachability took roots in Hindu society. Rigorous caste regulations were imposed on food habits, customs, ritual, social get-togethers, occupational mobility etc. Thus the pollution complex rendered caste system an institution of discrimination and segregation. This aspect of the Hindu
social structure has been characterised as: 'the most thorough going attempt known in human history to introduce absolute inequality as the guiding principle in social relationships'.

The next phase of the evolution of the caste system was, the allotment of specific occupations to specific castes. The choice of occupations was restricted to lower castes of the social order. Caste system dictated the pattern of the economic set up of society, by assigning superior jobs to higher orders and manual labour and unclean professions to lower orders. Besides, there was a stigma attached to these lowly professions, which further accentuated the social isolation among different sections of society. As regards the mobility of occupations, Brahmans had the option of going in for any trade other than their specific allotment and meanwhile retain the same social status accorded to them. But mobility was strictly restricted in the case of lower orders. Rights and equality were denied to these underprivileged classes. Thus caste system was largely responsible for the creation of privileged and underprivileged classes in society.

With the advent of the British rule, caste system underwent radical changes. The universalisation of education

and the influence of English literature on liberty, freedom and democracy stirred the intelligentsia of the lower orders to question Brahmanical supremacy. As a result of this, passive submission of lower orders to the dictates of caste rules ceased to operate. As Morris-Jones observed: 'social reform has often been anti-Brahmin actually to increase consciousness of caste on both sides'.

Equally interesting was the tendency among lower classes to rise in social estimation of society, by attributing new designations implying a high social origin to their caste groups. This tendency was glaringly prominent among the artisans. This social imitation of the lower classes has been termed by N.K. Srinivas as 'Sanskritisation'. Sanskritisation in short means the cultural and structural changes of society.

The early periods of the British rule marked significant changes in traditional caste hierarchy. During this time, a revision of the old social ideal in the context of social transformation was urged. The socio-religious movements of the period made efforts for the establishment of society on the principles of catholicity and cosmopolitanism. The impact of the British rule, especially their policy of throwing open the doors of education to all classes irrespective of caste and

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the admission of candidates belonging to different Communities into Government Service, produced marvellous effects. The Non-Brahmin movement in South India, was a natural reaction against the traditional social order. Western ideas, ideals and institutions introduced in India, shook the foundations of the old society. With the growth of National movement, the country witnessed a new sense of unity. The progressive policies advocated by Nationalist parties created a mental revolution, a new determination to do justice to Backward Classes. Gandhiji's entry into politics gave further shock to the rigidity of caste system. He evinced keen interest in the welfare of Harijans in particular and fervently criticised the caste system for doing injustice to these sections of society. Similarly, efforts made by Harijan leaders like B.R. Ambedkar, to fight casteism prepared the ground for the inauguration of a new society based on equality and justice.

With the dawn of independence commences a new chapter in the social history of India. The framers of the Constitution have not only devised a suitable Constitutional framework for the country but also conceived the remedies for social problems. The incorporation of provisions relating to the cause of doing justice to Backward Classes constitutes a glorious chapter in the Indian Constitution. The imbalance in society caused by the caste system is sought to be corrected by doing justice to Backward Classes in the social, economic and political plans.
This aim of the Constitution finds expression in the preamble, Fundamental Rights and Directive principles. The term 'Backward Classes' for whom special concessions are accorded in the Constitution includes the four categories - The Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes and Denotified Communities.

The Constitutional safeguards for Backward Classes are found in Articles 15(4), 16(4), 29(2), and Part XVI of the Constitution, which deals with Special provisions for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Art. 15(4) provides:

Nothing in this article or in clause (2) of Art. 29 shall prevent the State from making any special provision for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

Similarly, Art. 16(4) guarantees:

Nothing in this article shall prevent the State from making any provision for the reservation of appointments or posts in favour of any backward class of citizens which, in the opinion of the State, is not adequately represented in the Services under the State.

Art. 29(2) is a corollary of 15(4). Under Part XVI of the Constitution, reservation of seats in Parliament and Legislative Assemblies of States, for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are guaranteed. Art. 335 ensures the representation of Scheduled Tribes.
reservation of seats in Parliament and Legislative Assemblies would cease to have effect on the expiration of a period of twenty years from the commencement of the Constitution, according to the Constitution (Eighth Amendment) Act, 1959. Similarly, Art. 335 provides a governing clause, that the claims of the members of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes would be considered, 'consistently with the maintenance of efficiency of administration'.

But the process of equalisation effected through Constitutional safeguards for Backward Classes is beset with many difficulties. In view of the historical factors, Constitutional guarantee for the protection of Backward Classes was not only justifiable but also inevitable. The social conditions in India were such, that they necessitated the incorporation of special treatment for Backward Classes. These classes were denied opportunities of education, which stood in the way of their general advancement. Besides, the principle of equality enshrined in the Constitution cannot be operated in vacuum. To build an egalitarian society special preference to Backward Classes is inevitable. To transform a social order based on inequality, special concessions to the victims of inequality are necessary. As observed in the case of D.G.Viswanath V Chief Secretary Govt. of Mysore :

It is cynical to suggest that the interest of the Nation is best served if the barber's son continues to
be a barber and a shepherd's son continues to be a shepherd. The limitations of the doctrine of laissez faire is now well known. We have pledged ourselves to establish a Welfare State, Social justice is an important ingredient of that concept. That goal cannot be reached if we overemphasise the merit theory.

It is argued against special concessions for Backward Classes, that it contradicts the principle of 'equality of opportunity' envisaged in the Constitution. Criticisms are advanced, that reservations for Backward Classes in Services and educational institutions would bring down the quality and standards of the Services and education. Then again, special preference for Backward Classes would create a psychology amongst non-Backward Classes that Casteism is perpetuated. It has been charged by critics, that Constitutional safeguards for Backward Classes have drawn caste into the political arena. Adult franchise and democratic decentralisation have placed political power in the hands of numerically strong Backward Castes. It is felt, that castes are becoming politically dominant and there are situations where they play an important part in the Constitution of cabinets in some States. This conflict between the privileged and underprivileged classes in the political field is pointed out in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Kerala, Gujarat, Mysore, Madras and Bihar.

Hence, it has been commented that: 'Politics is more important to castes and castes are more important in politics than ever before'.

Caste loyalties are said to be prominent in political relations. Politicians aim at securing votes by winning caste loyalties. Critics have charged that 'caste forms the strongest party in India'. A.R. Wadia observes: 'The democratic method of voting has given a new lease of life to castes, for our democracy is still immature, political parties have yet to take roots and so the masses of our illiterate voters find a safe guide in voting on the basis of caste and religion and Community'. This tangle of casteism in Politics, has been explained by Myron Weiner as: 'For most Indians, the great competition is not between India and the West or even India and China, but between social groups within India'.

The role played by caste in elections is recorded by many case studies. These studies point out, that the numerical strength of castes play a deciding role in politics. 'The role of caste in the elections in Poona can be understood from three

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5. Jayaprakash Narayan, Deccan Herald, October 31, 1960
independent sources - the reactions of voters to the propaganda campaigns of various parties, the press and the polling figures at certain booths. These case studies also point out, that in the arena of politics it is possible to expect inter-caste alignments. Small caste groups align with each other to offer competition to numerically dominant castes. But some election studies reveal, that political organisation and leadership cut across caste loyalties. Thus the role played by caste affinities and caste loyalties in political field, their influence on the conduct of the major political parties, are advanced in support of the caste set up in politics.

It is interesting to note that controversial opinions and contradictory interpretations are given regarding the part played by caste in politics. It is held, that when caste assumes political role and competes with different groups, it automatically results in its extinction. Dr. E.R. Leach has observed that 'competition between caste groups is in defiance of caste principles'. Similarly, Dr. Gough opines that when a caste group turns itself into a political faction it ceases to be a caste. P.G. Bailey admits, that political conditions are not

completely swayed by caste and that political parties cut across many other factors. Commenting on casteism in Politics, Panikkar remarked: 'This accusation comes mainly from the higher castes whose privileged position in society, official life and politics, is being threatened by the awakening of the new classes'.

But it has been explicitly stated by some, that caste is continuing to be the dominant unit of social action. M.N. Srinivas finds that: 'the principle of caste is so firmly entrenched in our political and social life that everyone including the leaders have accepted tacitly the principle that, in the Provincial cabinets at any rate, each major caste should have a minister'. Many Western scholars hold similar views. Myron Weiner is of the view that: 'social changes accompanying modernisation are facilitating the development and not the diminution of community interests in Indian politics'. Field study conducted by Lloyd I. Rudolph and Susanne Hoeber Rudolph, in Madras State, on the role played by 'Vanniya Kula Kashtriya Sangam' is a pioneer to the close association between caste and elections. Similar observation has been made by

Selig S. Harrison, in his investigation on 'caste and the Andhra Communities'. By way of conclusion, Morris-Jones has remarked: Caste (or sub-caste or 'community') is the core of traditional politics. To it belongs a complete social ethos. It embraces all and is all embracing. An analysis of the case for an against the part played by caste in politics, points to the conclusion, that in the absence of all India studies on this situation, it is difficult to accept assertions and generalisations as basic realities. It is true that some sociological, anthropological and political behaviour studies are carried out, to examine the impact of caste system on various factors, in the light of changed conditions of the country. But such enquiries have restricted value, as they relate to a few villages or cities of specific States. The facts recorded in one village or a district could not be taken as the basis for analysing the prevailing conditions in a State as a whole. Elaborate investigations of this nature throughout India should be undertaken, for an analytical study of the present impact of caste on social, economic and political institutions of India. It could be said, that the problem of casteism has arisen because of the emergence of a new type of stratification in which caste


Constitution (Eighth Amendment) Act, 1959. As regards the representation of these classes in Services, it is emphatically stated, that their eligibility for special preference would be considered, 'Consistently with the maintenance of efficiency of administration'. (Art. 335). Besides, the special treatment of Backward Classes in Arts. 15(4), 16(4) and 29(2) is not mandatory, but only the enabling provisions of the Constitution.

The peculiar tangle of equality and special preference has become all the more crucial because of our scarce economy. The only solution far that could be suggested is, advanced sections of society should forego absolute equality in the larger interests of Backward Classes, for a temporary period. Constitutional problems relating to certain sections of society as Backward Classes, are difficult to be solved with mathematical precision.

To evaluate Constitutional safeguards for Backward Classes, the problem of administering justice for these classes is tackled with many compromises and skilful adjustments. The Constitutional guarantee of justice for these classes is beset with difficulties because of the complexity of their disabilities. While educational and economic backwardness is a common feature of these sections, they differ widely in their social disabilities. The Scheduled Castes present a problem of their emancipation from Untouchability. The problem of Scheduled Tribes is one of integration with the rest of the population. Other
Backward Classes have no such marked disabilities. On the contrary, the administration of justice for these classes demands the evolving of a workable and satisfactory criteria to determine who are backward. The problem of Denotified Communities is chiefly their rehabilitation weaning them away from their hereditary avocation of criminality. How these disabilities are eradicated by Constitutional safeguards is discussed in the forthcoming section.

For an examination of Constitutional provisions for the eradication of the social disabilities of Scheduled Castes, it is necessary to define who are Scheduled Castes. Art.366(24) defines them as: 'Scheduled Castes' means such castes, races or tribes or parts of or groups within such castes, races or tribes as are deemed under Art. 341 to be Scheduled Castes for the purposes of this Constitution'.

The stigma of 'Untouchability' is the declared criterion for classifying Scheduled Castes. Art. 341 empowers the President to specify the lists of Scheduled Castes, for purposes of guaranteeing special provisions for these sections envisaged in the Constitution. Since 1950, a number of orders were passed specifying the lists of Scheduled Castes. But wrong inclusion or exclusion of castes in these lists are frequently reported. Hence it is necessary, that the lists of Scheduled Castes should be scientifically scrutinised to ensure
that, only such castes are included in the lists who are in need of special assistance. The scrutiny of these lists demands an intensive investigation of the socio-economic conditions of these classes throughout the country. It is gratifying to note, that Lokur Committee is appointed to undertake this work. The Committee has finalised the work and the re-scheduling and de-scheduling of Scheduled Castes would be reported shortly.

Another measure which demands urgent consideration is, persons belonging to specific regions where they are eligible to be enlisted as Scheduled Castes should not be denied concessions if they move to other regions for livelihood purpose and where these their caste does not qualify for getting included in the lists of Scheduled Castes. To overcome certain discrepancies in this direction, it is necessary to prepare synonymous, generic and sub-caste names of Scheduled Castes, with a view to prevent people other than Scheduled Castes from enjoying special concessions by virtue of synonymous caste designations.

Untouchability is the greatest social disability of Scheduled Castes. Legally this practice stands abolished in the Constitution under Article 17. Further, Untouchability is made an offence under the Government of India, by 'The Untouchability (Offences) Act, 1955'. Apart from social legislation and legislative enactment, the Government have realised the necessity of intensifying the work of voluntary

agencies in eradicating this evil. States and Union Territories have been asked to maintain lists of villages which practice Untouchability. Some of the measures adopted for the speedy removal of Untouchability are - the institution of cash prizes to villages for the non-practice of Untouchability, introduction of mixed hostels, mixed colonies, adoption of Harijan children, award of gold medals for inter-caste marriages with Harijans, reforming of scavenging by introducing wheel barrows to remove night soil, attractive salaries for doing menial jobs etc. But these measures have touched only the fringe of the problem. Untouchability is reported to be still prevalent in many parts of the country. Accepting the facts recorded by the latest reports, it could be asserted, that basic social values of the caste-ridden society are remaining immutable defying all attempts to transform them.

It could be suggested therefore, that the economic basis of Untouchability has to be tackled in the same degree as social basis. The only way to improve their economic status is by creating a new occupational structure by means of education. Their grievances concerning Untouchability are purely economic. It is a well known fact, that majority of them constitute landless agricultural labourers in villages, or engaged in menial jobs. As they are economically poor they depend mostly on high castes for their subsistence. Hence,
these classes are incapable of asserting their rights and privileges by withstanding the economic boycott organised by high castes in villages. So it is necessary to take measures to provide employment opportunities to Scheduled Castes in factories and industrial concerns, to divert them from their present economic dependence on other classes. Lack of education is responsible for poor economic standards and their attendant consequences. Once their economic position improves it would automatically raise their social estimation. So the abolition of Untouchability rests chiefly on the creation of a new socio-economic status for Scheduled Castes. In the absence of this measure, Constitutional guarantee for the abolition of Untouchability would not be effective.

Equally important is to stabilise the position of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Constitution provides for the appointment of a Commissioner to investigate and evaluate the problems of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, under Art. 338(1). But the recommendations of the Commissioner seem to be very poorly implemented, as is evident from the annual reports. Besides, the States evince very little interest to furnish necessary information to the Commissioner for the compilation of these reports. For a proper evaluation of welfare schemes it is necessary, that field research work should be emphasised. In view of this
inadequacy, it could be suggested, that the office of the Commissioner should be staffed with research personnel to carry out field research. To make the Commissioner more authoritative, the recommendation of the Study Team on Social Welfare and Welfare of Backward Classes that:

The Report of the Commissioner may present a State-wise analysis and that the Government should issue explanatory Memoranda on the short-comings and inadequacies pointed out in the Commissioner’s Report. The Report and the Memorandum should be discussed in the Parliament and the State legislature every year. 21

holds good and deserves to be implemented.

Besides, 'The Untouchability (Offences) Act, 1955', should be made more rigorous if it is to be effective. The courts should expedite the cases registered under the Offences Act. At the lower level of administration, Panchayats should take the initiative in the eradication of Untouchability. This problem has to be tackled on many fronts, as to 'untwist successfully the thousand year old twist of the human mind'.

Social justice for Scheduled Tribes demands, 'the fight for the three freedoms - freedom from fear, freedom from want, freedom from interference' 22. Before proceeding to the discussion of the measures undertaken to ensure social justice,


it is necessary to define the term Scheduled Tribes. It is defined in Art. 366 (25) as: 'Scheduled Tribes' means such tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under article 342 to be Scheduled Tribes for the purpose of this Constitution'. Art. 342 provides for the specification of the lists of Scheduled Tribes by the President. But some discrepancies have been pointed out as regards the lists issued. It is generally felt that the overall view of all features distinguishing tribes is not taken into consideration in preparing the lists of Scheduled Tribes. These discrepancies have arisen as there is no specific criterion for classifying Scheduled Tribes, like the stigma of 'Untouchability' in the case of Scheduled Castes. Factors considered relevant in the classification of Scheduled Tribes are - tribal origin, primitive way of life and general backwardness. But this basis of classifying Scheduled Tribes, does not seem to benefit the lowest layer of tribals, who are extremely backward. In view of this situation, the Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission have specified the non-vocal section of tribes in different States for consideration, to be incorporated in the lists of Scheduled Tribes. It is to be hoped that this recommendation of the Scheduled Areas and

Tribes Commission would be implemented by the Government of India in the interests of tribals.

As regards the administration of tribal areas, the Constitution has provided for a Minister for tribal welfare in the States of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa, under Art. 164(1). Fifth Schedule of the Constitution specifies clearly the pattern of administration and control of Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes. Sixth Schedule lays down principles for the governance of tribal areas in Assam.

One of the most significant measures in the direction of social justice is the prohibition of 'forced labour', Art. 23(1) states: 'Traffic in human beings and beggar and other similar forms of forced labour are prohibited and any contravention of this provision shall be an offence punishable in accordance with law'. Forced or bonded labour is one of the worst forms of exploitation of Scheduled Tribes. It is termed 'Bagri' in Rajasthan, 'Vetti' in Andhra Pradesh, 'Gothi' in Orissa, 'Jeetha' in Mysore, and 'naukri-nama' in Madhya Pradesh. This system of pledging people against a loan borrowed, stands abolished in the Constitution. But it is reported that the system is still prevalent in many parts of the country. As it contravenes the principle of egalitarianism, it is necessary that the States should investigate the problem and devise measures to free them from serfdom.
Besides, the Scheduled Areas are witnessing a rapid process of transformation. Hence it is important to study the impact of industrialisation on tribals. So far three surveys have been conducted in this sphere -

(1) The Socio-Economic Survey of Tribal Labour in Tisco, Pilot Survey, on the basis of 1 per cent sample, conducted by the Government of Bihar, 1958;

(2) Socio-Economic Survey conducted under the supervision of B.R. Misra, Patna University, Bihar, 1959; and

(3) Study of the Impact of Industrialisation on the life of Adivasis Employees of Narmandi Iron Ore Mines, Tisco, But these surveys are inadequate to ascertain the impact of industrialisation on tribals. However they reveal that tribals are displaced as a result of the location of power and irrigation projects in tribal areas, particularly in Bihar, Orissa, Rourkela, Durgapur, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh. It is necessary to launch schemes of rehabilitation to meet the economic and educational needs of tribals instead of cash compensation. In short the welfare schemes for tribals should concentrate on a selected few programmes having a vital bearing on the urgent needs of the people in view of inadequate finances.

The most complex problem is the integration of tribals with the rest of society. As Nehru remarked : 'What we ought to
do is to develop sense of oneness with these people, a sense of unity and understanding. That involves a psychological approach. Their integration is affected through voluntary agencies, Tribal councils, and Cultural Research Institutes. As Tribal Councils are the keynote for preserving the cultural, religious, moral and social standards of the tribals, it is necessary to retain them side by side with the statutory Panchayats. Voluntary agencies are evincing keen interest in the welfare of tribals by convening Tribal conferences to focus attention on tribal problems, training of tribal welfare personnel, opening of educational institutions in tribal areas, publication of literature on tribals etc. Equally important is the establishment of Cultural Research Institutes. These Institutes not only collaborate with State Governments in all matters relating to tribal welfare but prove extremely useful in the chalking out of welfare schemes. But the research work of the Institutes should be more practical than academic. As suggested by the J.Lwin Committee, these Institutes should encourage research surveys on economics relating to Agricultural Schemes and Cottage industries in tribal areas. Besides, elaborate enquiries into the impact of industrialisation on tribal psychology should be carried out, to assist the Government in formulating welfare schemes to cater to the needs of tribals.

24. Ibid. P. 490.
Much has been done to safeguard tribal interests with a view to assimilate them with the rest of the population. This has been testified by the Elwin Committee that: 'Today there is a wide measure of respect for the tribal civilizations and a recognition that these fine people have a real contribution to make to the rest of India'.

The Constitution has provided for special concessions in Educational Institutions and Government Service to Other Backward Classes, as these opportunities were denied to them in the past. But the framers have failed to define the term 'Backward Classes' with the result, that it has become one of the most controversial topics of discussion. In the absence of a precise definition, it is reasonable to look to different interpretations given by the Judiciary, Backward Classes Commission, and several Committees constituted in States to investigate the problem. But no satisfactory criteria has been evolved to determine the Other Backward Classes. In view of the difficulties evolved in evolving a positive and workable criteria for determining backwardness, there is a feeling in some quarters that the category of Other Backward Classes should be done away with. The criteria put under trial and error method so far were:

(1) Caste criterion;
(ii) Criterion of Social Backwardness;
(iii) Criterion of Educational Backwardness; and
(iv) Economic criterion.

As the socio-economic status in India was determined by caste hierarchy, it was decided to emphasise the caste factor for determining backwardness. But caste criterion came in for criticism as violating the egalitarian concept and non-discriminatory clauses of the Constitution. Besides, synonymous caste names, the tangle between well organised and fairly advanced caste groups vying for special concessions, the non-record of caste in Census Reports and the Judicial interpretation that it is not reasonable to place singular emphasis on caste have made caste criterion inadequate to determine backwardness.

The need for considering the relevance of the criterion of social backwardness has arisen from the fact, that a reference is made to this aspect in Art. 15(4). But the Constitution does not contain any definition of 'Social backwardness'. A number of factors have contributed to social backwardness - caste, illiteracy, poverty and occupation. But caste, illiteracy and poverty are discussed in different sections of the discussion on criterion of Educational Backwardness' and 'Economic criterion' So under the criterion of social Backwardness, 'occupation to determine backwardness is examined. In India Co
Service is highly esteemed. Certain occupations are treated
inferior according to conventional beliefs and people who
profess these occupations are rated low in social esteem. But
a detailed study of the occupational structure indicates the
correlation between caste and occupation. The All India
Federation of Backward Classes have urged for the consideration
of occupation test for classifying Other Backward Classes. It
has been argued that people who traditionally earned their
livelihood through manual labor constitute the Backward Classes.
Therefore the issue of manual labour and backwardness should not
be mixed up with that of the economic factor. Under such
circumstances, occupation test however seems to be objective as
one of the criteria for determining Other Backward Classes.

The Criterion of Educational backwardness is another
criterion which deserves a thorough consideration in classifying
Other Backward Classes. The problem of education in most of
the States is chiefly the problem of Backward Classes, for it is
they who are extremely backward in education. Census Reports,
investigations carried out in Mysore State, and the studies on
the social composition of students in Universities and Colleges
conducted in Poona and Baroda reveal, that the traditional
privileged classes (Brahmans) are strongly represented in
educational institutions, particularly at the higher levels of
education. But there are certain inadequacies in this criterion
also. The unit for measuring literacy presents contradictions. The two alternative units are 'family' and 'caste'. Statistical enumeration of literacy family-wise would be cumbersome in view of the unwieldy population of the country. But caste-wise enumeration though appears practical contravenes the principle of non-discrimination on caste. In view of these difficulties, it could be suggested that 'occupational groups' are to be taken as the unit for determining educational backwardness. It would serve the dual purpose of recording literacy position of Other Backward Classes and also their occupational composition.

Economic criterion is another suggestion to determine Other Backward Classes. It is felt that reservations' benefits should be given to those individuals who fall below a prescribed economic level. Economic backwardness should be made the index for purposes of special concessions and State protection. Economic disparities which resulted in the creation of Backward Classes could be got rid of, by placing emphasis on economic conditions. Besides, Economic test would be in consonance with the spirit of the Constitution, as it does not create discrimination on grounds of caste, race, creed, etc. But it has been pointed out, that backwardness should be judged by social and educational conditions of the people and not singularly by economic conditions. Besides it is felt that social relief on income basis would be difficult to administer in an under-
developed country like ours. Table I illustrates this difficulty. 26

TABLE I

NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS IN INDIA DIVIDED BY INCOME GROUPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Range of income per household per annum (in lakhs)</th>
<th>Rural (in lakhs)</th>
<th>Urban (in lakhs)</th>
<th>Total (in lakhs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 500</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>Neg</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500 - 1000</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000 - 1500</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1500 - 2000</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000 - 2500</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2500 &amp; above</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>574</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>685</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conditions in certain States are such that Economic test could not be applied as the chief determinant of backwardness. Verbal has shown that the classification of people below a certain economic level as Other Backward Classes does not appear to be workable in the circumstances of the State. Hence economic criterion is inadequate to determine backwardness.

In view of the complicated problem of classifying Other Backward Classes, we could only suggest a working hypothesis

towards a satisfactory criteria. From the foregoing analysis it could be said that uniform criterion throughout the country is not workable. Any criteria suggested should be in conso-
nance with Art. 15(4) of the Constitution. The problem should be thoroughly investigated by the States for evolving a satisfactory criteria by taking the following factors into consideration:
(a) Traditionally neglected social classes;
(b) Poor education;
(c) Inadequate political power;
(d) Economic backwardness (poverty); and
(e) Lack of white collar jobs.

It has been suggested by the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, that random sample surveys should be undertaken in all States by Committees consisting of an Anthropologist, Administrator, Social Worker and Member of Parliament. The criteria suggested by the Commissioner that:

Income-cum-Merit is the only equitable basis for granting concessions to the under privileged sections of the people, though in the case of certain castes which are not still vocal enough to take full advantage of the opportunities so far, offered, criterion of caste-cum-occupation will have to be recognised for the present. For that purpose, lists of caste-cum-vocations,
considered very low in the social structure, will have to be drawn up and maintained for some time. 27

is equally satisfactory.

Another working hypothesis could be, to devise measures on the pattern of distribution of Congress tickets to contest elections in the political arena. In the distribution of Congress tickets quotas are fixed only for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. But certain guidelines are followed as regards other sections of society. The Congress Working Committee issues certain general instructions such as to safeguard special interests, minorities and representation of women etc. But ultimately practical considerations influence decision-making. What will be uppermost in the minds of the Election Committees is to secure adequate support of all sections to ensure success for the candidates contesting elections. So a similar policy may be followed for the determination of Other Backward Classes. Whatever is decided by the Legislature from time to time would be adopted. This would be in accordance with the changed demands of the time.

One more device is, the reservations policy should be in accordance with the necessities of the specific fields of reservation. For instance reservations or special concessions are given as regards admission to educational institutions and

entry to Government Service. Just as scholarships are awarded
to students on the basis of need or poverty, concessions
regarding admission to educational institutions should be
given to those students coming from a poor educational back­
ground, and preference in Government Service should be given
to those who have poor representation in this field. Economic
progress of the country seems to be the only panacea for all
the ills.

Of all the categories of Backward Classes, the least
benefitted from Constitutional safeguards are Denotified
Communities. These people are grouped along with Other Backward
Classes for special concessions. They are not accorded special
quotas like Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, nor are they
given representation in Parliament or Legislatures. While
special Officer is appointed in charge of Scheduled Castes and
Scheduled Tribes and a Commission was constituted to go through
the problem of Backward Classes, no such safeguards are provided
for Denotified Communities. As these people have certain
handicaps and mal-adjustments of a special nature, it is
necessary that the Union Government should undertake a thorough
investigation of this problem in view of their rehabilitation.
The neglect of this problem would endanger the peace of the
country, if the traditional avocation of criminality of these
classes is to affect assert itself.
In recognition of the fact, that Backward Classes are educationally and economically underprivileged, they are provided with special safeguards in these spheres to bring them to a position of equality with the rest of the population. The essence of these safeguards is 'Justice' as guaranteed by the Constitution.

Education has been made a Constitutional guarantee under Articles 29, 30, 45 and 46. Backward Classes are provided with Inland and Overseas scholarships, reservations in educational institutions, exemption from payment of tuition fees in most of the Universities to candidates from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, and relaxation in age for admission to technical and professional institutions. Besides, Basic education suiting to rural conditions is advocated for the liquidation of backwardness. It is felt that Basic education is the best method to provide vocational training and guidance, besides teaching three R's to the rural masses. 'The Working Group on the Welfare of Backward Classes' has recommended free education for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Students at all stages. The need for the dissemination of training and employment information among the Backward Classes has been emphasised. It is advocated to start higher secondary schools on the pattern of multi-purpose schools with forestry and agriculture as the two main components.
The task before an underdeveloped country is not merely to get better results with the existing framework of economic institutions but to mould them to the needs of the community to offer the fullest opportunity to every section of society to grow and to contribute to the national well-being. With this objective in view, a number of economic schemes are designed for the betterment of Backward Classes. These schemes relate to the development of agriculture, Cottage industries, forestry, co-operation, tribal development blocks, communications, housing etc. The Five Year Plan outlay for the welfare of Backward Classes is recorded in Table II:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of Backward Classes</th>
<th>First Plan estimated expenditure</th>
<th>Second Plan estimated expenditure</th>
<th>Third Plan estimated cost of programmes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Tribes</td>
<td>19.83</td>
<td>43.00</td>
<td>60.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Castes</td>
<td>7.08</td>
<td>27.66</td>
<td>40.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denotified Communities</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Backward Classes</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>5.86</td>
<td>9.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30.04</td>
<td>79.41</td>
<td>113.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the total amount of Rs. 211 crores spent during the first three plans, Rs. 115 crores have been devoted to Scheduled Tribes, about Rs. 72 crores to Scheduled Castes, about Rs. 22 crores to Denotified Communities and Other Backward Classes and

28. Compiled.
Rs. 2 crores to aid Voluntary Organisations.

The Fourth Plan provides for an outlay of Rs. 180 crores, of which Rs. 100 crores are for Scheduled Tribes, Rs. 66 crores for Scheduled Castes and Rs. 14 crores for other schemes. The tentative break-down of the allocation is given in Table III:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of Backward Classes</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Economic development</th>
<th>House sites water supply and other schemes</th>
<th>Aid to Voluntary Organisations</th>
<th>Rs. in crores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Tribes</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Castes</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denotified Tribes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Backward Classes</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common provisions</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

29. Fourth Five Year Plan, A draft outline, P. 372.
In short the Government have assumed a great responsibility for the well being of Backward Classes. If this responsibility is cautiously discharged with an emphasis on the qualitative aspect of development schemes and their speedy implementation, 'Justice' assured for Backward Classes would acquire a full meaning and significance in the Constitution.