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PRESS AND FactionALISM

A political party needs to maintain several modes of political communication to promote its ideology, programmes as well as to meet the propaganda of other parties. The press, in general, helps a political party in matter of organisation and participation considerably. Press also provides the means of initiating, sustaining and accelerating change in intra and inter-party affairs.

Press can be classified into three forms: the party organs, the committed press and the floating press. The party organs function as the official mouthpiece of a political party, while the committed press is run either by partymen or by the supporters and sympathisers of the party. The floating press is the one which is not affiliated to any party but supports any party or parties in accordance with its interests whether consistently or otherwise.¹

Press plays a significant role in inducing and developing factionalism within any party. Factional leaders or supporters may start a paper of their own to propagate their policies and issues. Positively, this may bring mobilization among the faction members but also may widen the rift between the different fac-

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tions. Most of the factions which emerged in Tamil Nadu Congress had their machinery of press in Tamil Nadu.

Swadesamitran of G. Subramania Iyer, started in 1882, as a Tamil weekly, induced political awareness and nationalism among the Tamil people. It was the first political weekly of Madras in Tamil. It was moderate in its approach and thus supported the moderate camp of the INC in Tamil Nadu. G. Subramania Iyer was one among those who attended the first INC Conference in 1885 representing Madras Presidency. In 1885 Swadesamitran changed itself into a tri-weekly and from 1889 onwards it became a daily. Subramania Iyer also started the Hindu a English weekly in 1878, with the help of C. Vijayaraghavachari, which later developed into a daily.

The extremist faction lacked press initially, but in the early 20th century, as they were attaining prominence under Tilak's leadership, many papers were launched. India, a weekly, started by Subramaniya Bharathi in 1906 with the help of Thirumalacharya, functioned as an effective mouthpiece of the extremist faction of Tamil Nadu Congress. Bharathi, while working in Swadesamitran as sub-editor, found it difficult to express his views and perspectives. India; thus, carried the motto 'liberate, egalite and fratenite'. It was through India the tenets of the 'New Party' or the extremist wing of the Congress came
to be known to the Tamil world. The available issues of India indicate that it represented the Radical party, played a central role in interpreting contemporary events and tried to inspire all those vibrant with the new spirit. \[3\]

Subramaniya Siva, an extremist, on his part started Gnana Banu in 1913, a monthly and Prabanja Mitran (1916) a weekly and India Desandari (1919), another weekly, all in Tamil which helped to publish V.O. Chidambaram Pillai's and Bharathi's articles and poems all expressing extremist ideologies which enthused nationalism among the Tamil people. \[4\]

Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, initially a moderate, underwent ideological change and shifted to the extremist camp in the early 20th century. He joined as the editor of Hindu in 1905 and through Hindu defeated the moderates in South India. Hindu became the foremost nationalist journal in the Presidency. Similarly Rangaswami Iyengar also shifted himself to the extremist camp and became the editor of Swadesamitran in 1915. \[5\]

Desabakthan was started by Thiru VI. Kalyanasundaram in 1917 as a daily in Tamil. It was considered as a promising vernacular paper which developed Congress in Tamil Nadu. It pleaded for self-government and Independence.
Hindu, Svadesamitran, Desabakthan all were organs of the Nationalists in 1920. The Gandhians had limited access to the press in Tamil Nadu. A new paper Tamilnadu edited by P. Varadarajulu Naidu from June 1920, was often enthusiastically pro-Gandhian. Tamilnadu to certain extent decreased the individuality of Svadesamitran. This paper was progressive in nature and recommended reforms in all spheres.⁶

The principal English dailies in 1920-21 like Mail, Justice and Basant's New India were persistently opposing Non-Cooperation. Even Hindu's support was a bit lukewarm. Gandhi hoped that Hindu would swing over to Non-Cooperation after the Nagpur Session of INC, but nothing happened so. Rangaswami Iyengar's Svadesamitran was more openly critical of Non-Cooperation but also was cautious.⁷

When V.V.S. Iyer took charge of Desabakthan, Thiru. Vi. Ka. resigned as editor of Desabakthan and started Navasakthi (1920), a Tamil weekly, which continued for twenty years as a pro-Congress paper. This paper facilitated communication among the Congress workers and also made them aware of the party programmes and activities.

The government prosecuted editorial staff of Desabakthan and P. Varadarajulu Naidu, editor of Tamilnadu, in September 1920, for their aggressive nationalist writings. In an attempt
to break through the nationalist domination of the press and as a rival to Hindu, Rajaji, a pro-Gandhian, contributed Rs.10,000 of the TNCC money to T. Prakasam in 1921, to launch a new paper. Thus Swarajya an English pro-Gandhian paper was born.

The Swaraj party which emerged in 1922 in Tamil Nadu felt the necessity of a paper for itself. The Swarajists tried to bring Navasakthi under their control but Thiru. Vi. Ka. refused. Later the Swarajists approached T. Prakasam, and Swarajya, a Tamil daily, with the help of Prakasam, was started with V.R.M.S. Subramani Iyer as its sub-editor. Thus the English paper Swarajya was under the control of Gandhiites and the Tamil daily Swarajya was the organ of the Swarajists of Tamil Nadu.

E.V.R., in 1924, started Kudi Arasu which stressed equality and self-respect. He left Congress in 1925 due to discrimination practised by V.V.S. Iyer in his Shermadevi Gurukulam. He wrote several articles accusing communalism. Similarly P. Varadarajulu Naidu also wrote against Congress and its policies in Tamilnadu. Tamilnadu also condemned V.V.S. Iyer for the educational system which he had maintained. Thus factionalism made Congressmen to become anti-Congress and made them use their papers to oppose the Congress. To face the justicile
opposition. Congressmen started *India*, a weekly with Kannappan as Editor and M. Baktavatsalam as its publisher. ¹⁰

In the nineteen thirties, TNC experienced further expansion of the press. As different ideological groups emerged within Congress during this period, each faction, in order to popularize its own ideology, had launched its venture in running an instrument of press. Thus there was an increased political consciousness among the people of Madras Presidency.

*Sudanthira Sangu*, a tri-weekly in Tamil, was first published on 30th January 1930 by S. Ganesan and Sangu Subramaniam. It was pro-Gandhian and carried translated articles from *Young India*. It supported the civil-disobedience movement of Gandhi and represented Gandhites of TNC. It published articles demanding Independence. In 1934 it was made a bi-weekly and in 1935, into a weekly, but it ceased in 1936, due to lack of finances. ¹¹

In 1931, T.S. Chockalingam started *Gandhi*, a Tamil bi-weekly and *Vande Maderam*, a Tamil daily, as vehement supporters of Gandhi's civil disobedience movement. In 1933, *Gandhi* was also changed into a daily and it claimed to be the "Voice of Gandhi". ¹² In 1934 when Sadanandam started *Dinamani*, T.S. Chockalingam became the editor of this pro-Congress newspaper, but when Goenka took charge of *Dinamani* in 1943.
T.S. Chockalingam resigned and started Dinasari. T.S. Chockalingam's writings were revolutionary in nature.

Janasakthi started appearing as a weekly of the socialists in the Congress from November 1937. From April 1938, it became the weekly of the communist party. In 1939, it was subject to repression by the British Government and therefore ceased publication. It was succeeded by Loka Sakthi and Bharatha Sakthi which also suffered governmental prosecution one after another. Janasakthi was revived in 1942 and was continued till 1948 when it was again subject to repression by the Congress government. Thozhilalar arasu edited by M. Kalyanasundaram during 1939-1946 filled the void created by Janasakthi.

Certain Congress newspapers, were quite popular among the Congressmen, though they did not survive longer enough. Bharata Devi was one such daily started in 1938 by Sadanandam, with avowed socialist leanings. It was first edited by Ramarathinam. In 1942, he suffered imprisonment for his bold editorials against the British. Subsequently, M. Baktavatsalam officiated as its editor till 1946 and he was succeeded by R. Nagarajan, a supporter of Kamaraj. The other papers which were inclined towards socialists were Puratchi, Samadharmam, Paguthrarivu, Puduyugam, all launched by the socialists within Tamil Nadu Congress.
Tamilnadu lost its influence after P. Varadarajulu's defeat in 1935 Assembly elections, when he contested against Congress candidate. T.S. Chockalingam, sub-editor of Tamilnadu too left it, disliking Varadarajulu's policy of non-Congressism and launched Dinakari, a daily in 1943, which was pro-Gandhian. T.S. Chockalingam, a pro-Kamaraj man, also edited Janayugam, Bharatham and Navasakthi successively after Dinakari ceased in 1953. Congress Berigai, a Tamil weekly, was started by O.V. Alagesan, a pro-Gandhian, in 1934 which published articles inducing nationalism among the people.  

Rajaji on his part, also started a journal to propagate the prohibition policy of Gandhi in 1929 called Vimosanam. He also started Kalirattai (1935) and Kudinool (1937) to make Khaddder propaganda. All his journals stressed Gandhian ideolo-gies like, untouchability, prohibition and khadi development.  

Kamaraj questioned the validity of the Thiruchengodu election, which elected Rajaji to the TNCC without the permission of the TNCC. In Kalki, its editor R. Krishnamurthi, wrote an article under the title, 'Periyapudhiyum chinnapudhiyum', which severely condemned Kamaraj and his attitudes. As a result, in many places Kamaraj's supporters burnt the Kalki magazine. It was this editorial which made Kamaraj familiar to the masses. Thus the confrontation between the factions
of Kamaraj and Rajaji was brought to the public light by Kalki. About this episode, newspapers like Hindu and Dinamani wrote articles supporting Kamaraj's faction.¹⁹

Kalki, a pro-Rajaji magazine played a significant role in the making of the Chief Minister of Madras state in 1946. The letters invited from the public, about their views of Rajaji, were published in it, which had a very decisive impact on the party men of Congress throughout Tamil Nadu. The letters in hundreds were published every week under the title 'Rajaji is wanted'. This propaganda work of Kalki was condemned by the anti-Rajaji men, and Rajaji himself withdrew the publication of letters to end the conflict among Congressmen.²⁰ In this struggle, Daily Thanthi was against Rajaji's faction. Dinamani was the mouthpiece of Kamaraj.

The factional quarrels in the Congress Legislature Party in the Madras state created ministerial instabilities leading to frequent changes in the leadership of the legislature party. While the press in general desired stability and an early end to all factional conflicts, the attitude of the bulk of the Tamil press to the Prakasam's Ministry was not very friendly and no tears were shed when this ministry fell. However the attitude of the Tamil press to the succeeding ministry was on the whole friendly.²¹ While holding that the resignation of Prakasam Ministry had become inevitable, the press put in strong plea
for the formation of a new Ministry consisting of persons with ability and integrity and for the total elimination of group feeling among the members of the Congress Legislature Party. When Omandur P. Ramaswami Reddiar was elected as leader of the CLP, the press emphasised the paramount need for a stable Ministry in the province and hoped that in future the CLP would function harmoniously as one team.

The anti-Farakasam line was actively pursued by Dinamani ever since it criticised him for refusing to quit despite a clear 'no confidence' in his leadership among the partymen. Charging him as 'publicity-oriented' rather than 'action-oriented' Chief Minister, it demanded immediate end to his Ministry and his resignation. It also criticised the Governor for agreeing to wait for his resignation till the budget was presented. It criticised the textile policy of the Prakasam Ministry and supported the resolution of TNCC, which condemned the Ministry's steps to control expansion of textile mills deviating from the all-India policy. It therefore, appealed to the new Ministry led by O.P.R. in 1949 to lift the ban on mill expansion and encourage khadi and handloom through grants. It also demanded ending of actions taken under the public securities act and requested help to restore normalcy in industrial climate.

When Kumaraswamy Raja succeeded O.P.R. in 1949, Dinamani opposed the appointment of Deputy Ministers and Parliamentary secreta-
ries as it would favour only the majority faction and create unnecessary confusion and even furtherance of rifts between the factions. 28

Press played an important role in widening the rift between Ma.Po.Sivagnanam and Kamaraj. The confrontation between Kamaraj and Sivagnanam could be traced to 1948 when both contested for the Presidency of Tamilnadu Congress Committee. Tamil Nadu described the election of Kamaraj as anti-people and the defeat of Ma.Po.Si. as people's defeat. 29 Ma.Po.Si. always had a friendly press among the non-party Tamil papers and he was emerging as a popular leader in his own right by virtue of his agitations for the creation of 'Tamil Nadu' with all its rightful traditional territories. Kamaraj, unhappy with the growth of a rival centre of power and influence, tried to control Ma.Po.Si. through an organised 'press campaign' against him on the one hand and made the Congress High Command to realise the extent of damage Ma.Po.Si. might do to the Congress on the other. Thus Janayugam, Imayam, Berigal and Congress Seithi, all pro-Kamaraj newspapers, abused Ma.Po.Si. for working against the interests of Congress and expressed that Ma.Po.Si. would leave Congress on his own. 30 Kalki praised TAK's role in 1952 elections and its services to Congress, and condemned the jealousy of the Congress towards TAK. Defending TAK on charges of secessionism, it said that TAK demanded separation
only from the British rule and its position prior to Independence should not be quoted out of context. It also advised TAK to clarify its goal in present context, so that its enemies might not find it guilty. It also urged the nationalists in Tamil Nadu to encourage TAK and its good services instead of trying to control it.

TAK accordingly amended its constitution of June 11, 1953 and announced that its goal would henceforth be the achievement of autonomous Tamil state within the Indian Republic without causing any damage to national unity apart from working for the creation of socialist society and the development of Tamil art and culture.31 However, Kamaraj was not satisfied and served a 'quit notice' on TAK on July 25, 1953. Kalki and Rajaji remained silent as they did not want to earn Kamaraj's wrath. Meanwhile, the press campaign against Ma.Po.Si. continued with vehemence. Dina Thanthi gave full page publicity with bold headlines often to 'false' accusations against Ma.Po.Si., perhaps due to its owner C.B. Aditanar's greater friendship with Kamaraj. Tamil Nadu, the Congress daily from Madurai, published a sensational report about one of Ma.Po.Si.'s interviews, in which he was reported to have offered to campaign for Travancore Tamil Nadu Congress against the Kerala Congress. Ma.Po.Si. denied the interview. Thereafter, Tamil Nadu wrote editorials often encouraging TAK. But, Bharatha Devi, with M.Baktavatsalam as its editor, often published editorials in support of expelling
TAK men from the Congress. Meanwhile, Kamaraj had become the Chief Minister in 1954 and the exit of TAK members from the Congress soon followed.

Dinamani regretted the exit of TAK and warned the Tamil Nadu Congress that there would be decline in Congress’ strength. Swadesamitran also deplored the compulsion of TAK to leave Congress. Tamil Nadu hailed TAK’s quitting Congress as Ma.Po.Si.’s sacrifice for Tamil race. Bharata Devi, while describing the exit of TAK as inevitable, however, praised its services. Viduthalai, however, suggested Ma.Po.Si. to dissolve TAK and get a few posts in the Congress. Dinamalar’s editorial was considered as the best by Ma.Po.Si. himself. Warning that Congress would weaken as a result of TAK’s exit, it said that the burden of opposing reactionary regional parties had fallen on Congress. It also complemented TAK, for without its service, Tamils would not have even dreamt Chitoor (Nehru had then agreed to appoint a Commission to decide the future of Chitoor District). Congratulating TAK for leaving Congress instead of dissolving TAK it said that TAK must be there if Tamils needed a permanent address for Tamil Nadu. TAK again received widespread praise and support from the Tamil press.

Dinamani was edited by A.N. Sivaraman, who succeeded T.S. Chockalingam in 1943. Owned by Express Newspapers Group of Goenka, Dinamani had been generally pro-Congress, though
at times it was opposed to the ministerial policies. Dinamani, however, started taking anti-government stance after the exit of Rajaji from power in 1954 and its attitude became quite antagonistic in the sixties.34

Swadesamitran (edited by C.R. Srinivasan till 1962) also had been pro-Congress daily, during the initial years after Independence, though it did not hesitate to criticise the Congress on certain occasions.35 Dinamalar published by T.V. Rama Subbaiyer in 1951 at Tirunelvely, also had been pro-Congress, though it did not seem to be politically influential. Ananda Vikatan, a weekly, supported the Congress throughout the period, though it did not fail to give considerable publicity to the opposition. Kalki, another weekly, was edited by R. Krishnamoorthy. He had displayed remarkable enthusiasm in freedom struggle, for the development of Tamil and complete loyalty to Rajaji. As a political and literary journal, it was pro-Congress in tone and always faithful. However after 1959, it actively propagated the ideology and leadership of the Swatantra Party and vehemently opposed the Congress and mainly Kamaraj.36

Other notable Congress papers included Nava India started in 1948 from Coimbatore by P.R. Ramakrishna and Tamil Nadu started in 1951 from Madurai by Karumuthu Thiagarajan. Dina Seithi started in 1957 by K.T. Kosalram and edited by
K. Subash and Nathigam edited by P. Ramaswamy since 1958 were also popular Congress papers and Nathigam's stand was pro-Kamaraj throughout. 37

S.S. Marisamy, who first ran Imayam when Rajaji was in power during 1952-1954, supported the faction led by Kamaraj. However after 1954, Marisamy used the weekly Berigai to support Rajaji and oppose Kamaraj. 38

The first general elections in 1952 brought in Rajaji as Chief Minister preceded by an uncertain electoral verdict. Rajaji's assumption of office evoked a mixed reaction from the Tamil press as the event was mostly unexpected. Even Kalki, a pro-Rajaji weekly, disliked the idea of Rajaji entering state politics in 1952. Recalling his failure to become Chief Minister of the Province in 1946, Kalki compared the invitation to him, to become the Chief Minister, to inviting Ramana Maharishi to become a Corporation Commissioner and ruled out any such possibility as he was busy with religious work. 39 However Rajaji did assume office as Chief Minister, though Kalki had eaten its words when it said that it was inevitable. 40

While Dinamani, Ananda Vikatan, Swadesamitran and Kumudam welcomed Rajaji's assumption of office, Dravidanadu, Janasakthi, and Viduthalai condemned it as undemocratic and urged mass agitations against it. Rajaji proved his majority in the Assembly subsequently and the opposition was silenced.
However, the new parliamentary situation after the separation of Andhra in October 1953 and the opposition inside the Congress to his plan of 'Basic Education' raised speculation about Rajaji's continuance as the Chief Minister. Vikatan, Dinamani, Kalki and Kumudam reiterated their faith in Rajaji's leadership and listed his achievements and the likely benefits of his continuance in office to Tamil Nadu. Kumudam however felt that Rajaji's quitting as Chief Minister, though unfortunate, could be used as an opportunity to establish a coalition government with the help of all parties, conforming to the Indian constitution, to tackle basic problems unitedly.

Rajaji, however, had to quit power, on health grounds in 1954 and he was succeeded by Kamaraj as Chief Minister. Initially, Kamaraj seemed to get support from all sections of the press and this strengthened his base considerably. Kumudam particularly, praised his tact in forming a Ministry by including pro-Rajaji men. Dinamani wished that Kamaraj would be free from the organizational vs government conflicts which were quite characteristic of Rajaji's period. Viduthalai, one of the E.V.R's papers, hailed Kamaraj's Ministry as it included no Brahmins and hoped the Chief Minister would be pro-Nobrahmin in his attitude.

The support from DK to Kamaraj was, however, not to the liking of the bulk of the Tamil press. Though Kamaraj
tried to make the support from DK appear as unilateral, considerate opposition did emerge to his tacit approval to DK's activities which were considered anti-national and anti-religious. A section of erstwhile pro-Kamaraj press voiced suspicions over this unwanted relationship between Congress and the DK, and they did not hesitate to attack Kamaraj.

Berigal for instance, alleged a secret alliance between Kamaraj and EVR and Kamaraj's decision not to favour 'Dakshin Pradesh' proposal at the AICC Session in Bombay in 1955 was a result of EVR's influence. Kalki, Ananda Vikatan and Dinamani too made a mockery of the relationship between Kamaraj and EVR.

In 1963 the bulk of the Tamil Press considered the 'Kamaraj plan' as irrelevant to Tamil Nadu. Dinamani pointed out that without Kamaraj as Chief Minister, there were conflicts between ministerial and organisational wings. Describing Kamaraj's resignation as an unmatchable sacrifice, it appealed to him to take steps to help to fulfil people's aspirations, though out of power. Kalki charged that the plan would create confusion and people could no longer distinguish between government and party. By sending away many Ministers without valid reasons simultaneously, the plan had killed democratic conventions, Kalki condemned.
Even Congress newspapers like Bharatam and Sarvathigari disapproved of the plan.

To rejuvenate and revitalize the Congress party in Tamil Nadu after the defeat in 1967, Kamaraj took the first step and with the help of Jayakanthan Jaya Berigal was started in 1967. But due to differences between Jayakanthan, the editor and E.V.K. Sampath, the financier Jayaberigal came to an end within one year. But again in 1968 Jayakanthan together with M.K.T. Subramaniam started another newspaper Jayakodi. Both were pro-Kamaraj in tone. But Jayakodi also was stopped within few months. 49

After the debacle of Congress in 1967, C. Subramaniam was made the TNCC President by Kamaraj. But pro-Kamaraj men did not like this. Though C. Subramaniam took many steps to strengthen Congress in Tamil Nadu, the pro-Kamaraj men through their newspaper Navasakti published many articles attacking C. Subramaniam. Similarly P. Ramasami, editor of 'Nathigam', also wrote articles accusing Brahmananda Reddy and Mrs. Gandhi.

The Tamil Nadu Congress working committee discussed about the articles that appeared in Nathigam and Navasakthi on 5th June 1969 and a three men committee was appointed to go into the issue. The committee gave its report which asked P. Ramaswamy to apologise. In this regard, the resolution
passed by the AICC Working Committee at New Delhi on 25th August 1969 also recommended for unity, which said: "A split in the party will have incalculable consequences. Let us therefore not say anything or do anything which is likely to widen the breach. The Working Committee calls upon all Congressmen to help create conditions in which the normal or healthy functioning of the party will be restored. Let us all try to contribute to unity in the organisation based on commitment to the accepted policies thus generating a new dynamism on the political and economic fronts."50

During the 1969 split all the papers of Tamil Nadu stood by the side of the Kamaraj Congress, opposing the Bank Nationalisation Policy of Mrs. Gandhi. Their support lasted till 1971 elections. But when the elections were indicative of the victory for Congress (R) at national level they accepted Congress (R) as the real Congress though they did not openly accept Mrs. Gandhi's leadership.51 By 1970, another Tamil paper called Mani Kodi was started by Bhuvarahan, who was a pro-Indira leader in Congress (R) of Tamil Nadu. This paper took steps to strengthen Congress (R) in Tamil Nadu, though it was not entirely successful.

After 1969 Swadesamitran was bought by the Congress (R) and Baktavatsalam was made its editor. This paper was
mainly used by the Congress (R) to oppose Kamaraj and his Congress. The paper was not much effective and it came to an end in 1971. It was again revived by Ramaswamy Udayar in 1980, but again lasted only for one year.52

After 1969 press was completely ignored by both the Congresses in Tamil Nadu. Only few devotees of Congress had run papers, that too for short spells of time, as they lacked full support of the party both financially and morally.

Congress (O) to a certain extent was accessible to the press. The party paper Navasakthi after the split was owned by Thanushkodi Nadar and came under Congress (O) control. E.V.K. Sampath and P.C. Ganesan were editors of the paper. It was more than a mouthpiece of Kamaraj's faction.53

Kannadasan of Congress (I) started a Tamil daily in 1970 named Kaditham. This helped the party to energize the Congress workers. Kannadasan emphasised through it that the pro-Indira Congress was the real Congress. Thellur Dharmarajan of TNP who started his Vidivelli in early 1950s changed it into Congress daily after its merger with Congress and this paper also supported Kamaraj. Even when E.V.K. Sampath left Congress (O) Vidivelli remained pro-Kamaraj. Nathigam edited by Ramaswamy also remained pro-Kamaraj after 1969 split.
Nedumaran of Congress (O), to revitalize the party started a Tamil Congress daily called Seithi in 1971. It was also pro-Kamaraj in attitude but it also ended in 1972 due to weak circulation. Ananda Vikatan maintained its support to Congress (O) till the death of Kamaraj. Kalki welcomed the unity between Congress (O) and Swatantra and recommended the people to vote for the Democratic front. But from 1959 it was pro-Rajeji and opposed Kamaraj and his Congress as it was anti-Congress in attitude though mainly anti-Indira.

After the 1971 elections, Ananta Vikatan recommended for unity among the two Congresses considering the national integration. Thuglak also supported for the merger of the two parties and said that merger will strengthen the Congress. It also recommended to vote for Congress (O) during the Dindigul by-elections.

During emergency M.K.T. Subramanium of Congress (O) started Jawaharism, a Tamil daily which lasted only for a few months (1976-1977). After 1977 most of papers in Tamil Nadu supported Janata including Hindu, Indian Express, English dailies, Dinamani, a Tamil daily and Thuglak a Tamil fortnightly. Vidivelli shifted its support to Kumari Anandan’s GKNC after 1978. After the unity of the two Congresses, Karim a Congressmen started a paper by name Desabakthan (1980) and Mylai S.M. Krishnan a pro-Indira man started a Tamil daily called Bharatham
in 1982. These two were the only papers of the party which made the Congress workers aware of their party activities in the early eighties.

Between 1980-1984, Hindu and Indian Express consistently supported Congress (I) but at times it also pointed out the Emergency effects. After 1984 both the papers openly supported Congress (I). They were pro-Rajiv and praised his leadership. In 1984 another news paper Dinasari in Tamil was started by James Fredrick a millionaire who owned and managed its publications. The paper was Congress oriented and acted as a mouth-piece of Congress (I) in Tamil Nadu. In 1988 March Navasakthi was again revived and Jayakanthan was made the editor. 55

In view of the enormous publicity, the Congress got from numerous well established newspapers in various languages, the Congress in Tamil Nadu did not consider that separate investment in the area of the press was a political necessity. Thus the Congress did not have an effective party organ in Tamil after Independence. 56 However, there were several attempts by Congressmen to run newspapers and journals reflecting and supporting Congress ideology and programmes.

During the initial period following Independence, the nationalist Tamil press converted itself as Congress press and there was not much political articulation at the regional level
as the entire political press was concerned with national and international events. As a result, there was conscious and unconscous ignoring of the need to strengthen the party at the regional level. The neglect of party-building at the initial phase proved fatal to the party: it led to the rise of strong factions at the regional level followed by the establishment of the weak party base. The various efforts by the Congressmen to start and run newspapers failed due to apathy and indifference of the party leadership and the lack of enthusiasm among the party rank and file. In the Congress, more ever, writers and authors were isolated individuals who were always ignored and even discouraged within the party itself. After the 1969 split Congress has neglected the importance of press and so a consistant party organ is lacking. This had led to decline of the party mobilisation and communication among the Congress workers and between the party and the masses too.
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13. Information collected from Janasakthi office.


16. Interview with S.M. SUNDARAM, the editor of Bharata Devi, 1985.


18. Ibid., p.235.


22. Fortnightly Reports to the Government of India for the first half of March 1947 (TNA).

23. Ibid., for second half of March 1947.


31. Ibid., p.691.

32. Ibid., pp.699-701.


35. Ibid., It said: Though Swadesamithren has Congress leanings, its criticisms of the opponents of the Congress are not vehement.

36. Ibid.,


40. Kalki, 6th April, 1952.

41. The achievements listed included removal of uncertainty following elections, abolition of food control, raising of public debt, basic education scheme, strict implementation of prohibition etc.

42. Nimudam., 10th May, 1953.


47. Dinamani, 1st and 4th October, 1963.


52. Interviewed M. Baktavatsalam the ex-Chief Minister in December, 1986.


54. Interviewed, Sakthividivel, Vice-President of TNCC (I) in January 1968.

55. Interviewed Thiyagarajan, Sub-editor of 'Murasolai', in November, 1968.

56. The only organ was Congress Seithi, a fortnightly run by the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee between 1947-1967. But it did seem to have been effective.