CHAPTER II

FACTIONAL HISTORY OF INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

A faction situation is characterised by a cessation of co-operative activities between contending groups. This aspect is apparently so important that Siegal and Beals have incorporated it in their definition of factionalism. They define it as an overt conflict within a group leading to an increasing abandonment of co-operative activities. A party is formed with a common objective, but as the party fissions into factions, the common co-operative activities tend to cease. Conflict and antagonism signify attenuation and breakdown of the communication across the factions.¹

Factions emerge and become active in any party under a specific set of circumstances. But each individual faction situation is unique. The context of time, group and culture, persons and values, make every faction situation a historic individuum. A faction situation may primarily be structured in terms of the issue(s) that give rise to disension. The issue(s) or point(s) of division may or may not be based on some objective clash of interests. Also factions develop around leading individuals in a party and a clash of interest (including status rivalry) between them sets the factional process in motion. Likewise the factional disputes may be ideological or non-ideological.² Thus the factional settings may be various and varied.
INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS:

The Indian National Congress (INC) is the oldest and largest political party in India. It led India's national movement for freedom from the British Colonial rule. It helped to foster and strengthen the many splendid, multi-religious, multi-racial and multi-lingual composite nationalism of the country. The ideology of nationalism and the goal of political freedom enabled it to bring together persons from different regions, backgrounds and ideological convictions. So the members of Congress were landless labourers and peasant proprietors; tenants and landlords; untouchables and high castes; workers and businessmen; and men of hills and men of plains. There was therefore disagreement in INC over such questions as (1) the means by which Independence was to be achieved - whether through constitutional or extra-constitutional methods, (2) the kind of political, economic and social system which ought to be created once independence was to be achieved, and (3) the specific interests which were to be served by the post-Independence government and which were to be fostered even before Independence.

The INC came into being in 1885 as a result of interaction between Indian social aspirations and Raj's attempt to create opportunity for an adequate expression of the expanding political intelligence and capacity of educated Indians. The Indian leaders wanted to use moderation and co-operate with the government, in their attempt to convert Congress into a kind of party machine, the aim
of which was to secure placements in the public services and share in the administration of the country, to start with.

The Congress had to face from an early period, an element of contradiction. The contradictions arose from its having to act simultaneously as a movement and a party. As a movement Congress had to deal with a foreign government. Its object in that capacity was to mobilize all segments to bring pressure upon the government for a gradual transfer of power to Indians. At the same time, as a party, Congress wanted power for the promotion of its own dominant interests. While the one made the Congress a socially heterogenous body, the other led to the creation of empathy amidst its middle class leadership which controlled both the movement and the party. However, when the movement later expanded and the party grew in the 20th century through gradual process of downward mass contact, contradictions appeared and intensified.

MODERATES AND EXTREMISTS: (1885-1920)

Grounding of INC was accelerated by the Moderates. Moderates were western educated, and were more receptive to European ideas and principles of liberalism. They believed in the divine purpose of the Indian society, in the inevitability of the interaction between England and India, in the British sense of justice, and in the representative institutions created in India. Yet, even as they believed in liberty and democracy as their demands, they
did not press for the immediate application of these abstract doctrines in India, to their logical extremes. It was because, they believed that prudence has been not only the first of all virtues, political and moral, but it is the dictator, the regulator and standard of them all. Moderates used the concepts of liberty and nationality as tools and serviceable instruments for the generation of their mass base. Therefore, the moderates condemned all terrorist activities to resist the British. They believed in incrementalism and readily conceded the argument that in order to manage democratic institutions, Indians would have to go through a laborious process of training in the art of parliamentary self-government. The elites among the Moderates were, G.K. Gokhale, Rash Behari Ghosh, Dadabai Naoroji, W.C. Banerjee, Surendra Nath Banerjee, Phirozshah Mehta, Madan Mohan Malaviya, Bishan Narayan Das, Nawab Syed Mohammed, R.N. Madhokar, Bupendranath Basu, Satyender Prasad Sinha and others. 5

By the middle of the first decade of the 20th century, several members of the Congress became restive. Together these members were called as 'Extremists' and were led by Bala Gangadhar Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal and Lala Lajpat Rai. They criticized the moderates for their love of British parliamentary institutions. These radicals emanated from the lower middle class and had begun to fill the rank and file of the Congress. These extremists demanded self-government through passive resistance. The extremists, who
represented the educated-unemployed, combined political radicalism with a high degree of Hindu revivalism, as a means of mobilising the masses. Inevitably, the moderates and the extremists of the Congress clashed.

The reason for the emergence of differences was the goal and the means visualized for the Congress. Moderates advocated only legislative representation of Indians and the growth of the sentiment of common nationality. To achieve this they were wedded to constitutional methods. But the extremists wanted to get rid of the British rule and achieve independence, through passive resistance. Secondly the members of each faction represented different strata of the society. So each class worked for their own self-interest. Though factions were there in 1890's, they were not noticeable, since the extremists, due to lack of leadership, were not competent enough like Moderates. But the rift between these two factional groups became distinct at the Banaras Congress in 1905, when the extremists opposed the resolution of the moderates which wanted to welcome the Prince of Wales, and also worked for the boycott of his visit. But in 1906, the moderates used 'self-government or Swaraj' as the official slogan to keep the extremists within their fold. The trouble again started when the term 'Swaraj' was dropped from official resolutions of the Congress in 1907 at the Surat Session, which was dominated by the Moderates. For the Moderates the word 'Swaraj' meant Dominion status or
self-government, under the British empire. They wanted to be treated as equal partners in the administration. But on the other hand the extremists viewed 'Swaraj' as self-government or Independence. The extremists also refused to accept Dr. Rash Behari Ghosh, who was a Moderate, as the President of the Congress. Factionalism thus developed and led to the split of 1907.

Factionalism between the wings of the Congress during this period was bi-factional in nature. Both moderates and extremists were equally competent, but either one of it always dominated the other. During first half of the period, under consideration, moderates influenced the Congress activities. But after 1915, extremists controlled the INC. An important consequence of factionalism was that it gave birth to a new minor party, called the 'Advanced Party', who's leader was Balala Gangadar Tilak, which was composed of the radical elements of the Congress and which also brought pressure to bear upon the government to introduce the elective principle in the constitution of legislative councils. Secondly, factionalism was responsible for the famous Surat-split. This made the adventurous radicals of the Congress to regroup into the 'Nationalist Party'. The prominent leaders of this party were Balala Gangadar Tilak, G.S. Kharparde, Bepin Chandra Pal, Lala Lajpat Rai, Aurobinda Ghosh and Dr. Deshmukh. Thirdly, when there was rapprochement in the INC in 1914, the disgruntled, moderates formed a separate party called the 'Liberal Party' in 1918. This party was led
by Ghokale and the other prominent members of this party were Dadhabai Naoroji, B.G. Ranade, Rashbehari Ghosh, Madan Mohan Malaviya, Bishan Narayan Das and others.8

GANDHIITES Vs SWARAJISTS: (1920-30)

INC was waning as a political party, by 1920, as the liberals seceded and the nationalists created their separate sphere of influence as Home rulers. But the emergence of Gandhi brought unity in the Congress and there was also rapid changes in the INC from an upper middle class organisation to a mass organisation. The beginning of mass movement in politics, religious revivalistic forces, industrialisation, modernisation and economic growth led to crystallization of different classes in the Indian society, which made its impact on INC.

The upper middle classes who have always been opposed to anything like mass action disliked Gandhi's approach of Non-Co-operation. They preferred for a peaceful settlement with British to only assist them in the field of administration and economic development. They pressurised Gandhi to suspend his civil disobedience, although followers were greatly disappointed to do so. They were the people who after Gandhi's arrest, organised the Swaraj Party with the declared object of fighting against the British from within the councils and press for 'Swaraj' (Dominion Status). They included such leaders as C.R. Das (Bengal), Motilal Nehru
(U.P.), N.C. Kelkar (Bombay), G.S. Kherphade (C.P.), Vithalbhai Javerbhai Patel (Bombay), S. Srinivasa Iyengar (Madras) and Jamnadas Madhavji Mehta (Bombay), all belonging to the legal profession. They were called as 'Swarajists' or Pro-changers. They wanted to demand 'Swaraj' and if the British did not concede the demand, they planned to wreck the councils with their majority strength inside the councils.

The supporters of Gandhi's Non-Co-operation were called as Gandhiites. They remained firm in their opposition to council entry and they were also called as No-changers. C. Rajagopalachari, Vallabhbhai Patel, Sarojini Naidu, Jamnadas Dwarkadas, Indulal Yajnasik and Umar Sobhani were prominent among the Gandhiites. They wanted to achieve independence through passive resistance.

Thus in the 1920's factionalism in INC led to the birth of the Swaraj Party first. Swarajists were recognised as a branch of the main organisation itself, but they disagreed with Gandhi's Satyagraha. It was the Swarajist Party outside the councils, not the Congress, that was to be responsible for controlling the legislative activities of those congressmen who decided to go into the councils. The Swarajists replaced the moderates in the councils and became stronger which was due to the unity of its goal, the social homogeneity of its leadership, its appearance as an integral part of the Congress itself, and, above all, to the efficiency of its organisation. A second consequence of the factionalism in
the INC was that, Malaviya, who was by that time influenced by the Hindu Maha Sabha, organised in 1923, the 'Independent's Party' of the Hindu nationalists though it also formed a part of the INC. the Independent Party stood for regular council programme and nationalist consolidation, but they did not have plans for wrecking the councils from within; on the other hand, they wanted to make the best use of the opportunity. M.R. Jayakar and Aney also stood for this view. Factionalism inside INC brought also the third consequence of another minor party led by N.C. Kalkar, one of the leaders of Maharashtra. This faction also believed in responsive co-operation and favoured council entry on whatever mandate the Congress might decide to give.

To bring compromise between the warring groups of the No-changers and Pro-changers, the Gandhi-Das Pact (1924), was formulated. Conflict between them were minimised by this pact. The pact confirmed the suspension of Non-Cooperation programme and gave the Swarajists definite recognition and a free hand to pursue their tactics. This facilitated the Swarajist faction to control the INC. In this phase of factionalism also, uni-factionalism was pre-dominant, for the Swarajists were the official Congress throughout. The Gandhiiites however remained within the Congress to clinch their political ideology subsequently.
LEFTISTS Vs ESTABLISHMENT: (1930-47)

The suspension of the Non-Cooperation Movement in 1922, imbued culturally-oriented revolutionary nationalism in Congress, which gave importance to two new dimensions, socialism and mass actions. This laid the foundation for the leftist elements in INC, and as a result during the 1930's many leftist ideological groups came into existence in INC such as socialists and communists. Thus the Congress was further divided into rightists and leftists. The Congress establishment was carried on by the rightists however.

Socialist faction was the result of cross-fertilization between Marxist and Gandhian ideas. When terrorism was suppressed by the Raj in the 1920's, most terrorists turned to be the Royists or to a little extent as communists. Also the right wing of the Congress, including Gandhi himself, were fascinated by the growing ideology of socialism. Socialists, communists and congressites were all thus tied together against the common enemy of the British.14

The suspension of mass civil disobedience by Gandhi in July 1933, left the Congress radicals confused and the formation of Congress Parliamentary Board (CPB) in June, 1934 to select candidates for contesting elections isolated the revolutionaries from the Congress as a whole. The revolutionary group was left divided in 1930's, influenced by the theories of mass action and socialism. In that one group lined with the Communist Party in India and the other group formed the Congress Socialist Party (CSP) in 1934.
Thus socialists were an important faction in early 1930's who stood for complete Independence and their socialist programmes were, to mention a few, zamindari abolition, nationalisation of key industries and transfer of power to the producing classes etc. The socialists represented the masses, the lower middle class and a section of the middle class intellectuals. They stressed for mass action against the Raj. The prominent socialists who operated within the Congress were Acharya Narendra Deo, Sampurnanand, Jayaprakash Narayan, Abdul Bari Purushottamdas, C.C. Banerjee, Mrs. Kamala Devi Chatopadhyaya, F.H. Ansari, A.K. Pillai, Ram Manohar Lohia, A. Patwardhan, Faridul Hug, M.R. Masani, Jawaharlal Nehru and others.15

Another leftist faction within INC was the communists led by S.V. Ghate. The communists showed no respect for private property but believed in armed revolution to change the existing colonial order of society and government. B.T. Ranadive, S.V. Deshpande, G.M. Adhikari and others were prominent among the communists. They were against Gandhi and his Non-Cooperation Movement and they were fighting for the opportunity to capture INC and change it into a revolutionary movement. They worked within the Congress and influenced it in the 1930's and 1940's.16

By the end of 1930's two more factions emerged. One faction, led by Subhas Chandra Bose, was an off-shoot of the socialist faction. Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose, who were the idols
of the young nationalists in the thirties, were both attracted to socialism. But Bose started as a humanitarian rather than as a scientific socialist which Nehru claimed to be. In 1933, Nehru defined socialism as a revolutionary change in the social structure and the ending of vested interests in land and industry. For Bose, the main appeal of socialism lay in its concern for the uplift of the poor. For Bose, socialism did not derive its birth from the books of Karl Marx, but it must have its origin in the thought and culture of India. This difference in the interpretation of the word socialism, brought the cleavage among the socialists of Congress Party, which gave rise to the formation of Forward Bloc by Subhas Chandra Bose in 1939. The proximate reason for factional split was Nehru's opposition to Bose's re-election as Congress President and his consequent rise in status as leader of the leftists. It was more a personal than ideological conflict. For his part Bose felt that, Congress Ministers after electoral success of 1936-37, instead of wrecking the councils from within had gone about enjoying the offices and this distressed Bose. Thus power motivation among the two leaders brought to existence another party of the leftists. Therefore, Forward Bloc wanted to uplift the poor and it stood for complete Independence of India through an anti-imperialist warfare with the help of other countries, for the establishment of modern socialist state promoting social ownership and control of large scale industrial production for economic development etc.
About this time, another faction was formed by the radical democrats, which was led by M.N. Roy. They were known as 'Royists'. This reformist group of communists of M.N. Roy was lying in between the socialists and communists wedded to marxism. They wanted to co-operate with the British Government in the promotion of its war effort. Roy's lieutenants, like R.S. Ruikar, G.L. Kandalkar, Mukunda Lal Sarkar, Maniben Kara, Kunwar Brajesh Singh, Rajani Mukherji and other communists, after Roy's arrest, formed the All India Socialist Party in April 1934. Their object was, in the first instance, to achieve complete independence and later a 'workers and peasants Raj'. They were critical of Gandhi's religion-oriented Non-Cooperation Movement and advocated the use of strikes as a weapon to achieve their objective. After Roy's suspension and resignation from the Congress in 1940, he formed a new party called as the 'Radical Democratic Party' which advocated radicalism.

The Revolutionary Socialist Party, was an All-India United Front of revolutionaries that came into existence in the course of the Ramgarh Session of Congress in March 1940. Their programme included the collection of arms, provision for the shelter of absconders and underground workers, the collection of detailed information regarding government and commercial installation, the particulars of personnel and the number of arms available with the police and other sources etc. Their activity increased with the outbreak of war and the leaders were arrested at the end of 1940. This
party aimed to establish a socialist republic and a classless communist social order after the overthrow of the foreign government. The members were inclined to communism. 18

In general, though differently motivated, these left parties and groups were united in their opposition to British imperialism; and when Congress Ministries resigned under their pressure to start preparation for a 'non-violent' campaign, they welcomed the Congress move as heralding the approach of a long-awaited opportunity to organise, with the help of the Congress, a resistance movement for national independence, so that they might capture through it the Congress machine and use it as a revolutionary instrument of political and social change.

RIGHTISTS VS ESTABLISHMENT: (1930-1947)

The politics of establishment was led by two factions namely the rightists and the revived Swarajists. The rightist faction was led by Rajaji and it stood for private property. Mostly rightists were conservatives and represented the landed aristocracy of the Indian society. Rajendra Prasad, Vallabhbhai Patel, and J.B. Kripalani belonged to the right wing of the Congress.

The landlord and moneyed classes in the Congress were opposed to anything resembling 'a socialist or agrarian revolution'. Increasing infiltration of left influences in 1930's, which expressed themselves in the form of Independence as a goal and direct mass
action as the method, subjected Congress to right reaction. That reaction expressed itself in the total suspension of civil disobedience movement and a resort to the council entry programme as the best means to secure, in collaboration with the British government, the preservation of the existing social and economic systems. But inspite of this contradiction, rightists and Swarajists were united by the existence of foreign rule and the growing influence of CPI inside the Congress. 19

Yet, another group of congressmen whose main object was to enter the council, was the one led by Dr. Ansari, B.C. Roy, Madan Mohan Malaviya and others. They wanted to revive the Swaraj Party which might function for electoral purposes aiming at council-entry programme. But this revival was opposed by the left wing of the Congress. However, in 1934 at Patna, Congress accepted council-entry on advice of Gandhi's suspension of civil resistance and the CPB was formed. Meantime, prior to the election of 1934, Pandit Malaviya and Aney resigned from the CPB on the question of the working committee's refusal to reject the communal award, and formed the Congress Nationalist Party in July 1934. 20 While the Congress Party appealed to voters to reject only the white paper, the Nationalist Party concentrated attention on the rejection of both the white paper and the communal award. The Swarajists and the rightists mentioned above joined and accepted council-entry programme and formed the Ministry in 1937 after the elections under the 1935 Act.
In 1940, again Congress was split into three factions, one supporting a return to Parliamentary programme and the second, especially the socialists and radical elements, advocating a full civil disobedience campaign against British to achieve independence. While the first was represented by such leaders as Sathyamurthi, Rajaji, Asaf Ali and Bhulabhai Desai, the second faction included the leaders of Congress Socialist Party, Forward Bloc as well as CPI. There was the third factional group led for some time by Nehru and Maulana Azad, which opposed the extension of Non-Violence to the problems of defence. But the third faction did not develop to the level of splitting the INC. These factions were ably manipulated by Gandhi, during the 'Quit India Movement'. Thus multi-factionalism appeared in the Congress for the first time in the 1930's. Social and economic aspirations, personality clashes and organisational competitions were the reasons for the rise of multi-factionalism. It led to various activities, some constitutional and peaceful and others wholly violent. Inspite of the different factions that existed in INC, yet it was held together by the influence of Gandhi. And it was to be noted that no single faction could control the organisation.

CONGRESS FACTIONALISM: (1947-1967)

Factionalism arose in INC during 1947-1967, due to leftist, rightist and centrist perspectives. While the socialists like Jayaprakash Narayan, Asok Mehta, Ram Manohar Lohia, Achyut Patwar-
dhan, Aruna Asaf Ali and others formed the leftist faction, the conservatives headed by Vallabhbhai Patel formed the rightist faction. And the centrist faction arose because of personality clashes and power considerations.

**LEFTISTS: (1947-1948)**

In the 1940's, the socialists refused to negotiate with the Labour government of U.K. for achieving India's freedom and they also wanted to boycott the Assembly, as well as reject to the Mountbatten's plan for the partition of India. This made Patel to gain an upper hand in the affairs of the Congress and he constantly applied pressure to get rid of the socialists. But Gandhi wished Jayaprakash Narayan or Acharya Narendra Dev to lead the Congress. The socialists started their struggle by opposing the resolution of the Congress working committee passed in January 1946, in which faith in Non-Violence was re-affirmed. As a second step at its Kanpur convention in February 1947 the Congress Socialists dropped the word 'Congress' from its Party's name. In 1948, Gandhi's assasination deprived the socialists of their refuge in the Congress and left Patel free to adopt such measures so that socialists were forced to quit the party early. Patel also passed a resolution which outlawed the formation of political parties within the Congress. Accordingly the members of the Congress Socialist Party had to choose between disbanding their ideological loyalties altogether in order to remain within the Congress or to retain their
ideologies and leave the Congress. Socialists chose the latter alternative. 22

CENTRISTS: (1948-1967)

After the Independence as the ideologues - socialists and communists have left Congress, the issue between the party members and the Ministers arose as to who were to decide the policies and the programmes of the government. The conflict was between Nehru and his supporters in the government on the one hand and Tandon and his supporters in the organisation on the other. Patel and J.B. Kripalani were fighting to have supremacy of the party over the government. It was an acute power struggle between the leaders of the party and the leaders of the government.

With the death of Gandhi, Nehru emerged clearly as the leading figure of the Congress in the national politics. He implicitly controlled the party, the government and the politics of the country. Patel was another leader, who had the charisma, administrative ability and iron-will to contest against Nehru. Although the two main political actors disagreed among themselves, the death of Gandhi left them with no option but to co-operate and stand together for nation-building. Even before the exit of socialists, there was personal rivalry between J.B. Kripalani and Vallabhbhai Patel. Kripalani, a devote Gandhian, resented the authoritarianism of Patel. After serving the Congress for nearly 12 years as its general secretary from 1934, Kripalani became its president in 1946, in succession
to Nehru. Patel who was opposed to Kripalani's elevation as the Congress Chief, interfered with the presidential privilege of constituting the working committee in order to have a majority in his favour. Kripalani was further irritated when Patel declined to discuss the question of consultation between party and government on the plea that he was not responsible to the President of the Congress but only to the Parliament. Kripalani proclaimed the doctrine that it was the party from which the government derives its power. Nehru on the other hand emphasised that his government was responsible only to the Parliament and immediately it was crowded with senior leaders from the CWC. With this shift of power the Congress President became less luminous and the two successive party presidents U.N. Dhebar and Mrs. Gandhi, unsuccessfully attempted to make the government act only with the explicit approval of the Congress President and the Party Executive.

In such situation the President ought to have asserted his position and personality but Kripalani had failed and could not find the means to do so. Having given up the Presidentship in November 1947, on the advice of Gandhi, Kripalani stood again for the same office in 1950 at Nasik Conference with the support of Rafi Ahmed Kidwai against P.D. Tandon, a Patel nominee. This was serious challenge to Nehru's control of the Congress. Nehru, who could not match Patel in organising ability, was reluctant to come forward with his support to Kripalani, as he did not want
himself to be in a predicament as Gandhi was in 1939, against S.C. Bose. In the elections that ensued Kriplani was obviously routed. Both J.B. Kriplani in 1946 and Tandon in 1951, sought to assert the authority of the Chief of the organisation over the government and the Prime Minister. They demanded that Nehru and his Cabinet should be responsible to the party, which was not accepted by Nehru and his followers. In 1937 when the state governments were formed under the Government of India Act, 1935, Nehru expressed himself in favour of the government working under the direction of the party. But his views underwent change after he became the Prime Minister.23 Thus factionalism of Organisationalists Vs. Ministerialists was regaining supremacy during the years 1947-1951, in INC.

Immediately after the Independence ideological factions within the Congress came out and formed independent parties. The Socialists formed the Socialist Party and the faction led by Kriplani formed the Congress Democratic Front. P.C. Ghosh founded the Krishak Prajan Mazdoor Party (KPMP) in 1950 and Prakasam formed the Praja Party. They all were dissidents from Congress. Later these parties merged together and formed the Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party (KMPP). Both Socialists and Kriplani had similar reasons for leaving the Congress. Both were victims of Patel's autocracy and both were elements whom Patel wanted to purge. Neither Kriplani's Gandhism nor the Socialists' Marxism was viewed
tolerantly by the Centrist Wing of the Congress, which wanted them to get out of the party instead of creating polarisation from within. Both Kripalani and Socialists vainly aspired for high offices of the Congress and in their frustration they identified the Congress as a big bourgeoisie organisation incapable of adopting itself to changing conditions. If the socialists were led to believe that young blood was callously neglected, Kripalani entertained the feeling that ideological puritans like him had no place in Congress. The socialists expected that if they left the Congress, they could rally the nation behind them for their role in the "Quit India Movement" and Kripalani hoped that his personal virtues and stature of his colleagues would be adequate for national support. Both these proved to be miscalculations.24

The uneasy relationship between the party President and the Prime Minister came to an end in 1951 when Nehru took over the Presidentship of the organisation. The party-government conflict was also avoided with the election of Nehru's nominees U.N. Dhebar (1954-1959), Indira Gandhi (1959-1960), N. Sanjeeva Reddy (1960-1961) and D. Sanjivayya (1962-1964), as the Presidents of the INC. Nehru had become supreme arbiter of the party and the government, leaving the successive Presidents to the routine work of maintaining the party machine and they were not allowed to intervene in the administration of government.
Though socialists left the Congress in 1948, the liberals stayed within the Congress. They were namely, Rajaji, M.R. Masani, K.M. Munshi, N.G. Ranga and others. This faction derived the support from the rich agriculturalists and industrialists and also from some of the prominent members of the princely order. These elements were against the modern ideologies favouring common ownership. This faction was strengthened when the INC in 1951 first attempted to abolish the Zamindari system and in 1955 Avadi Session of INC, adopted the goal of socialism. The immediate cause for the formation of the new party was the resolution that the Congress passed at its Nagpur Session in 1959 - regarding co-operative farming which Rajaji viewed as nothing but the royal road to communism. The situation appeared to offer the first opportunity for organising a mass based free enterprise party by exploiting the fears of large and small land owners alike. This faction was conservative in nature and was wholly opposed to Jayaprakash Narayan and his socialism. Their opposition to Nehru's centralism and socialism resulted in the formation of the rightist 'Swatantra Party'.

The Swatantra Party which came into existence in 1959, stood for freedom of man, freedom of the farm and the family as against the attack of totalitarianism on the freedom of everybody. Swatantra turned to be an effective opposition to Congress during the 1962 and 1967 elections.
In the mid 1960's dissident Congress factions in the states felt isolated from power within the party because of their inability to intervene into national politics. By about 1966, Congress was corrupted by the uninterrupted enjoyment of power over two decades, since Independence. Self-seeking, discontentment and frustration led to dissension, defection and bitter and intense struggle in the party. In such a situation different state defections joined together to form the Bharatiya Kranti Dal (BKD). Humayun Kabir, Hare Krishna Mahatub of the Jana Congress, (Orissa), Ajoy Mukharjee of the Bangla Congress, Mohanlal Balkival of the Jana Congress and P.C. Ghosh, V.K. Krishna Menon and J.B. Kriplani and Charan Singh of U.P. held a joint conference and formed the BKD or the Indian Revolutionary Party on 15th May 1967. They pledged social justice through elimination of corruption and violence, honest and efficient administration, supply of the basic necessities of life and employment. They left Congress organisation and undermined the common man's faith in constitutional progress. They wanted to create a democratic society free from economic, social and political exploitation.26

The period (1951-1964) was thus marked by what has been called a period of centralisation and convergence. Factionalism was absent during this period.
SYNDICATE Vs INDICATE: (1969)

After Nehru who? This question gave birth to an intense bi-factional struggle between the 'Syndicate' of the Congress and Mrs. Gandhi, which resulted in the great split of the INC. Kamaraj, Nijalingappa, Atulya Ghosh and S.K. Patil constituted the hard core 'Syndicate'. Other luminaries who supported this Syndicate were Morarji Desai, V.B. Naik, C.B. Gupta, Sanjeeva Reddy, Ram Subhag Singh and K.C. Abraham and others. The other faction was the pro-Indira faction which consisted of persons like Asoka Mehta, Fakruddin Ali Ahmed, Jagajeevan Ram, V.S. Dikshit, Brahmananda Reddy, V.V. Giri and others.

The factionalism between Syndicate and Mrs. Gandhi arose because of many reasons. Centralisation of power took place in INC under the leadership of Nehru which declined the popularity of INC. So Nehru, in August 1963, conceived a strategy called as the 'Kamaraj Plan', to oust the unmanageable Chief Ministers and intriguing Central Ministers. Many senior Congress leaders in the party were not happy in the manner the plan was implemented. S.K. Patil, one of the Ministers who was eased out of the office was the first to object the introduction of the plan. The plan meant to send the top leaders to the periphery and the organisational leaders from the states to the centre. Kamaraj, S.K. Patil, Atulya Ghosh, Sanjeeva Reddy and lately Nijalingappa were brought to the centre from their state capitals. The state leaders instead
of sustaining Congress power in the various regions degenerated into a rival 'Syndicate'. The Syndicate faction was actually born in the conference of informal group at Tirupati conclave in September 1963 to discuss the proposals of the next Presidentship. It was decided that Shastri should be chosen as the next party President. If Shastri was unwilling the next choice could be Kamaraj. Subsequently, when Shastri declined the offer, (he wanted to avoid an open clash with Morarji Desai), the name of Kamaraj was proposed and accepted. The Kamaraj plan has upset the seniority pattern in the Cabinet which would have been used to claim legitimacy of succession.

Nehru recalled Shastri to join his cabinet as a Minister without any portfolio in 1964 January. To many, Nehru's action was a clear indication of his choice of succession. After Nehru's death, the unwilling Shastri was persuaded to become the Prime Minister. But his tenure of Prime Minister was short lived as he died in January 1966. Consequently, this time the contest for Prime Ministership between Mrs. Gandhi and Desai became inevitable. However Mrs. Gandhi was elected as the Prime Minister by the Congress Parliamentary Party and she gave a new turn to government-party relationship. Unlike, Shastri, she made significant changes in the composition of her Cabinet. A major rift between the party President, K. Kamaraj who was re-elected for the second term as Congress President and the Prime Minister developed by the summer
of 1966 on the decision of Mrs. Gandhi to devaluate the Indian Rupee without consulting the Party President or CWC. She was alleged to be 'Autocratic'. Friction developed between them and it got reflected in the process of selecting the candidates for the fourth general election in 1967.27

Mrs. Gandhi's strategy of independent action clashed with the concept of collective leadership of Kamaraj. The President of the party impliedly sought that his position should be reckoned with for the making of policies. But Mrs. Gandhi claimed unfettered authority in such matters. The polarisation of rightism (Syndicate) and leftism (Mrs. Gandhi's group) slowly crystallized and came to the fore in 1969. The proximate cause of the factional split were the decisions taken at the Bangalore Session of the AICC in July 1969. Indira Gandhi's preference for Jagjivan Ram as presidential candidate was ignored by the opposition and they, instead, chose by majority, Sanjeeva Reddy to contest for that office. As a reaction, Mrs. Gandhi relieved Deputy Prime Minister Morarji Desai from the finance portfolio and effected nationalisation of 14 major banks. Sequentially, Reddy lost the election and disciplinary proceedings were contemplated against Indira Gandhi by Nijalingappa. Personal antagonism assumed an ideological form and V.V. Giri in August 1969 was elected as the President of India, (supported by Indira Gandhi). Further, Mrs. Gandhi dropped four junior ministers who owed allegiance to Congress President Nijalingappa. He retaliated by removing Fakrudin Ali Ahmed and C. Subramanian, two
of Mrs. Gandhi's supporters from the CWC on constitutional grounds. In October 1969, CWC meeting was boycotted by Mrs. Gandhi's faction and they held a parallel AICC meeting. Mrs. Gandhi was expelled from the INC in November 1969, and Ram Subhag Singh was elected as the leader of the Congress Parliamentary Party (CPP). Though the overwhelming of the CPP supported to Mrs. Gandhi, the formation of another faction under Ram Subhag Singh meant that Congress Party lost its absolute majority in the Parliament.

In November 1969 the Congress was finally split into Congress (R) led by Mrs. Gandhi and Congress (O) led by Nijalingappa. Thus the split in 1969 was due to indulgence of personalities and struggle for power and supremacy. The INC during 1969 was bi-factional in nature, where both factions were equally competitive. However only Congress (R) was able to built itself to be a systematic party later and Congress (O) could not culminate into a real opposition and therefore it merged with the other parties. This factional process in 1969 led to a vertical split from the top to the bottom of the party in both the organisation and in the government.

The 1969 split was unique for it heralded the beginning of the new era of political polarisation and realignments in the national political scene. It enabled the Congress to have a rebirth and prevented the opposition to exploit the situation for nearly another eight years. Unlike the previous rifts, the two rival factions began to claim the party's label and office. The consequences
of the split extended until 1971 when the Supreme Court gave its verdict in favour of the Congress led by Mrs. Gandhi as the real National Congress, in a reply for the petition filed by the Congress (O). It was for the first time that the Congress party's official candidate for the office of the Indian President (Sanjeeva Reddy) was defeated by the Congress party itself. For the first time, the split also led to the dissolution of Lok Sabha a bit earlier than scheduled. The Congress (R) or the New Congress or the Ruling Congress, after the split, shed its old symbol and accepted 'cow and calf' as its symbol. The Congress (O) was given the stature of National Party and separate symbol. This split also changed the leadership of the INC, to pass on from the elderly freedom fighters to younger generation.

In the first general elections of 1952 the Congress outdistanced all the other political parties and emerged as the dominant inter-acting variable in the Indian party system. By then intra-party atmosphere had changed substantially. Nehru had established a very effective centralisation of power under his leadership by assuming both the Prime Ministership and Party Presidentship. During 1954-1963 the Congress Presidentship passed to Nehru's nominees and the CWC was brought under the control of the Parliamentary Wing. The Congress constitution too, has been repeatedly altered in compliance with the setting of new goals and objectives. In its nature of authority the Congress has been described as democratic in appearance but oligarchic in reality.
Towards the end of the Nehru era the provincial Congress leaders had been fairly assertive to make the deconcentration of powers and dissenting Congress groups threatened to work as a formal opposition. At the provincial level the struggle for power was always present in the organisation, even during the Nehru era.\textsuperscript{32} Factionalism had pervaded the whole organisation.\textsuperscript{33} With the Kamaraj plan the Congress entered into a new phase with a number of state centres to counter-balance the centripetal pull of the Congress high command. With the death of Nehru the pivotal position of the state units came into sharp focus showing a polycentric system. Power was dispersed in the party among several competing but overlapping groups, the CWC, the Chief Ministers, the Cabinet and the Congress Party in the Parliament.

After the 1967 election the party was in a disarray with dissensions and defections from all sides. Over the years the Congress has gradually evolved itself from a mass party to a skeletal organisation. The party had failed to perform the traditional function of moderating and neutralising the factional splits within it.\textsuperscript{34} So the intra-party conflicts led to the biggest ever split in 1969.

\textbf{1969–1978}

\textbf{BEFORE 1977 ELECTION:}

India was one of the few developing countries that had decentralized power. The constitution of 1950 had provided a federal
system. To many Indians, and certainly to members of the Congress party, India had developed a new unique political system — a "Congress System", which provided the country with stable authority, a regime committed to economic development, socialist planning and secularism, all within a free-wheeling democratic process.

Yet by the 1970's many of the distinctive features of the Indian Political System appeared to be coming to an end. The government had become more and more centralised. State governments were controlled by the Prime Minister, at whose pleasure the State Chief Ministers held office. At the same time public strife was on. rise. Declaration of emergency in 1975 was justified by Mrs. Gandhi, by asserting that the opposition parties had been resorting to extra-parliamentary and extra-constitutional measures to force the Congress party out of office. An underground opposition to the government developed during the emergency and Mrs. Gandhi decided to hold the parliamentary elections in 1977, for many a reason.

There had been political clashes between H.N. Bahuguna the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, and Mrs. Gandhi that had led to his dismissal, and Sanjay Gandhi had succeeded in obtaining the dismissal of Nandini Satpathy as Chief Minister of Orissa. Secondly, the Congress Parliamentary Party had refused to accept constitutional amendments proposed by the government that would have transferred control over agriculture from the state governments
to the centre, and removed the right of property from the constitution. Thirdly, a Senior Minister in Mrs. Gandhi's Cabinet, Jagjeevan Ram, resigned from the government in February 1977, denounced the emergency and announced the formation of his own political party, the Congress for Democracy (CFD), which would support Janata Party candidates. Ram, a long time Congress leader and Minister, was a prominent figure in the politics of the state of Bihar and a leader of India's Harijan community. Ram was particularly harsh in denouncing Mrs. Gandhi for destroying democracy within the Congress Party. He noted that during the emergency party officers had been appointed, not elected including the Chief Ministers of states. Two state Congress leaders, both former Chief Ministers of their states, H.N. Bahuguna (U.P.) and Nandini Satpathy (Orissa), joined Ram's newly formed Congress for Democracy, after their resignation from Congress. And others who followed Ram, was K.R. Ganesh, D.N. Tiwari and Raj Mangal Panda.

Ram's resignation evidently led Mrs. Gandhi to fear widespread defections from the Congress party and therefore she announced for immediate elections. Thus the small faction of Ram before the 1977 elections, left Congress and merged with the Janata Party to provide a strong opposition to Mrs. Gandhi's government.

**AFTER 1977 ELECTION:**

Congress (R) usurped the heritage of INC after the 1959
split. But within nine years, the INC has been subjected to another major tumult. The split came as an after effect of the sixth general elections, when the Congress for the first time in 30 years of monopolistic power in government had to sit in the opposition, that too without their leader Mrs. Gandhi and more than a dozen of Ex-Central Ministers (who were all defeated in the VI general election of 1977). Since 1971, the image and structure of the Congress was being eroded. Especially at the time of announcement of the Mrs. Gandhi's and her son's defeat (Sanjay Gandhi) the leaders in the Congress began to denounce them.\textsuperscript{36}

Congressmen who had spent their careers in political office were now out of power. Many resigned from the party and sought admission to the Janata Party. A wave of recrimination swept the party leadership and the rank and file as losers and survivors alike sought to cast blame for the party's debacle and to find ways to recoup. Indira Gandhi's opponents blamed her, Sanjay, Bansi Lal, Shukla and their associates, while her supporters attempted to diffuse the blame more broadly. D.K. Barcoah, the Congress President, resigned his office. Bansi Lal was expelled from the party. A reprimand for "misuse of power" was given to V.C. Shukla, who had lost his parliamentary seat in Madhya Pradesh by one of the largest margins in the state. Y.B. Chavan, one of the leading survivors, was elected as leader of the Congress Parliamentary Party.
Indira Gandhi's supporters argued that Congressmen should not join with Janata in defaming the party leadership, nor should they repudiate the emergency or the policies pursued by the party because of the excesses committed by the few. A battle soon ensued between the two groups over the office of the Congress Party President. Opponents of Mrs. Gandhi backed Siddharta Shankar Ray, Chief Minister of West Bengal and a one-time close associate of the Prime Minister, who had turned against Mrs. Gandhi when her son had attempted to undermine his position in the state. Mrs. Gandhi's supporters backed Brahmamanda Reddy's candidature. In the bitterly contested election in the AICC, the party's governing council chose Reddy who had won by 317 to 160 votes. Mrs. Gandhi thus demonstrated her continued popularity within the Congress Party.

Though Congress was again defeated in the June 1977 state assembly elections, Congress leaders found consolation in the fact that this defeat was not as severe as that happened in the parliamentary elections. Moreover many Congress leaders continued to hope that differences within the State Janata Party Organisations would fetch Janata leaders back into their fold. Many of the leftists within Congress also believed that 'Contradictions' within both Janata and Congress would eventually fragment the two parties and lead to realignment that would benefit the left.
By the middle of 1977, Mrs. Gandhi was making statements to the press and attending party meetings. Her re-entry into the political arena spurred Morarji Desai and Chandra Sekhar in their efforts to keep together the diverse elements within the Janata Party. By the end of the year the struggle between Mrs. Gandhi and her opponents within Congress became acute. Her supporters attempted to dislodge Brahmananda Reddy and make Mrs. Gandhi the Congress President. This rivalry extended from the CWC to the CPB and then to the AICC.

Meanwhile the Janata Government began cracking the caucus regime of the emergency period. Mrs. Gandhi and her close associates of emergency rule were arrested. This move of the Janata Government boomeranged as it roused sympathy and mass support for Mrs. Gandhi. The Congress itself was in a dilemma, as mass riots and demonstrations took place throughout the country protesting her arrest. The CPP, in the meanwhile, decided to support the Janata government in repealing the controversial clauses of 42nd amendment of the constitution. When the AICC met on 15th October 1977, there was a little chance of compromise. Mrs. Gandhi's group claimed to have the significances of 411 AICC Members demanding the resignation of Reddy and for electing a new President.

The six weeks of drama was temporarily cooled down by a three points formula, of withdrawing the move for a requisite AICC, delinking Karnataka issue from national party issue and the
election of the best candidates for the coming assembly poll. But Devaraj Urs demanded that problems of Congress parties in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Punjab, Tripura should also be discussed and resolved in consultation with Mrs. Gandhi. This was not acceptable to the Reddy-Chavan group and a division was inevitable. On 18th December, 1977, Mrs. Gandhi announced her decision to resign from the CWC and revive the move to requisite AICC. Nearly 200 key supporters of Mrs. Gandhi demanded to request the Congress President to convene a meeting of the AICC within a week to arrive at a collective decision by democratic means to resolve the current crisis. It was also decided that if Reddy refused, some CWC members in their camp could call a meeting of the AICC on 28th December 1977.

It was the Karnataka crisis that led to the final decision. KPCC and Reddy faction took disciplinary action against the Chief Minister Devaraj Urs and paraded their strength against the government before the Governor. To protest the suspension of Urs, seven CWC members resigned and decided to convene the convention of Congressmen between December 31, 1977 and January 1, 1978. Meanwhile, the Urs Ministry in the Karnataka was dismissed by the President on 31st December, 1977 as the opposition strength increased to 109 out of the total 206 in the Assembly. As a result INC was split on January 1st 1978, into two parties. The 'Convention of Congressmen', met at Delhi and unanimously elected Mrs. Gandhi
as the President of the Congress (I). The convention authorised Mrs. Gandhi to organise Congress Committees at all levels, consulting with the seven Pro-Indira CWC members.

The convention declared that the split was complete and finally on 3rd January 1978 the CWC expelled Mrs. Gandhi and the conventionists from the Congress and authorised the Congress President, the PCC Presidents, DCC Presidents, to fill up the vacancy caused thereby. The CPP executive pledged its loyalty to Brahmamanda Reddy. The CPP was divided, and in the beginning Chavan had majority. Though the AICC was split, the majority was with the organisational wing. Twenty out of twenty four PCC Chiefs declared allegiance to Reddy by 7th January 1978. Already he had a majority in the CWC. Like the 1969 crisis, the split extended to the lower levels also and the division took place in the name of the party President and Mrs. Gandhi.

On a petition filed by the Congress President, the Chief Election Commissioner ruled that the Congress (R) led by Brahmamanda Reddy will be allowed to use the "cow and calf" symbol in the Assembly elections. The other group was named Congress (I) or Indira group and was recognised as a national party with "arm" as its election symbol. In the election, Congress (R) was defeated while Congress (I) secured absolute majorities in Karnataka and Andhra. In Maharashtra, Congress (I) became the biggest party in the Assembly and in the by-elections held in North India they
defeated the Congress (R). Mrs. Gandhi was also elected to Parliament from Chickmagalur by-election in Karnataka but was expelled from the house for the breach of privileges of the House in the Fifth Parliament.

At the national level, the split alienated the Congress (R) which later became Congress (S) from the people, while Congress (I) grew as the only challenging force in the country to oppose the Jan Sangh dominated BJP or the Lok Dal or the Janata Party. Like the Congress (0) in 1969, Congress (R) was left with a large army of leaders without any adequate mass base. Even the exit of Devaraj Urs from Congress (I) and his selection as the new chief of the Congress (R) made little impact in challenging Mrs. Gandhi's personality, charisma and superiority.

Ideology played only a very subordinate role in the 1977-1978 crisis. Unlike the 1969 split there was no economic issues before the Congress Party; and the only major problem was the leadership question. But in the midst of hero-worship, inner party democracy was lost which paved for the party's debacle at the 1977 polls. And without power and mass support, the stalwarts of Congress (R) planned for the elimination of Mrs. Gandhi. On her part Mrs. Gandhi was required to rejuvenate the forces like she did during the political turmoils of 1969.
1978-1984:

Indira Gandhi's party, Congress (I), later provided continuity to INC. But the institutionalised leadership of the Congress party was replaced by a highly personalised and centralised leadership of Mrs. Gandhi. Her 1980 electoral victory accelerated the above process. Constitutionally the Congress had been a federal organisation but the federal norms were now forgotten to patrimonialism. At the same time, in order to curb defeiances, defections and desertions the leadership have frequently used material and status satisfaction to its members. 

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5. MISRA, B.B., The Indian Political Parties - An Historical Analysis of Political Behaviour upto 1947, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1976, p.3.

6. Ibid., p.52.


10. Ibid., p.233.

11. Home (Pol) K.W., VI to File No.66 of 1934 (United Provinces), p.3.


20. The Working Committee with the Motives of Political Expediency had neither accepted the Communal Award nor rejected it. Malaviya and Aney therefore resigned their seats in the CPB on 28th July 1934.


31. See ROBERT MICHAELS, Political Parties, The Free Press of Glou-


39. The attention of the rival group was diverted due to the proceedings of the Shah Commission. Mrs. Gandhi and her groups were isolated by the former colleagues.

40. The Hindu, 9th December, 1977.


43. The resolution read, "This convention representing the INC in which a majority of the members of the AICC are also present in view of its being the only representative organisation of the INC and in order to provide effective national leadership to meet the challenge before the nation and the Congress unanimously elects Smt. Gandhi as the Congress President.


46. Later on the eve of the VII General Election, the symbol of the Congress, 'Cow and Calf' was frozen by the Chief Election Commissioner, on a petition filed by Congress (I). The Congress (U) was allotted the symbol of 'Chakra' whereas the Congress (I) retained its symbol of 'Arm'.