Straddling the uneven and highly variegated terrain of the U.P. Congress and attempting to give it a basic structural unity was the U.P. Congress Committee. At one level it was a mere Committee: subordinate to the AICC and responsible for the Congress organisation in the United Provinces. At another level it was the forum wherein equations between various Congressmen were worked out in the context of the changing situations of the period.

In the previous sections we have traced the different strands in the U.P. Congress. In this chapter we shall see how the apex Provincial Congress organisation tried to integrate these strands in the context of the functioning of the Ministry.

As will be seen below, the UPCC tried to assume the role of mediator between the Ministry and the radical Congress activists on issues such as the Kanpur labour strike of May 1938, the referring of the U.P. Tenancy Bill to the Parliamentary Sub-Committee of the Working Committee, the question of individual Congressmen or committees resorting to Satyagraha on their own, the relationship with the Kisan Sabhas etc. Subhas Bose's challenge to the Congress High
Command in early 1939 also created some interesting polarisations in the U.P. Congress, which will be outlined. In passing, we shall also trace the extent to which the growing communal problem was taken note of by the UPCC and the steps adopted to deal with it.

Finally, we shall assess the effectiveness or non-effectiveness of the UPCC in widening the appeal of the Congress and in fruitfully chanelising the energies of those sympathetic to the national movement. Since this was the premier role of any Congress committee in the pre-Independence phase and more so during a temporary "truce", such an assessment has to be made, to whatever extent possible.

In 1936, all PCC constitutions had undergone certain changes. Among the proposed changes in the UPCC constitution (largely CSP sponsored) was one to have primary Congress committees in every village.\(^1\) In effect, village-level primary Congress offices were set up only during the Congress election campaign of 1936-37, usually in the vicinity of a polling-booth.\(^2\) And then, when the Congress Ministry was formed, clusters of village-level Congress offices


\(^2\) See Chapter I, Section on Election Campaign.
ranging from forty to a hundred, constituted themselves into Mandal Congress Committees.\textsuperscript{3} In some districts, such as Basti, Mandal Congress Committees were already in existence, prior to Ministry formation.\textsuperscript{4} These MCCs, then, became the grass-roots Congress units, replacing the earlier tahsil-level organisation.

The thrust of the 1936 changes in the UPCC constitution was towards the democratisation of the PCC, by providing for the consultation of all primary members on major matters. It was suggested that all resolutions to be put before district or provincial political conferences and DCCs be first circulated among the primary committees for discussion. It was laid down that all primary members should meet at least twice every year, that elections to all village and mohalla-level Congress committees must be direct and not on the earlier group basis.\textsuperscript{5} Unfortunately, we have no record of whether these instructions were duly followed. The Congress Socialists did take the whole programme seriously at the beginning. A mass contacts questionnaire was

\textsuperscript{3} Interview with Ramakant Pandey, Rae Bareli, April, 1986. See also Jawaharlal Nehru's piece 'The United Provinces Congress', January 1939, \textit{SWJN}, Vol.9, pp.456-7.

\textsuperscript{4} Memorandum on Mass Contact, U.P., \textit{J.P. Narayan Papers}.

\textsuperscript{5} Ibid.
circulated to all the district and local committees, but we have on record replies from only two committees: i.e. the Lucknow City Congress Committee and the Basti District Congress Committee. Many Congress committees apparently did not send replies to the questionnaire. Given the unprecedented rise in primary Congress membership during the 1937-39 period and the pressures on the Congress organisation due to the work of the Congress Ministry, such instructions could well-nigh have been overlooked and the earlier practice of primary members meeting only at election time and during political conferences may very well have persisted.

From the inception of the Congress Ministry, the UPCC was drawn into its activities. The deliberations at Executive Council meetings in this period reveal the extent to which ministerial matters became the concern of the U.P. Congress. At the very first meeting of the Council on 12 September 1937, C.B. Gupta (himself an MLA) moved a resolution asking the U.P. Assembly and Council Congress Parties


not to take any member into the Congress Party without the consent of the Executive Council. Another resolution drew the Ministry's attention to cases of police terror in the Province.\(^8\) On 18 November, the Executive Council passed a series of resolutions which would form the outline of the draft Tenancy Bill.\(^9\)

However, very soon Nehru and Sri Prakasa expressed their disapproval of this tendency for "Congress committees to review the work of Ministers and for individual Congressmen either to take a subservient attitude of unctuous acquiescence or a haughty attitude of carping criticism from a high and superior pedestal."\(^{10}\) Instead, PCCs were advised to maintain a certain distance from the functioning of the Ministries.\(^{11}\) Nehru also tried to evolve a code of conduct for U.P. Congressmen:

---

8. UPCC Executive Council Proceedings (henceforth UPCC EC Proceedings), 12 September 1937. The second resolution ran thus: "This Council is distressed by the fact that in many districts of the Province, particularly Gorakhpur, Mainpuri and Bulandshahr, the police is spreading terror and false cases are being instituted against Congress workers. The Council draws the attention of the Ministry to this matter and hopes that necessary action will be taken."


10. This was at a meeting of UPCC workers in Benares on 7 December 1937. AICC/P-20(iii)/1937.

11. Ibid.
So far, individual Congressmen have been saying much what they pleased.... Every Congressman must have full instructions about Congress aims and endeavours; and while speaking, must not go beyond them. Instructions are necessary as to what we say, if required, on religion, communal problems, economic aims, social relations, culture, language etc. 12

Yet, attention was soon diverted to the question of who would become President of the UPCC in 1938. It was the usual practice to have the President of the annual provincial political conference going on to become President of the UPCC for the ensuing year. Five names, (those of Acharya Kripalani, Dr. Murari Lal, Damodar Swarup Seth, Sampurnanand and Mohanlal Saksena) had been proposed for the Presidentship of the political conference to be held at Aligarh from 28-30 November. 13 Almost instantaneously, lobbying began with Balkrishna Sharma asking J.B. Kripalani to withdraw in favour of Dr. Murari Lal 14 (a Kanpur Congressman like Balkrishna Sharma, and President of the Kanpur City Congress Committee in 1936). The former along with Sampurnanand and D.S. Seth withdrew from the field, leaving two contestants, Dr. Murari Lal and Mohanlal Saksena.

12. Ibid.

13. UPCC Secretary’s note to J.B. Kripalani, 14 September 1937, AICC/P-20(i)/1937, p.187.

In early November Dr. Murari Lal was first declared elected as President of the political conference by 24 votes to 22, but the decision was challenged by a certain group of Lucknow Congressmen, championing the cause of Saksena. It may be recalled that Mohanlal Saksena had been involved in a claim for general secretaryship of the Lucknow Congress in 1936. This group even took the matter to the AICC which refused to intervene. Finally, the matter was referred to the E.C. meeting on 16 November. Largely through the efforts of Jawaharlal Nehru, Saksena was ultimately elected President of the provincial conference. Two months later, Nehru managed to prevail upon the major Murari Lal supporters to unanimously elect Mohanlal Saksena as

15. See Harish Chandra Bajpai's statement to Sainik, 15.11.37, AICC/P-20(i)/1937, pp.15-15A.

16. Gopinath Srivastava and Harish Chandra Bajpai in particular. Bajpai claimed that Murari Lal had only got 21 votes since three districts (Banda, Bulandshahr and Bareilly) had no proper District Congress Committees functioning and therefore no right to vote. Bajpai also claimed that some districts had been made to change their minds and transfer their vote to Dr. Murari Lal. Statement to Sainik, 15.11.37. Bajpai was severely reprimanded by Nehru for having gone to the Press on this matter. Letter from Nehru to Bajpai, 24.12.1937, AICC/P-20(ii)/1937.

17. AICC/P-20(i)/1934, p.199.

President of the UPCC.\textsuperscript{19}

This was not a happy beginning for the new UPCC. Provincial politics had polarised sharply into pro- and anti-Saksena camps. Nehru was trying to ford the breach: he had first championed Murari Lal’s cause, but then seeing the bitter feelings, convinced himself that it was “absolutely immaterial who was elected President”\textsuperscript{20} and thereafter actively lobbied for Saksena. To him, the election of a “proper Secretary” and “other office bearers and Council” was more important. He hoped that an Executive, enjoying the general confidence of the PCC, would be formed.\textsuperscript{21}

The UPCC of 1938 had five Vice-Presidents: Nehru, Acharya Narendra Dev, Husain Ahmed Madni, Sampurnanand and J.B. Kripalani.\textsuperscript{22} R.S. Pandit, K.D. Malaviya and Mahabir Tyagi were the Secretaries. Among the members of the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{19} On 8 January 1938, Nehru sent a set of identically-worded notes to Damodar Swarup Seth, Acharya Narendra Dev, Sampurnanand, Purshottamdas Tandon, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, K.D. Malaviya and Narmada Pratap Singh, calling for an “end to all party canvassing”, the unanimous election of Mohanlal Saksena and the need for a “strong Council and Secretariat which has the confidence of all groups in the PCC.” AIICC/P-20(i)/1937, pp.187-203.
\item \textsuperscript{20} This was stated in a letter to Acharya Narendra Dev, 9.11.37, AIICC/P-20(i)/1937, p.73.
\item \textsuperscript{21} Letter to Kidwai, 8 January 1938, \textit{Ibid.}, p.201.
\item \textsuperscript{22} PAI UP No.4/1938, 15-22 January, p.26.
\end{itemize}
Executive Council were radicals like Vishnu Saran Dublish, Damodar Swarup Seth, Thakur Malkhan Singh and Dr. Murari Lal himself. Would Mohanlal Saksena, a seasoned Congressman with plenty of organisational experience, be able to steer his vessel safely through?

It was in his relationship with the Kisan Sabha that the new President of the UPCC encountered rough weather. The behaviour of the U.P. Kisan Sangh, both in word and deed, had been causing some concern to the Ministry as well as to senior Congressmen in the U.P. Consequently, when the Sangh announced its decision to launch a thousands-strong kisan march to the Council Chamber on April 20, the day the Tenancy Bill was to be placed in the Legislative Assembly, the Ministry was far from pleased. The Premier, G.B. Pant, felt that to have the kisans marching to the Council Chamber with their charter of demands after the Government had already worked out its proposals for the Tenancy Bill was superfluous and inconvenient. (On 1 March

23. "I have received reports from some districts that the people of Kisan Sabhas create disputes with Congress mandals.... Such disputes only tend to weaken the strength of Congress." Jawaharlal Nehru, speech at Allahabad on 26 November 1937. SWJN, Vol.8, p.366.

24. Ranjit Pandit to Nehru, 13 April 1938, AICC/P-20(ii)/1938, pp.247-8. See also Premier's reprimand to kisans: "Demonstrations are Futile", The Leader, 23 April 1938, p.13.
1938, there had already been a kisan march to the Council Chamber, when the main demands were placed before the Ministry. Pant conveyed his irritation on the matter through R.S. Pandit to Jawaharlal Nehru. Besides, the UPCC had called for the observance of Kisan Day on 17 April and Nehru felt that all Congressmen should concentrate on this event. In a statement to the Press as well as in a note to the General Secretary, UPCC, both dated 14 April 1938, Nehru observed: "It seems to me highly undesirable that repeated demonstrations should be held before the Council Chamber... the whole object of such demonstrations is thus frustrated by making them cheap and ludicrous."26

Nehru's statement earned him the wrath of those Socialists who had planned the march at a kisan conference on 3 April, presided over by Acharya Narendra Dev. They had intended this march to strengthen the hands of the Ministry "in the face of the organised and determined united opposition of the zamindars."27 It was also to have been the first such march under the auspices of the Provincial Kisan

25. Sangharsh, 7 March 1938, p.16. For more details, see Kisan Sabha Chapter.


27. Damodar Swarup Seth to Nehru, 18 April 1938, AICC/P-20(ii)/1938, p.219.
What hurt the Socialists most was that Nehru had, rather than sending a telegraphic or telephonic message to Narendra Dev or Mohanlal Gautam, made a public statement on the matter. Yet, the march was abandoned though some districts which could not get the information on time, sent their quota of participants. Nehru, on hearing the other side of the story, issued a second statement titled "On the Need for Kisan Demonstrations" in which he stated:

Kisan meetings and demonstrations, to enable them to follow developments and to bring the weight of their opinion to bear on them, are...to be encouraged.... But I still think that demonstrations before the Council Chamber should only take place on rare and very special occasions and should not otherwise be encouraged.

This episode was indicative of the contradictory ways in which different levels of the Congress could sometimes function in the Ministry period. Intriguingly the same individuals could be involved in these conflicting activities -- Acharya Narendra Dev being a prime example.

At the 24 April meeting of the UPCC a heated discussion

28. Acharya Narendra Dev's telegram to Nehru, 16 April 1938, AICC/P-20(ii)/1938, p.219.
29. Damodar Swarup Seth to Nehru, 18 April 1938, op. cit.
30. Home Poll. 18/4/38, BR.UP.ii.
on the role of the Kisan Sabha took place. The details of the discussion were not made public. Mohanlal Saksena had apparently had some strong differences of opinion with his colleagues, presumably Acharya Narendra Dev and others. At the end of the meeting, Nehru appeared rather distressed at Saksena's handling of affairs and, more so, his inability to carry various elements of the PCC with him. He bluntly wrote to Saksena: "If you cannot carry a man like Narendra Dev with you in any important matter the blame must inevitably rest largely on you." 32

Immediately after this incident, Nehru announced his decision to leave for Europe. Congress affairs, both of the national and provincial varieties, appeared to have worn him down greatly. 33 After having played the role of principal architect in the formation of the new UPCC, and having seen his carefully prepared plans for balancing the various forces in the Committee come to naught, he threw up his hands and retreated from the scene, having decided to sail from Bombay on 2 June for Europe. Until his departure, however, he was in the thick of political matters. After attending the UPCC meeting of 22 May, he drafted the much-

32. Letter dated 29 April 1938, AICC/P-20(ii)/1938, p.229.
awaited statement 'On the Congress Attitude Towards Kisan Sabhas' in which it was stated:

Some individuals unable to find a place in the district Congress executives have sought to organise Kisan Sabhas locally which might give them greater prominence.34

Kisan Sabhas working in opposition to the Congress, the statement said, must not be encouraged. This was not to say that Congressmen should keep out of Kisan Sabhas, which could then become the preserves of non-Congressmen. Kisan organisations were "desirable" but they must work in coordination with the Congress.

Nehru had warned Saksena that, in the ensuing months, there were greater possibilities of friction in the PCC and that he would not be on the scene to apply the salve.35 But the President of the UPCC was apparently in no mood to avert a crisis. He was greatly disturbed by the functioning of the Kisan Sabhas in the Province. A UPCC circular in early July 1938 called for details of the working of these organisations.36 It was suspected that, in some cases, Congress malcontents had assumed positions of importance in Kisan

34. SWIN, Vol.8, pp.391-2.
35. Letter of 29 April 1938, op. cit.
36. AICC Papers, File 17/1938, p.163.
Sabha units. Veteran Congress man Manzar Ali Sokhta proposed to move a resolution at the 10 July session of the UPCC, calling upon all subordinate Congress committees to dissociate themselves from organisations which had been set up parallel to the Congress, and which were opposed to the Congress in their principles and policies. DCCs were also enjoined to take disciplinary action against those who continued their "improper and subversive activities", which included "open fomentation of violence and class war and opposition to Congress official programmes and policies", "the maligning and defaming of prominent Congress workers and local office-bearers and the declarations of Congress itself as a capitalist body". The thrust of this resolution was explicitly anti-Kisan Sabha but it did not come up for discussion until the October meeting of the UPCC.

The 10 July UPCC meeting had been called to discuss recommendations of the various DCCs on the Tenancy Bill. The meeting witnessed a debate on the extent to which the UPCC should comment on the Bill. R.S. Pandit was of the view that only the broad principles should be discussed, and that the details should be left to the Congress party in the Legislature. He also felt that the Committee should take no such decisions as would cause embarrassment to the Govern-

37. AICC/B-6/1938.
ment. The militants, Z.A. Ahmed, B.D. Tripathi and Mohanlal Gautam strongly disagreed with this. They felt that all PCC decisions must be binding on the Congress party in the legislature and further, that the PCC had the liberty to change its own decisions whenever it was thought necessary. 38

Clearly, the Left was on the warpath at this meeting. They wanted a 50 per cent reduction in rent. 39 The UPCC finally passed a resolution calling for 50 per cent reduction in the total rental demand of the Province within six months of the passing of the Tenancy Bill. This reduction, it was stated, should be distributed on different holdings on the basis of soil classification and other factors. 40 However, when the Premier made an appeal to the Committee to reconsider the matter, since a 50 per cent reduction would completely dislocate the Budget, the resolution was reopened for discussion. Finally, an amended resolution, calling for 33 per cent reduction in rent was passed. 41 But the later meeting witnessed stormy scenes.

41. *The Leader*, 13 July 1938, p.3.
After the July meeting, the UPCC also adopted a series of resolutions which seemed to indicate greater sensitivity to the Ministry's predicament. For instance, a PCC circular of 27 July 1938 asked Congressmen not to interfere with police investigations. 42 Two days earlier, another circular had virtually turned down a request of some Congress committees for permission to launch satyagraha on the grounds that 'in the Province Congress Ministries are in existence' and, therefore, the position of Congress committees had greatly changed. 43 Even earlier, on 2 July 1938, another circular had asked Congressmen to exert their influence on tenants to pay rents on time. The circular called for reports of cases where the zamindar was the aggressor and also of cases where the tenant was the aggressor. 44

Mohanlal Saksena may have been responsible for the tone of many of these circulars. But it must be borne in mind that their content was in accordance with the instructions

42. AICC/P-20(ii)/1938.

43. UPCC Circular, 25 July 1938, AICC/P-20(ii)/1938, p.96. The Fatehpur DCC had written to the PCC for permission to start satyagraha against a problematic zamindar of Khaga tahsil but had been refused the permission. Sangharsh, 1 August 1938, p.16.

44. Circular No.47 of the UPCC issued by R.S. Pandit, General Secretary, UPCC, AICC/P-20(ii)/1938, p.81.
emanating from the Working Committee at this time. The Congress Working Committee at its Delhi session had deprecated Congressmen's interference in the day-to-day administration, their interventions in judicial investigations, their calling of panchayats and handing out of punishments to alleged culprits. Such resolutions sounded the death knell for parallel government efforts. On the other hand, Congressmen, by intervening in the routine working of the law, had created some embarrassing situations. In May 1938, Biswanath Mukerji, the Congress MLA-cum-President of the Gorakhpur Mazdur and Kisan Sabha, was found guilty of contempt of court for his apparent interference in a theft case while it was sub judice.

Once the Tenancy Bill was introduced in the Legislative Assembly, the Ministry felt that it needed all the support that could be mustered. Since there were so many critics and opponents of the Bill, outside the Party as well as some within (fifty Congress-Zamindar MLAs were reportedly putting


46. Mukerji had apparently written two letters to the tahsildars handling the case, stating that he had made independent enquiries into the case and wished to compare his findings with the tahsildar's. The Leader, 4 May 1938, p.6.
pressure for amendments), the Ministry appealed to the UPCC not to be critical of its shortcomings. If the Committee responded to this appeal it stood in danger of playing second fiddle to the Ministry. Nevertheless the Tenancy Sub-Committee formed by the PCC in April 1938 reserved its reactions to the Bill until the Parliamentary Party had scrutinised it. The Sub-Committee subsequently held lively discussions on the draft Bill at its sessions in June 1938. But when, in October 1938, there was talk of intervention by the Central Congress Parliamentary Sub-Committee to try and reach an agreement with the zamindars on the Bill, the UPCC felt compelled to speak out. Throughout the months of July and August 1938, kisans in several parts of the Province were being evicted by panic-stricken zamindars before the introduction of the new Bill.

47. *The Leader*, 1 May 1938, p.10.


49. A three day meeting was held from 25 to 27 June. Among the resolutions passed was one that sir should be reduced from 100 to 50 acres, kisans' lands could not be seized, there could be no bedakhli. *Sangharsh*, 4 July 1938, p.17.

50. In Benares, zamindars were taking back their sir lands cultivated by tenants for many years, so that tenants would get no rights on them. *Sangharsh*, 18 July 1938, p.16. The same was true of Gorakhpur, Azamgarh, Ballia, Basti, Ghazipur etc. *Sangharsh*, 11 July 1938, p.17.
worded statement was issued:

The Government proposals are quite modest and inadequate to give a sufficiently large measure of relief to the peasantry.... The big Zamindars are forcibly dispossessing their tenants in order to deprive them of the new rights that might accrue to them under the new Act.... The Government has gone far to appease them.... The new proposals in consequence fall far short of the proposals enunciated in our Agrarian Programme and the recommendations of the PCC.... The peasantry is getting restive and if the process is not speeded up and all talk of compromise with the big zamindars is not given up it is bound to lead to disastrous results.51

This statement earned the Committee a reprimand from the Congress Working Committee.52 However, the attack was not on the Ministry as much as on the Parliamentary Sub-Committee of Congress. The UPCC's reactions to the Tenancy Bill from July to October 1938 cannot be easily categorised and it is thus extremely difficult to determine whether the Committee was closer to the Ministry or to the forces outside.

Another issue, which found the UPCC in a similarly ambiguous position was the Kanpur workers' strike of May 1938. While desirous of working in harmony with the

51. Resolution of the Tenancy Sub-Committee of UPCC, AICC/P-20(i)/1938-39, pp.73-75.

52. U.P. Governor's Report, 10 October 1938, Haig Papers, Roll 1.
Congress Ministry, which took a friendly but neutral stand on the strike, PCC sympathies were clearly with the striking workers. (The strike had been a wholly spontaneous one, the workers having refused advice from the local Congress committee to wait a while.) On record, we have three statements from the UPCC on the Kanpur strike: one, passed at its meeting of 28 May, 1938 stated that, while noting with deep regret that workers of Kanpur had declared a general strike without due notice and without waiting for the Government's decision on the Inquiry Committee Report, it realised that the workers had great provocation and were compelled to strike. It congratulated the workers on their self-discipline. Mohanlal Saksena's own statement was warmer—expressing wonder at the lack of bitterness among the workers despite their "grim struggle with hunger and starvation", he called upon all subordinate Congress committees to give full support to the strikers. Damodar Swarup Seth, one of the organising secretaries, known for his sharply worded statements, went one step further in supporting the strikers. He wanted to move a resolution at the next UPCC meeting condemning the Congress Ministry's

53. The Leader, 24 May 1938, p.4.
54. AICC/P-20(ii)/1938, p.132.
attitude of benevolent neutrality towards the strike.\textsuperscript{55}

As may be seen clearly from the above statements, the fabric of the PCC had worn dangerously thin and it would require a massive effort and much goodwill to prevent the various elements from tearing it apart. The combination of Jawaharlal Nehru's absence, Mohanlal Saksena's increased churlishness, the Ministry's expectations and the aggressiveness and impatience of PCC members like Damodar Swarup Seth and Mohanlal Gautam was not a happy one. The gentle presence of Acharya Narendra Dev was probably the only redeeming factor. Indeed, one gets the feeling that the controversial circulars and resolutions of July-August 1938 referred to above were passed only because of the restraint advised by the Acharya.\textsuperscript{56} It was also perhaps at his instance that the U.P. Kisan Sangh sent out a circular to all its subordinate units in August 1938, stating that there must be no rivalry between the Congress and the Kisan

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item[55.] The Pioneer, 21 May 1938, p.1.
\item[56.] Acharya Narendra Dev, in his speeches at this time, e.g. at the District Kisan Sammelan, Utraula, Kanpur, on 27 June 1938 tried to explain the predicament of the Congress under provincial autonomy, the plus points of the Tenancy Bill etc. Sangharsh, 4 July 1938, p.16. Even Mohanlal Gautam in a mammoth District Kisan Sangh meeting at Unnao on 18 Sept. 1938 said that the Ministry was trying to do its best for the kisans. Sangharsh, 19 Sept. 1938.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
Sangh and that it was as important for Kisan workers to strengthen the Congress as it was to strengthen the Kisan movement.

Yet, the President, Mohanlal Saksena, felt that matters were getting out of hand and that he was no longer able to head the Committee. In his resignation letter, dated 20 August 1938, he expressed unhappiness with those who differed with the PCC’s leadership and made a “public display” of these differences, and with those who went about propagating that they should not expect any good from the Congress — this he described as “nothing short of treason”. Perhaps Saksena had reason enough to feel injured; but one cannot help feeling that the threat of resignation was, above all, an admission of his own incompetence. Recalcitrant elements in the PCC could have been dealt with dignity and tact. The Kisan Sabhaitees, as seen above, were amenable to reason and if Saksena had strengthened the more reasonable elements within this body, rather than condemn the whole organisation as he did on several occasions, a rapport may have been achieved. Saksena’s inability to win the confidence of Acharya Narendra Dev must certainly have been a major handicap. To add to his woes, an expulsion order served by him on a Barabanki CSP worker and editor of a

57. AIICC/P-20(i)/1938, pp.23-25.
small newspaper, was revoked by the UPCC at its 10 July meeting.58

Mohanlal Saksena's resignation letter was placed at the PCC meeting of mid-October, which persuaded him to withdraw it. The Socialists themselves argued that this was the best course, since there were barely two and a half months of his term remaining and there was little point in getting involved with fresh elections at this stage.59 Nevertheless, the meeting elected Jawaharlal Nehru as President of the next provincial political conference to be held at Ayodhya, Fyzabad at the end of the year.60 It seemed that, after the disastrous experience of Saksena's Presidency, the Committee had decided that the reins of the U.P. Congress were safer in Nehru's hands.

Congress-Kisan Sabha relations once again figured at the October UPCC meeting. Manzar Ali Sokhta's resolution against the Kisan Sabhas, which he had apparently been wanting to place before the UPCC since the previous December

58. Sangharsh, 18 July 1938, p.16.

59. Sangharsh, 24 Oct. 1938, p.10. The person involved was Ramgopal Sushil.

60. Ibid.
came up for discussion.61 It was defeated, however, and a less sharply worded, more amiable resolution proposed by Purshottamdas Tandon adopted. According to that resolution, the PCC deplored the entry of large numbers of selfish people into the Congress who did not believe in its principles. Congress principles, the resolution stressed, must be preserved.62 The Socialist Kisan Sabhaites accepted this resolution and even congratulated themselves on not having come off too badly at the meeting.63

But the complacency was short-lived. An Executive Council meeting of the UPC held after the October meeting, prohibited Congressmen from associating with those Kisan Sabhas which did not use the tricolour flag or which had, amongst their functionaries, those against whom the PCC had taken disciplinary action. A Congress circular issued on 16 November 1938 prohibited other organisations from using the UPCC and other Congress offices with immediate effect.64 All those who indulged in criticism of the Ministry were warned that disciplinary action could be taken against

61. Ibid.
62. Ibid.
63. Ibid.
64. UPCC Circular Letter No.41, AICC/P-20(i)/1938, p.287.
(To this, the Kisan Sabha retaliated by passing a resolution at the end of the year at Ayodhya to the effect that disciplinary action must be taken by the UPCC E.C. against all those who maligned the Kisan Sabha as well. \textsuperscript{66}) Kisan Sabha spokesmen were also dismayed at the UPCC's silence on the arrest of some Kisan Sabha leaders and prosecutions of others, especially in Benares district, around this time. \textsuperscript{67}

On the Select Committee Report on the draft Tenancy Bill, released in October 1938, the PCC maintained a discreet silence. Earlier, one of the UPCC's recommendations had been that only zamindars paying a revenue of up to Rs.100 should be allowed to retain sir lands. The Select Committee Report extended this privilege to zamindars paying up to Rs.250 as land revenue. \textsuperscript{68} The suggestion that sir area be limited to fifty acres had, however, been adhered to.

So far, our discussion has centered around the top-level goings-on in the UPCC. What was happening, during

\textsuperscript{65} Sangharsh, 24 October 1938, p.16.
\textsuperscript{66} Sangharsh, 1 January 1939, p.12.
\textsuperscript{67} Sangharsh, 3 October 1938, p.16.
\textsuperscript{68} Sangharsh, 17 October, 1938, p.8.
these months, at the intermediate and lower levels? The ever-increasing lists of four-anna primary members (from a mere 62,703 in 1936 membership had risen to the modest figure of 88,620 by September 1937; in early 1938 it was 9,39,340 and by December 1938 it had swelled to 14,50,00069) has led Tomlinson to make the rather sweeping statement that, in these years, enrolment of members was the sole activity of lower level Congress committees.70 That this was untrue is revealed from the numerous references to the work of Mandal Congress Committees available for this period. In Unnao it was a M.C.C. which had helped a tenant to re-assert his rights over his land.71 No doubt the phenomenal increase in membership posed a major organisational problem. Congress leaders themselves admitted that many opportunists and self-seekers had joined the Congress.72 Perhaps never before had the organisation to contend with such a large body of apathetic members, indifferent to the long-term nationalist goals of the Congress.

69. For the 1936 figure, see ALCC/G-76/1936, p.117; for 1937 see ALCC/G-78/1937-38; for the early 1938 figure see ALCC/G-78/1937-38, p.1; and for the December 1938 figure, Mahabir Tyagi's statement, Sangharsh, 5 December 1938, p.12.

70. The Indian National Congress and the Rai, p.66.

71. See Chapter on Kisan Sabha.

72. Editorial in National Herald, 4 December 1938, p.6.
Could the UPCC tackle this problem effectively? The organisation had two options available to it: (i) to succeed in changing the outlook of those hungry power-seekers and make them selfless, committed nationalists; or (ii) to restrict further entry by more stringent qualifications and by weeding out the undesirables. Both options were availed of, though the latter was more heavily relied upon. 73

Though a UPCC circular on 9 January 1938 had advised Congressmen not to meet Government servants unless there was some specific need, 74 the former were not able to always

73. This option was put to use from late 1938 onwards. As an editorial in the National Herald, 17 December 1938, explained: "The Congress is primarily a fighting organisation. In it there is no place for adventurers and careerists.... It represents the nation on the march and only persons prepared for gruelling discipline have the right to hold the commissioned ranks.... The Working Committee... is not keen on a large and ineffectual membership which is as useless as a mob or a rabble." At the same time the Working Committee at a meeting in Wardha had decided on a 'purge' of the primary ranks of the Congress organisation. It was also decided to have a register of voters rather than a register of 4-anna members. Only those who took the trouble of going personally to the Congress office to register themselves could vote. See J. Nehru's article, 'The United Provinces Congress', National Herald, 10-11 Jan. 1939, SWJN, Vol.9, p.455. Many of the UPCC Circulars of 1939 were concerned with the elimination of 'bogus members' from the Congress. AICC/P-20 KWI/1939, pp.389-93.

74. AICC/P-20(i)/1937, p.120.
resist the temptation. There were charges of embezzlement and misuse of funds against some of the UPCC office-staff. (Ironically, these were members of that same Congress civil service for whom Nehru had such praise!) Delegates' elections, and those to DCCs were marked by several irregularities.

Towards the end of 1938 it was felt that this state of affairs must be remedied, especially since the organisation

75. There were complaints about three Congressmen in Mahoba, Hamirpur Dt., having attended parties hosted by the SP and SDO. Sangharsh, 21 May 1939, p.28.

76. The Honorary Auditor for the UPCC in a letter to Mahatma Gandhi on 2 November 1938 implicated twenty members of the office staff. AICC/P-20(i)/1938-39, pp.147-151. However, K.D. Malaviya in a letter to Gandhi, 28 November 1938, denied that there was widespread corruption. Ibid., pp.187-8.

77. From Kanpur it was reported that, during the delegates' election for the Haripura Congress, one of the candidates, who was also a former DCC General Secretary, ensured that "only voters of his choice entered the polling booth". Supporters of the rival candidate were beaten up. Letter from Bakhat Bahadur, Kanpur, to Election Officer, UPCC, 23.12.37, AICC/P-20(i)/1937, p.243. M.N. Roy complained of irregularities in the 1939 delegates' election to Tripuri from Dehradun, as a result of which, he claimed, he had been defeated. AICC/P-20(i)/1938-39.

78. For instance, the election to the Benares DCC in April 1938 was not properly held. A large number of the 100 candidates were 'disqualified' and a handful selected at a secret meeting. These were duly declared elected. However, election petitions were filed and some of the office-bearers had to resign perforce. The Leader, 27 April, 1938, p.14.
had to be streamlined for a possible confrontation with the British Government over the Federation issue. A five-man Committee, with P.D. Tandon as convenor and consisting of Mohanlal Saksena, Acharya Narendra Dev, Acharya Kripalani and Sri Prakasa, was appointed to bring about some constitutional changes so as to "protect the Congress ideals and programme". The Committee submitted its report on 10 December 1938. It suggested higher qualifications for those contesting elections: a contestant for delegates' election would have had to have spun 5,000 yards of khadi or put in 120 hours of work for the Congress (four hours per day for a thirty-day period would be adequate). To be elected to any Congress committee it was necessary to have been a habitually khadi-wearing Congress member for at least three years. A nominated member was debarred from campaigning for himself. No printed or handwritten notices in favour of any candidate or in criticism of rival candidates were to be allowed. Another significant recommendation was a ban on any Hindu Mahasabha or Muslim League member from joining the Congress. As for primary members, it was decided that only such members as took the trouble to go personally to the

79. On 24 October 1938, the President of the UPCC issued a call to be ready to fight the Federation by closing the Congress ranks. National Herald, 25 October 1938, p.4.

80. AICC/P-20(1)/1938, p.231.
Congress office and register themselves would be allowed to vote. 81

The Tandon Committee recommendations could go a long way in streamlining the Congress organisation. However, they were inadequate to wipe out the prevalent corruption. 82 For instance, 'the 5,000 yards' khadi qualification for delegateship acted as no deterrent since any amount of khadi could be freely bought and passed off as self-spun. 83

For turning the new entrants to the Congress into good nationalists, there were, indeed, some excellent schemes in operation. The Volunteer Training Programme and Seva Dal Camps were rather effective in this direction, as noted earlier. The UPCC had formed a Volunteer Board and, in October 1938, sanctioned a sum of Rs.1150 for its use. 84 The literacy campaign was another effort which involved


82. M.N. Roy felt that the Report had only suggested an 'elaborate election machinery' which did not go to the root of the problem. M.N. Roy to the General Secretary, UPCC, 7 February 1939, M.N. Roy Papers, Roll 10.

83. Many of our interviewees mentioned that some Congress men resorted to this malpractice.

84. Sangharsh, 24 October 1938, p.16.
large numbers. The prohibition drive was, however, limited geographically, covering the districts of Etah and Mainpuri alone. The Rural Development Programme was another successful endeavour, combining the efforts of the Congress Government and the UPCC. Such were the 'reformist' programmes of the Congress. For those of a more militant disposition, work in the Kisan Sabhas, membership of Youth Leagues, or of underground terrorist groups, or work among labour, was available.

From the above list, it appears that there was no paucity of schemes to involve new recruits. The schemes were financially sound since many of them were backed by

86. AICC/P.L.4/1938, pp.28, 30, 103, 107. Later, it was extended to Bijnor, Jaunpur, Farrukhabad and Budaun.
87. The U.P. Government had formed a 33-man Rural Development Board in April 1938. It consisted of MLAs, MLCs, Congress and non-Congress, as well as Government officials. The Leader, 22 April 1938, p.123. Usually the district-level Rural Development Association was headed by a prominent Congressman - e.g. Raghubir Sahai in Budaun, R.S. Pandit in Allahabad. Its work ranged from digging of wells, drains and soakage pits to forming libraries and panchayats. The Leader, 30 April 1938, p.14 & 2 May 1938, p.7. In October 1938 the UPCC decided that through a more widespread development of rural uplift schemes, it would intensify the programme of mass contacts. National Herald, 19 October 1938, p.6.
budget allocations from the Ministry. The UPCC itself was a richer organisation by 1938: all salaried Congressmen were required to contribute 15 per cent of their emoluments to the Committee, there was a vast four-anna membership. Doubtless, the Committee also received substantial sums in the form of voluntary donations from several quarters. Consequently, from 1938 onwards, every City and District Congress Committee could afford to employ an office secretary on a monthly salary ranging from Rs.15 to Rs.40 per mensem. The UPCC had also acquired a 'Propaganda Motorbus', fitted with a loudspeaker which toured the districts where meetings were scheduled. Plans were afoot in 1938, to acquire another motorbus of the same kind. All this contrasted sharply with the state of affairs in 1937, when DCCs could not even hold political conferences on time due to financial constraints.

88. In the 1938 Budget, 2 lakh rupees were set aside for the Adult Literacy Campaign, Rs.41.36 lakhs was allocated for Rural Development.

89. Decision at UPCC E.C. meeting, 10 May 1938, AICC/P-20(ii)/1938, p.204.

90. Ranjit Pandit's handout to all DCCs and CCCs after the Aligarh Political Conference, December 1937, Ibid., pp.197-8.


92. See Chapter I of this thesis.
Yet, one problem which irked the U.P. Congress organisation as well as the G.B. Pant Ministry greatly was the rapidly growing communal divide. There was an alarming increase in communal riots in early 1938 and, by 1939, the problem was to assume menacing proportions. The UPCC had responded to Nehru’s suggestion for Muslim mass contact in 1937, and a seven-man Muslim mass contact committee had been constituted at the 12 September meeting of the Executive Council.93 Damodar Swarup Seth was to be the Convenor. Four of the members were Muslims, including Dr. Ashraf, the Secretary of the All India Muslim Mass Contact Committee. Congress Socialists, Acharya Narendra Dev and Balkrishna Sharma, were also members. The tasks of the committee were not very well defined. It was expected to propagate the Congress ideology and programme among the Muslims.

In the delegates’ election to the Haripura Congress, the UPCC issued instructions that care should be taken to elect as many Muslims as possible.94 Yet, there were complaints from at least two districts - Kanpur and Gorakhpur -

93. UPCC Executive Council Proceedings.
that Muslim candidates were being opposed. In the elections to subordinate Congress Committees as well, there were cases of discrimination. Nehru was asked to intervene in favour of the two Muslim candidates for the Aligarh DCC (which had fifty seats) whose nominations had been rejected by Thakur Malkhan Singh, President of the DCC and an active Socialist, who had allegedly "put up his candidates in opposition!" In our understanding, such cases were not dealt with adequate firmness by the UPCC, which tried to persuade the recalcitrant elements, rather than take punitive action. The same was true of communal-minded Congressmen, whose actions were deplored at E.C. meetings. Nevertheless, some improvement was noticeable by 1939. Although Muslim candidates for delegates' elections were still not unanimously elected, discrimination against them by methods

95. In Kanpur, Iqbal Bahadur was opposed by Chhail Behari Dikshit/Kantak, former General Secretary, DCC. In Gorakhpur too, it was alleged by Biswanath Mukerji that the sole Muslim candidate, Abu Zafar Ansari, was being opposed. Letter dt.20.12.37 to UPCC President, AICC/P-20(i-iii)/1937, pp.243 & 249 respectively.

96. AICC/P-20(ii)/1938, p.279, letter from Jagdambe Prasad Agarwal, President, Aligarh TCC to Nehru, 15.3.38.

97. At the E.C. meeting of 15 January 1938, the involvement of communal-minded Congressmen in the Dadri Mela episode was deplored. In the meeting of 24 April 1938, it was the Bareilly Ramlila episode. UPCC E.C. Proceedings.
such as rejection of nomination papers was not permitted. The Secretary, Muslim Mass Contact Committee, Bulandshahr, wrote to Dr. Ashraf on 4 January 1939 that initially, papers of two of the three Muslim candidates standing for delegates' election had been rejected. However, on the "timely intervention of Mr. Hazari Lal Sharma of the PCC" their papers were accepted. AICC/P-20(i)/1938, pp.323-5.

UPCC circulars were simultaneously brought out in Urdu and Hindi. In April 1938 the Committee decided to set up an Urdu Section with an Assistant Secretary who would be paid a starting salary of Rs.60 per mensem. The work of this section was to keep in touch with "trends of opinion" among Muslims, to deal with Urdu papers and to correct and contradict false statements regarding Congress activities. A sum of Rs.250 per month was also sanctioned to the National Service Board for involving Muslims in Congress work.

In the enrollment of primary members too, there was a special focus on Muslim members. While, for 1937, we only have the Province-wide figure of Muslim primary members (i.e. 3,088 out of 88,620), there is available a detailed, district-wise figure for September 1939. These figures

98. The Secretary, Muslim Mass Contact Committee, Bulandshahr, wrote to Dr. Ashraf on 4 January 1939 that initially, papers of two of the three Muslim candidates standing for delegates' election had been rejected. However, on the "timely intervention of Mr. Hazari Lal Sharma of the PCC" their papers were accepted. AICC/P-20(i)/1938, pp.323-5.


100. Ibid.

are revealing: in Benares, where a large Muslim population resides to this day, there were a mere 248 Muslim members out of a total enrollment of 14,182: Gorakhpur and Lucknow were somewhat better with 783 out of 28,640 and 879 out of 20,990 respectively. Ballia and Azamgarh had 659 out of 21,027 and 647 out of 13,233 respectively. The western U.P. districts of Meerut, Moradabad, Saharanpur, Bijnor and Bulandshahr had four-figure lists of Muslim primary members. This is attributable to the extent of Muslim mass contact work in this region. 102

In October 1938 the PCC declared that it had resolved to "broaden and quicken" its contact with the Muslim masses. 103 The broadening included a decision to do away with the nomenclature "Muslim mass contact". (This decision was taken at the AICC level.) 104 Such committees and departments were declared abolished in early 1939, to be replaced by "a strong Minorities Committee consisting chiefly of leading Muslim Congressmen in the Province as well as some Hindu, Christian and ...representatives of the de-

102. See Chapter 1, for details.


104. See J.B. Kripalani to UPCC Secretary, 7.1.39, on the disbanding of Muslim mass contact committees. AICC/P-20(i)/1938-39, p.341.
pressed classes.\textsuperscript{105} Maulana Mian Faruqi was to head the office of this committee in Allahabad.\textsuperscript{106} The committee could have done very little work since, by the time it could get off the ground, the Ministries had resigned, and the UPCC's priorities had to be reordered. Thus the UPCC's record of Muslim mass contact work was a mixed one — the greatest failure being the inability to stem the growing tide of the Muslim League in the Province.\textsuperscript{107}

The Congress-Muslim League divide may have been impossible to bridge, but the gaps between the Kisan Sabha, the PCC and the Ministry were not. On returning to India, one of Nehru's first political acts was to attempt such a rapprochement. His Presidential address at the U.P. Political Conference in Ayodhya was a masterly effort to conciliate the three groups. For the benefit of the Kisan Sabha he

\textsuperscript{105} National Herald, 8 April 1939, p.5.

\textsuperscript{106} Nehru to Rajendra Prasad, 7 July 1939, \textit{SWJN}, Vol.9, p.471.

\textsuperscript{107} According to Mushirul Hasan, the Congress right wing had opposed the mass contact programme fearing that "the success of mass contact would further bolster Nehru's image and provide him, as in the case of Gandhi during the Khilafat days, with a solid base among Muslims." Mushirul Hasan, \textit{op. cit.}, p.34. Whatever truth there may be in this explanation, it is difficult to imagine that the prestige of Nehru or Gandhi were dependent upon the success of a Muslim mass contact or Khilafat campaign alone.
stated:

The tenancy legislation is now before the assembly. What has really pained me is that though one and a half years have elapsed, the Congress ministry has not been able to get that legislation passed....

I want that the provincial government should soon enact laws which would lessen the kisans' burden of indebtedness....

I certainly have respect for the red flag....108

For the pro-Saksena forces in the UPCC he had this to say:

I understand that efforts are being made to form Kisan Sabhas as organisations rival to the Congress....

...at the moment it is a great mistake to take out the red flag in villages. The kisans will get confused by seeing several flags....109

and as for the Pant Ministry:

I must also deprecate the tendency to resort to hunger strikes or satyagraha by students....

The legislation which is before the assembly has many good provisions....110

At the Conference, Nehru allowed strong agrarian resolutions to be placed: for instance, a call was given for the reduc-
tion of rents to the tune of Rs.8 crore.111

Shortly thereafter, Nehru indulged in what can only be termed a morale-boosting exercise for the UPCC. In a two-part article in the National Herald of 10-11 January 1939, he listed the achievements of the UPCC which, in his estimation, compared very favourably with other Provincial Congress Committees. Nehru also maintained, somewhat unrealistically, that the President of the U.P. Congress was no exalted being—he was little more than a member of the Executive. 112

Within a short period of time, the new President had succeeded in mollifying critics and applying the salve on bruised feelings. But, in the process, he had carved out a role for himself which he was called upon to play several times in the ensuing months. It was just as well that Jawaharlal Nehru had a vast reserve of Congress Socialist respect and regard from Ministerial quarters to draw upon. A pleasant relationship bound Premier G.B. Pant, and Nehru together and when Nehru's ally and protege, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, took over as acting Premier, things were even

111. Haig to Linlithgow, 10 January 1939, Haig Papers, Roll 1.

smoother. As for the Socialist firebrands like Mohanlal Gautam and Damodar Swarup Seth, Nehru managed to keep them guessing about the position he would take on contentious matters.

Socialists, Kisan Sabhaites and labour leaders were greatly agitated by the frequent resort to repressive action by the Ministry in mid-1939.\textsuperscript{113} This was reflected in a UPCC meeting on 20 May when a series of strongly-worded resolutions against the Ministry were proposed. There was also a suggestion that a committee be appointed by the PCC to keep an eye on the functioning of the Ministries. As President of the UPCC, Nehru firmly turned down the proposal. As for the other resolutions, he pronounced them to be too critical of the Ministry and suggested that an alternative resolution, to the effect that the time had come for Congress to resign from office, be passed.\textsuperscript{114}

On the other hand, when Nehru got news of a controversial circular from the Chief Secretary to district authorities to the effect that punitive action sanctioned against fomentors of communal violence could also be applied to those preaching class hatred, he condemned it and attributed its having been issued to some "Government

\textsuperscript{113} Sangharsh, 24 April 1939, p.19 & 7 May 1939, p.10.

\textsuperscript{114} Sangharsh, 28 May 1939, p.3.
The UPCC resolution on the disciplinary action taken by the AICC against the 9 July demonstrators must owe itself to Nehru: it stated that while nothing should be done to split the Congress ranks, people should have the freedom to express their views.116

Yet, all Nehru's efforts were inadequate to lessen the growing animosity between the Ministry and the PCC. Each was trying to control the other. On 27 December 1938 the UPCC, by a majority, passed a resolution disallowing MLAs from serving on the Congress committees. The resolution was opposed by Nehru, Mohanlal Saksena and Acharya Narendra Dev. It resulted in the UPCC Executive resigning en masse. The resignations were later withdrawn when the PCC affirmed its confidence in the E.C.117 Following upon this the PCC tried to appoint a committee to monitor Ministerial functioning, which came to naught, as mentioned earlier. The Ministry's rejoinder was an attempt at laying down guidelines for the PCC and a suggestion that PCCs and Congressmen could not pass or accept resolutions contrary to the decisions of the

115. SWJN, Vol.9, p.349.
117. Sangharsh, 1 January 1939, p.12.
The Premier's anti-Subhas stand at Tripuri must have added a further dimension to the conflict, since the majority of the PCC were in Subhas Bose's favour.

Indeed, the Congress Presidential election for 1939 cast a heavy shadow on U.P. politics with all the major leaders arraying themselves into pro- and anti-Bose camps. But the polarisation was not Ministry versus PCC. Within the Cabinet, G.B. Pant and R.A. Kidwai were in opposite camps, with the latter supporting Bose's candidature. Acharya Narendra Dev too had clearly and openly indicated his preference for Bose. Jawaharlal Nehru had expressed the view that, at this juncture, it was not advisable for Bose to seek re-election and that he would have preferred Maulana Azad who had, however, declined to contest. Here, then, was an issue which cut across all the lines drawn over the preceding two years (to find Kidwai, the Revenue Minister and Mohanlal Gautam, strident critic of the Tenancy Bill, in the same camp was strange indeed!)

118. Sangharsh, 9 July 1939, p.9.
119. Haig to Linlithgow, 8 March 1939, Haig Papers, Roll 1.
120. Sangharsh, 29 January 1939.
majority which the U.P. gave to Bose is the best proof of the vague uneasiness with Gandhi that has been referred to elsewhere in this thesis; as also of the radical orientation of the U.P. Congress in these years.

What impressions do we get, then, of the U.P. Provincial Congress Committee at the end of this exercise? One thing strikes us immediately: that this Committee was hard put to keep pace with the frenetic activity of U.P. Congressmen in this period. Some areas of work (such as panchayat forming) remained outside the UPCC's purview. Others, such as the formation of Seva Dals were first undertaken through local initiative and later brought under the UPCC's purview.122 But the Committee had sufficient hold over its members to be able to turn the organisation on to the path it desired in the post-Ministry period. This Committee reflected all the predominant and conflicting trends in the U.P. Congress at this time. While it could take a firm stand on communal matters, it was never able to effectively resolve the Kisan Sabha-Congress dichotomy, which was played out several times within the portals of its office. For this, the UPCC alone could not be blamed; the U.P. Kisan Sangh itself had a two-faced character. If at one time it looked towards the AIKS and Swami Sahajanand

122. See Section IV of Chapter III.
Saraswati for guidance, at another it showed great eagerness to identify wholly with the Congress Socialist stream in U.P.

It is difficult to measure the extent of Socialist influence over the UPCC in 1939. Certainly, the total identification of CSP and UPCC programmes of the 1936-37 period was missing in the later years. By 1938, CSP and UPCC policy could be told apart. However, the somewhat critical attitude of the CSP towards the PCC leadership in 1938 disappeared by 1939, thanks to Nehru's dexterity. Hence, it would not be correct to maintain that the Congress Socialists lost their influence over the UPCC by 1939; indeed, the Committee still enjoyed the confidence of the Socialists very substantially. Nor were non-Socialist elements able to make much headway in the organisation. If they had their pockets of influence, those were residues from the pre-1935 organisational set-up. In 1940, the U.P. was regarded as one of the few remaining strongholds of the CSP. 123

Though there were tensions between the Pant Ministry and the UPCC, there was no rift. This was largely due to

the large number of individuals who played active roles in both forums. Despite the heavy legislative schedule, Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries and other MLAs found plenty of time for Congress organisational work. At every district political conference in the 1937-39 period, one and usually more such figures could be found in attendance. Legislators like Mohanlal Gautam, B.D. Tripathi, Algu Rai Shastri and several others were indispensable to the Congress movement outside the Council Chambers. District-level leaders-cum-legislators spearheaded work like Seva Dal training in their districts. Some were also much-respected peasant activists.

As for the query, did a new level of Congress leadership emerge at the district level in these years, the answer is a distinct yes. Whether it were the ex-revolutionary terrorists who assumed responsible positions in the Congress, or the young England-returned Communists -- Z.A. Ahmed, Sajjad Zaheer (who was active in Allahabad DCC affairs by 1939) and K.M. Ashraf -- or the young proteges of older Congressmen (for instance, Mohanlal Gautam was considered a disciple of P.D. Tandon), the UPCC of the late 'thirties certainly had a changed character.