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THE ETHNIC AND SOCIAL BASES OF INDIAN FEDERALISM

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I

The theoretical perspective

In traditional political science Dicey reconciled 'national unity and power with the maintenance of state rights' in a federal form of state. The power - or the balance of power - approach, embodied in the 'treaty' theory of the origin of federations, persisted through Wheare.¹ It is not that a federation is actually born out of a treaty. The Central Government that was 'created' by the federation of the 13 former British Colonies of north America in 1789 could easily trace its origin in the Confederal Congress, or, still back, the Continental Congress. The Austro-Hungarian federation (1859) was likewise born out of the Austro-Hungarian empire. A little historical light on the origins of the other federations of the world, including the Indian, can repudiate the authenticity of the treaty theory. The origin of federations in treaties, Riker holds, is mostly 'fictional'.²

This statement is true even for the USSR which grew out of a series of 'treaties' of the Soviet Republics of Eastern Europe during 1922-23. For these Republics were merely fragments of the old Tsarist empire that had broken away after the 1917 revolution. Their reunion was brought about by the consolidation of the Bolshevik movement that had made the revolution. The territory of the USSR was enlarged till the end of the second world war. Of course the treaty theory is reinforced in the Soviet context by the

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1. A.V. Dicey, Introduction to the Study of the Law of the Constitution, London, Macmillan, ninth edition, 1939; and K.C. Wheare, Federal Government, London, Oxford University Press, fourth edition, 1939.
 2. William H. Riker, 'Federalism' in Fred I. Greenstein and Nelson W. Polsby, Handbook of Political Science, Vol.5, Reading, Mass., Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., pp. 99-172, at p.100.

admission of the right of secession. (If a treaty serves as the basis of a federation, normally, there should be the freedom to terminate it). The right was ruled out in the USA during the civil war when the USA was declared 'an indestructible union of indestructible states'.³ The Western constitutional authorities, however, consider the right of secession in the USSR 'unreal' in as much as, ever since the formation of the USSR (1924), secession has never occurred there and the political affairs in the USSR are regulated by a centralized Communist Party.

The real purpose of the treaty, it seems, is to stress the volitional character of the federal union distinguishing it from annexation. The second property of a treaty is that it is embedded in power.⁴ This synthetic concept of 'union with power' approximates Dicey's characterization of the constituents of federations as 'sovereign within powers'. However, Riker is critical of 'the excessive legalism of conventional definitions, while not throwing out the juristic element entirely.' He rejects the traditional definition (of Dicey and Wheare) which 'emphasized not only independence of constituent and central governments but some more or less precise division of functions'.⁵ Yet, although Riker claims to offer a definition which 'leads to the understanding of federalism as a range of phenomena rather than a single constitutional thing', the properties of his 'different' definition are not adequately distinguished from those of the older ones. His definition — 'Federalism is a political organization in which the activities of government are divided between regional governments and a central government in such a way that each kind of government has some activities in which it makes final decision'⁶

3. In India separatism and secession was expressly ruled out by the 16th amendment to the constitution in 1963.

4. See Dennis J. Palumbo, 'Organizational Theory and Political Science' in Greenstein and Polsby, op.cit., vol.2, pp.319-69, at pp.322-24.

5. Riker, op.cit., p.103.

6. ibid., p. 101.

is loose-ended and tends to confuse federalism with decentralization. It is liable to include in its scope any effective system of local government and even delegation of power. Any theoretical precision with the concept of federalism cannot fail to emphasize the importance of power and the fact that the power in a federation must spring from the constituent units. The theory of decision-making is contingent upon the theory of power.

To say that 'power of the constituent units' is the central point of reference in any analytical theory of federation is not to ignore the wider context of power. Any union must necessarily involve the curtailment of power/autonomy and work for new alignments of forces. An analytical study of federations, therefore, must seek to examine to what extent the constituent units enjoy such power/autonomy. It is only such examination that may reveal to what extent a federal union is really federal.

Logically, a union with power should entail conflict as well as collaboration. All unions, at the same time, are by no means volitional. If a part of the territory of the USSR joined the federation through the impact of the presence of the Red Army at the end of the second world war, much of the territory of the USA was simply annexed. Ruthless force was used to suppress the secessionist move of the southern states of the USA, Federations in fact embody a combination of compulsion and volition. If federalism is ideally conceived to be based on volition, the degree of deviations of the actual federations from this ideal standard is an important subject of study.

The difference between decentralization and federation can be clearly shown from the history of British India. Decentralization is a matter of administrative policy flowing from the top and it was an inevitable consequence of the fast growth of the British empire in India. The British experimented with it, as well as its opposite, namely, centralization, ever since the merger of the three Presidencies of Bengal, Madras and Bombay under the Governor-General of Bengal, through the Regulating act of 1773.

Although in 1833 the civil and military powers of the Governors of Madras and Bombay were transferred to the Governor-General of Bengal, the legislative powers were returned to the Governor, by the Indian Councils Act of 1861. Meanwhile, in 1853, the government of Bengal was placed under a provincial Governor. Yet, the power to make regulations for the administration of the 'backward tracts' was restored to the Governor-General by the Government of India Act, 1870. On the other hand, although the Madras and the Bombay military commands were abolished in 1893, the Montford Commission found even the centralization of military powers 'shadowy'.⁷

The administrative initiative of Curzon led to a marked concentration of authority in the hands of the central Government. Immediately after him, however, a Decentralization Commission was set up. Before the report of the Commission was submitted in 1909, the Morley-Minto Reforms confirmed the decentralizing trend as well as the British government's desire to increasingly associate Indians with the administration expressed in the Queen's proclamation of 1858. It was only with the Montford Reforms that the Indian people were granted an element of responsible government. This led to a kind of bifurcation of power between the respective domains of the rulers and the ruled, but there remained no doubt that the powers of the ruled were merely delegated and were easily withdrawn/superseded whenever necessary for the rulers.

The democratic basis of federalism

Yet, whatever form of 'federalism' emerged in British India by 1935, it was the result of the pressure of the national movement demanding rights of the Indians in the imperial order. Here one locates the root of federalism in democracy. Conversely, without the participation of the people a federation becomes meaningless and, hence, not durable, as will be evident from the failure

7. 'A curious echo of this state of things lingers in the language of section 45(2) of the Government of India Act, 1915, which still contemplates the possibility of a provincial Government making peace and war', wrote the Montford Commission (Report on Constitutional Reforms in India, Cmd 9109, Government of Great Britain, 1918, paragraph 37, p. 26.

of the Austro-Hungarian federation as well as the more recent-federation of the United Arab Republics (of Egypt, Sudan and Yemen).

In this view, therefore, federalism becomes a sub-set of democracy⁸ with reference to the two fundamental categories of 'power' and the 'people'. But as 'power' involves conflict — if not contradiction — the systemic unity must of necessity be derived from what in modern parlance is called 'consensus'. Thus the federal relation in the USA is structured according to the theory of balance of power, but the national consensus vests the arbitrating power in the federal judiciary.

This analysis equally holds good for the federal system of the USSR where the power of arbitration is vested in the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. The argument that the Presidium is a part of the federal legislature and cannot be as neutral in the federal relations as the Supreme Court of the USA can be countered by the fact that the US Supreme Court's sympathy for the federal government has been so outspoken in the last several decades that it can now be virtually regarded as a part of the federal government. On the other hand, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR has always comprised the top leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and, with reference to the political system of the USSR, may claim to have the consensual sanction of the arbitrator's role.

Yet, what is the basis of a consensus that explains the persistence of a federal (or, for that matter, any) union? It becomes essential to set the question of consensus in the context of ideology. Consensus is

8. Robert A. Dahl (Pluralist Democracy in the United States : conflict and consent, Calcutta, Scientific Book Agency, 1969, pp.24-52) views US federalism in the light of the pluralist theory that 'Instead of a single centre of sovereign power, there must be multiple centres of power', because, as 'one centre of power is set against another, power itself will be tamed, civilized, controlled, and limited to decent human purposes'.

basically a property of compatibility⁹ --- partnership in a common value-system ruling out fundamental contradictions. In this sense the federal systems of both the USA and the USSR (which has survived as a federation for over half a century) are based on consensus. Federations in history have failed, or have managed to survive only through the use of force, whenever incompatible values have exposed irreconcilable contradictions between the federal partners.

Needless to say that though values are frequently symbolized in culture, they are rooted in the socio-economic structure of society. Thus, according to Beard,¹⁰ the US federation was a victory of big money over the small proprietary interests. Subsequently, agrarian interests in the south threatened secession that had to be suppressed by war. The first Russian federation (REFSR) was similarly threatened with secession that required force to be suppressed. Such 'national' revolts were fundamentally directed against the communist system.

We have defined federalism as a subset of democracy. Like democracy it draws its strength from consensus. But as in politics the role of consensus is circumscribed by a common value system, the consensus paradigm can only be an 'ideal type', its inadequacy in the actual world of politics is compensated by the use of force the amount of which is determined by the exigencies of the circumstances. This combination of consensus and force is pragmatically determined by the representatives of the dominant interests that control the affairs of the state. The point can be made out of a study of the Indian case.

9. See Karl W. Deutsch, et al, Political Community in the North Atlantic Area, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1957, p.58, where compatibility of basic values is stressed as a condition of federation.

10. Charles A. Beard, An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution of the USA, New York, Macmillan, 1913.

Federalism in Independent India

Federalism was a legacy of the British empire in more than one sense. The form evolved during the British period as a solution to the twin problem of associating Indians with the government and religious communalism. Besides the problem of religious minorities, which appeared to have been politically solved with the partition, the leaders of independent India had to count with the other cultural diversities within the country and wide regional disparities. Federalism emerged as the answer. It was blended with the parliamentary form of government in such a way that the success of the latter would be the condition of success with the former.

The constitution of India indeed provided for a division of power which was biased for the Centre and left scope for the Central government to intervene in the administration of the states through its 'directives' and even to supersede the state administration. But a more crucial role was allotted to the rather innocuous-looking Governor who was appointed and removed by the Central government. Although the executive authority of the state was to be normally exercised by the state's Council of Ministers, holding office at the pleasure of the Governor (like the Union Council of Ministers vis-a-vis the President), the Governors were granted a virtually unlimited amount of 'discretion'.¹¹

It should initially be made clear that 'pleasure' is not 'discretion'. The former relates to the tenure of office of the executive, the latter to the way of its functioning. The first belongs to the President as well as to the Governors, the second only to the Governors. Which means that in the exercise of the executive powers, the President has no discretion, he is always governed by the advice of the Union cabinet. This has been made sure by the

11. See Shibani Kinkar Chaube, 'The Governing Process in India' in Anil Kumar Mukhopadhyaya (ed), Society and Politics in Contemporary India, Calcutta, Council for Political Studies, 1974.

42nd amendment to the constitution. Therefore, even the cases when executive steps are taken on the 'satisfaction' of the President, the satisfaction is that of the cabinet.

On the other hand, the Governor acts according to the advice of the cabinet except when he is required by the constitution to act in his discretion.¹² At the moment the constitution specifically requires the Governor to act in his discretion only in the case of arbitrating a dispute over the share of certain revenues between the autonomous District Councils and the states of Assam, Meghalaya and Mizoram.¹³ Yet it confers on the Governors the blanket discretion to decide when they are required to act in their discretion.¹⁴ The Governors' satisfaction, as well as certain special responsibilities,¹⁵ therefore, become vulnerable to this discretionary power. Even the normal executive businesses are not immune.

Thus the Governors have used their discretion to reserve state bills for President's assent, to direct the state cabinet to call meetings of the state legislatures, to make reports on the affairs of the state to the Centre and to cause ministerial changes. All these discretionary functions are over and above the discretionary powers exercised during the Governor's rule. As the Governors are merely employed by and are agents of the Union government, the intervention in state politics could not but be viewed as prejudicial to the federal relations.

12. Article 163(1) of the Constitution of India.

13. Paragraph 9 of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India.

14. Article 163(2) of the Constitution of India.

15. The respective Governors have special responsibility over Law and order in Nagaland and peace and equitable social advancement in Sikkim to be discharged in discretion (Arts 371 + 371F), and over the working of a Hills Areas Committee without specific discretion (Article 371 C).

In the past the constitutional provision and the democratic principle have in fact frequently collided in the matter of the supersession of the elected state governments. Such supersessions were resorted to by means of the declaration of constitutional breakdown whenever the central government, on the basis of a report from the Governor, or otherwise, was satisfied that lawful government had become impossible in a particular state. The practice has been followed until the recent supersession of the Congress-run state governments in northern India (Bihar, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Panjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal) by the Janata-led central government. But there were certain differences between this last supersession and its preceding ones. There was no Governor's report recommending the supersession in the last case while in the preceding ones the Governors' report was always available for the purpose. Such reports of Governors in the past have often been controversial, and occasionally censured by public opinion, when the party/coalition superseded managed to win the subsequent election as in the case of West Bengal's United Front government (1967 & 1969). The recent supersession of the Congress-run state governments was based on the plea of the loss of public confidence by the Congress party; and the central government was vindicated in its stand by the electorate even before the Congress-dominated Council of States had an opportunity to disapprove of it. The democratic principle took precedence over the constitutional form.

The point can hardly be missed even in a legalistic approach to federalism which locates the volitional character of a federation either in the form of a treaty at its origin (as in the USA) or in that of a constitutional right to secession that can terminate it (as in the USSR). The Indian federation did not emerge out of a treaty among its constituents. On the other hand, whatever uncertainty about the rights of the Indian states (after 1950) might have existed at the beginning, that was removed in 1963 with the 16th amendment to the constitution.

A greater difficulty arises out of an apparent 'absurdity' in the federal structure of India. The constituents of the Indian federation have not yet acquired the 'indestructible' character which the constituent states of the USA have enjoyed. In the USSR too, though the Karelo-Finnish Republic was abolished in 1958, it was done with the consent of the local legislature. In India, on the other hand, the formation and alteration of the boundaries and names of states are powers of the Union. The President, of course, seeks the views of the concerned states in respect of change of areas, boundaries and names of states. But such views are not required for creation of new states through partition or merger of old states and their territories.¹⁶

But in one respect the treaty element is present in India. If the formation of the United States Federation was due to a treaty among the representatives of the people of the 13 former colonies, the size of the USA grew in the next two centuries through annexation of the native people's territories. The size of the USSR grew through the success of the socialist revolution in the neighbourhood and eventual voluntary unions. In India too the merger of the Princely states was forced by popular democratic movements of the states' peoples. The French colonies were transferred in deference to popular demands. Although the Indian army had to be moved into the Portuguese colonies, the people welcomed them. The last country to join the federation was Sikkim, where in 1975, the ruler was overthrown and the specific proposal for merger was passed by the local legislature elected by universal adult franchise. Secessionist forces have indeed been active in some parts of India. Even though 'secessionism' is prohibited by law and the coercive power of the state, it is important to note that even the disguised parties of secession have never been able to win a single election in any part of the country. The treaty element in Indian federalism can be located only in the consent of the peoples comprised in it.

16. Article 3 of the Constitution of India as amended by the fifth amendment (1955).

This theoretical clarification is necessary in order to avoid the formalist bias of the constitutional lawyers who throw their attention merely on the division of power between the Union and the units, the written constitution and the federal judiciary. The questions that need some extra probe, in the light of the nearly two hundred years of federal history of the United States of America, is how much of this 'autonomy' is real and how much of it is relevant to the social reality. When the Anglo-Saxon constitutional lawyers frown upon the federal system of the USSR, for instance, on the ground of the unreality of the right to secession of the Soviet Republics, the question of the reality of state autonomy in the USA, against the increasing assault of the defence and commerce powers of the Centre, becomes pertinent. Even Beard's dichotomy between the 'substantial personalty interests on the one hand and the small farming and debtor interests on the other' as the respective proponents and opponents of the US federation fails to hold good in the era of monopoly capitalism.

The only tangible criterion of federal autonomy today, therefore, can be found in the cultural world. The United States will of course not fit in this scheme, as it does not recognize any cultural minority (except, probably, the American Indians living in the federal reserves and yet to acquire political rights). But many other federations will surely fit - Switzerland, Canada, the USSR and India.

II

The imperial legacy

The cultural basis of the Indian federation consists in the vastness and variety of this very ancient country. And as the present shape of India is mainly a legacy of the British rule, the cultural complexities of the country may not be fully understood without that historical reference.

The British can be said to have set the pattern for India's federal growth in one important way - by leaving a set of administrative boundaries which were mostly incongruent with the cultural boundaries of the Indians people. As their 'military and political exigencies led to a great extension of the empire', the political map of British India was drawn 'with small regard to the natural affinities or the wishes of the people'.¹⁷

The partition of Bengal (1905) and its subsequent reconstitution (1912), through separation of Bihar and Orissa, showed the basic contradiction between the imperial policy and the cultural patterns of the people. The province of Eastern Bengal and Assam, created in 1905, would have been a predominantly Muslim-majority area and would, it was hoped, cut the Bengalee Madhralok Hindu unrest to size. It was also a bait to the Muslim elite in British India until the beginning of the khilafat controversy. The annulment of the partition of Bengal was announced when the controversy had already begun. It probably made the Indian Muslims more unhappy; but there was no violent articulation of this unhappiness. The annulment gave Bengal the shape of a linguistically homogeneous province.

17. Report of the Commission on Constitutional Reform, op.cit.,
paragraph 39, pp.27-28.

For the freedom movement in India this had great consequences.¹⁸ There emerged a counterpoise between religion and language. Against the Muslim League's continuous assertion of religious nationalism, the Congress asserted the territorial integrity of nationalist India. As the sub-national identities they recognized the linguistic communities. In 1917 the Andhra and Sindh Pradesh Congress Committees were formed. The Congress constitution was amended in 1920 by Gandhi recognizing the linguistic provinces as its units. The British continued to give priority to the considerations of convenience or economy¹⁹ when it bundled together Bihar and Orissa although some concessions were granted to religious as well as linguistic aspirations in the subsequent constitution of the provinces of Orissa and Sind.²⁰ Yet Orissa contained a chunk of Andhra (Telugu-speaking) territory, as Madras did another chunk. This fact left some critical problems for the nationalist leaders of India. The nationalist definition of India exactly corresponded to what Lytton's 1877 proclamation described India to be and the Interpretation Act of 1899 confirmed.

The Pakistan idea was accommodated within the Cabinet Mission's 'grouping' plan rather innocuously. It could save the unity of India under the then conceived dominion status. But if it is assumed that the Indian leaders were visualizing a sovereign, independent India, their opposition to grouping may be justified. They did not want repetition of the Irish tragedy in this country to an extent far in excess of the impact of the communal riots that

18. For the story of the growth of the demand for linguistic reorganization of provinces out of the agitation against Bengal partition see K. V. Narayana Rao, The Emergence of Andhra Pradesh, Bombay, Popular Prakashan, 1973, pp.13-14 & 29.
19. Report of the Commission on Constitutional Reform, *op.cit.*, paragraph 41, p.29.
20. Narayana Rao (*op.cit.*, pp.119-27) argues that the creation of Sind and Orissa was actually meant to weaken the nationalist movement.

occurred around the time of transfer of power. Yet, even the partition of India was a half-hearted admission of religious nationalism : it created a Hindu-majority state (India) and a Muslim-majority state split in two parts (Pakistan). It did not end the 'communal problem' in either of the successor states even after partial transfers of population. On the other hand, the religious unity of Pakistan itself was shattered when the language movement in East Pakistan developed into the liberation war of Bangladesh. What the partition ensured was the end of the 'political' problem with religious minorities. The constitution of new India scrupulously ensured that only the backward areas and communities were entitled to special status.²¹

End of religious nationalism

Of course this radical step was taken ignoring the claim of one religious community which, though not very large, was geographically concentrated and important enough to have acquired the status of a political minority : the Sikh had identified themselves with the nationalist mainstream after the emergence of the partition idea. At the end of the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly of India, however, their frustration could hardly be suppressed. Sardar Hukum Singh (later, a Speaker of the Indian Lok Sabha) protested : 'Does it stand to reason that because the Muslims have secured Pakistan, therefore, the Sikhs have ceased to be a minority?'²²

Although the constitution of a Punjabi suba in 1966 has been viewed by some as a grant of Sikh 'homeland' 'only in a different garb',²³ it was preceded by the transfer of the leadership of the suba movement from the religion-oriented, sometime secessionist, Master Tara Singh, to the more

21. See Shibani Kinkar Chaube, Constituent Assembly of India : Springboard of Revolution, New Delhi, People's Publishing House, 1973; particularly chapter 12.

22. Constituent Assembly Debates, Delhi, Manager of Publications, Government India, Vol.10, p.235.

23. Paul R. Brass, Language, Religion and Politics in India, Delhi, Vikas Publishing House, 1975, p.17.

moderate, language-oriented, Sant Fateh Singh. The apprehension of the Punjab Hindus about the Tara Singh movement can be gauged from the fact that since 1921 the number of declared Hindi-speakers was steadily increasing in each census, so much so that, in 1961, the number of Punjabi-speakers in the Indian part of the Punjab fell from 64.13% (in 1911) to 41.9% and the strength of the Hindi-speakers rose from 13.94% (in 1911) to 55.64% in 1961.²⁴ On the other hand, the formation of the Punjabi suba on professed linguistic ground did not invoke any major controversy and, in 1971, the strength of the Punjabi-speakers again rose to 65.61%. The corresponding figure of the Sikh Strength in the Indian Punjab is 60.22%.

The end of 'religious communalism' did not lead to any negative repercussions in the form of a majority chauvinism. Punjab is not the only state in India with a non-Hindu majority. Jammu and Kashmir is a Muslim-majority state (65.85%) and the Laccadive, Minicoy and Amindivi group of islands is a Muslim-majority Union territory (94.37%). Political history (and, in the second case, geographical distance too) separated them from Pakistan. There are three religious concentrations in Jammu and Kashmir. The Jammu division is Hindu-majority, the Ladakh division Buddhist-majority and the Kashmir division Muslim-majority. Suggestions for splitting the state according to the religious concentrations have been turned down in the past not only by the Government of India, but also by Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah, the unquestioned leader of the people of the state. The Lakshadweep islands is yet politically inarticulate, and they are administered directly by the centre.

A group of Christian-majority states have emerged in northeast India as a result of fast spread of Christianity and political reorganization. Nagaland (66.76 Christians in 1971) became a state in 1963. Meghalaya, born

24. The percentages have been worked out by Brass, op.cit., pp.293-95, with reference to the period subsequent to the partition of India but prior to the constitution of the Punjabi suba.

in 1972, had of course 46.98% of its population as Christian in 1971. But the spread of Christianity is so fast in that area that it can reasonably hope to be the religion of the majority in 1981. In the Union territory of Mizoram the Christian strength rose to 86.09% in 1971. Christian strength is fast growing in the hill areas of the neighbouring states of Manipur and Tripura too. But the strength of the hill population constitutes a minority in each of these states so that the Christians comprise respectively 26.03% of the total population of Manipur and Tripura. The only new hill state with a Christian minority is the Union territory of Arunachal Pradesh (26.35%).

The existence of several states and Union territories with non-Hindu majority is a proof of the equal status of all religions in India although not until the 42nd amendment was India formally declared to be a secular state. Although the overwhelming majority of Indians is Hindu, Muslims and Christians are spread over the whole of the country. In a way the fact of some of the border states of India being non-Hindu is a guarantee of secularism. For any attempt to convert India into a Hindu state will certainly affect the territorial integrity of the country.

Neither Jammu and Kashmir nor any state in northeast India was created as a religious state. Jammu and Kashmir in fact is a revolt against religious politics. This Muslim-majority former Princely State was integrated with the Indian nationalist aspirations through an anti-feudal struggle against the Hindu prince. During the merger negotiations the Prince toyed with the idea of a union with Pakistan, while the National Conference, led by Abdullah, threw its lot with India. The union was qualified by the retention of a vast amount of autonomy by the state ²⁵ and, although strains have occasionally appeared over the question of autonomy, the accession to India has never been put to doubt. Even in the Assembly elections of 1977, when the National Conference was set against both the Congress and the Janata Party, no secessionist demand was entertained.

25. Article 370 of the Constitution of India.

In spite of the Christian concentration in Nagaland, Meghalaya and Mizoram and the fact that their political leadership is almost entirely christian, religion did not enter the demand for their creation. It is only the secessionist movements in Nagaland and Mizoram which sought to use religion by propagating the idea of 'Christian states', but the Christian Churches not only dissociated themselves from the movements, they positively opposed the secessionists when they latter became involved with communist China.²⁶

Problems of reorganization

Out of the three Presidencies of Bengal, Bombay and Madras that developed into the British empire of 'India' was administered, as we have seen, according to 'convenience and economy' an important constituent of which was the strategy of divide et impera. At the time of the British departure 'India' consisted of the following categories of territory :

1. British India - under the direct rule of the Governor-General, divided into (a) Governors' Provinces and (b) Chief Commissioner's Provinces.
2. 562 Princely States in which the Governor-General of India, as the Viceroy of the British Crown, exercised different amounts of agency powers; their sizes differing greatly, but their total territory constituting about one third of the territory of India.
3. Two tracts of 'tribal areas', defined as 'the areas along the frontiers of India or in Baluchistan which are not part of British India or of any Indian state or of any foreign state',²⁷ and placed, according to the Government of India Act, 1935, under the executive control of the Governor-General of India.

26. See Shibani Kinkar Chaube, Hill Politics in Northeast India, Calcutta, Orient Longman Ltd., 1973, pp.156 & 226.

27. Section 311(1) of the Government of India Act, 1935.

Within the Governors' Provinces 'backward tracts' were categorized as 'excluded and partially excluded areas' the local legislatures having no control over the excluded areas and partial control over the partially excluded areas. Most of such backward tracts were inhabited by tribal or semi-tribal populations.

Partition of India was a masterly implementation of divide et impera. For India, though, it solved no problem. The Indian leadership of course had reason to be grateful to their former masters who chose not to aggravate the problems of the merger of 552 native states with India. Complex arrangements had to be evolved in order to accommodate the Princely States within the democratic framework of independent India with the minimum use of coercive power. Yet the enforcement of one national constitution on the disparate units was a great achievement of the Indian leadership. After the mergers the country was put under four categories of state administration : Part A (former Governor's Province), Part B (some big Princely and groups of Princely States), Part C (some Princely States and their groups as well as most chief Commissioner's Provinces) and Part D (the Andaman and Nicobar Islands). Specialized administration of most of the former backward tracts was provided through two separate Schedules (the Fifth and the Sixth). The areas under the Fifth Schedule were called Scheduled Areas and the areas under the Sixth schedule were called the Tribal Areas (differing from the 'tribal areas' of the British period).²⁸

The merger of the Princely States with India (as also with Pakistan) gave the question of linguistic reorganization some urgency. The initial territorial arrangement of the constitution was greatly ad hoc and some rational realignment of territories was obviously necessary. To quote the Madras government memorandum to the Simon Commission : 'The separation between British Indian territory and [that] of the various native states follows neither nationality, language nor geography. If we admit the linguistic

28. See Chaube, op.cit., pp. 215-19.

provinces theory, we raise inevitably the question of the separate existence of the Indian States as they are at present'.²⁹ It fell to the States Reorganization Commission to suggest that territorial realignment not only in regard to the linguistic principle, but also with a view to the administrative integration of the former Princely States.

There were practical hurdles to the linguistic reorganization of India as were revealed in the early period of the working of the Constituent Assembly of India. Nehru told the All-India Congress Committee in April 1948 that there were more serious problems requiring the Government's attention than the linguistic reorganization of the provinces. Yet in June 1948 the Constituent Assembly appointed a Linguistic Provinces Commission (popularly known as the Dar Commission) to examine the possibility and the implications of the constitution of the linguistic provinces of Andhra, Karnataka, Kerala and Maharashtra. [Significantly Punjab was not yet on the agenda]. The Commission submitted its report on December 10, 1948, recommending the postponement of such reorganization on the ground it would have 'a sub-national bias and militate against the working of India into one nation'. They recommended 'administrative convenience' as the principle of reorganization.³⁰ In 1949 the Congress party's own high-power Linguistic Provinces Committee consisting of Nehru, Patel and Sitaramayya also disfavoured linguistic reorganization on administrative and financial grounds. The constitution of course left scope for such reorganization.³¹

29. The Hindu, February 21, 1929, quoted by Narayana Rao, op.cit., p.130.

30. See Narayana Rao, op.cit., pp.204-09.

31. See Chaube, op.cit., pp. 219-22.

Reorganization - a continuous story

It required some agitation by the Andhras and the fast unto death of a saintly politician, Potti Sriramalu, for the Government of India to finally concede the creation of a separate Andhra state, out of the territories of the then Madras state, on October 1, 1953. This unleashed a series of demands for reorganization of states along two lines :

- (1) creation of new states out of the old, occasionally involving territories of two or more contiguous states.
- (2) Adjustment of existing borders of states.

The common criteria proposed for such reorganization, in most of the cases was language. In a few cases religion (as in the demand for a Moplastan in the western coast) and caste (as in the demand for a Jat-dominated union of western Uttar Pradesh and the Haryana region) seem to have influenced the demands.

The government's apprehensions came true. The country threatened to be split into a large number of small states, economically and administratively non-viable. Parochial jealousies and rivalries threatened to break out in local riots which the country could hardly afford within a few years of independence and the communal holocaust. The principle of languages itself became open to doubt, as regional dialects like the Maithali (a part of Hindi) asserted autonomy. On top of all, the established administrative boundaries had developed some economic and political integrity of their own which would undoubtedly collapse in case of a radical reorganization. Within three months of the formation of the Andhra state, therefore, the States Reorganization Commission was set up.

The States Reorganization Commission was aware of the constraints. Their recommendations for linguistic reorganization fell short of a neat

linguistic pattern as outlined in the Eighth Schedule.³² The commission did a great deal of integrative work in respect of the former Princely States (Part B and Part C States under the 1950 constitution) with the neighbouring Part A states or in groups. The Commission recommended the reduction of 27 states of the Indian Union to 16 states and three union territories (with the stipulation that one of the territories - Manipur - would be eventually merged with the neighbouring state of Assam), it stood by two major principles: (a) language as the broad criterion of reorganization and (b) administrative undesirability of too many states. The two principles conflicted in the recommendation for the continuation of bilingual Bombay (Marathi and Gujarati) and Punjab (Punjabi and Hindi), and the second principle prevailed over the first. In the recommendation for the continuation and enlargement of the state of Assam the same attitude was strengthened by strategic considerations. Yet the Commission ostensibly violated both the principles in the cases of Vidarbha which, on political considerations, was recommended to be carved out of the state of Madhya Pradesh as a separate Marathi-speaking state, and Hyderabad, on consideration of some historical peculiarities.³³

32. Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu. In 1967 Sindhi was added to the list, though there is no Sindhi-speaking state. Sanskrit is a classical language and Urdu may be regarded as a dialectal variation of Hindi/Hindustani. English enjoys the status of the official language of the Union, along with Hindi.

33. The SRC recommended the creation of the following states : Uttar Pradesh (Hindi), Bihar (Hindi), West Bengal (Bengali), Orissa (Oriya), Assam (Assamese), Jammu and Kashmir (Kashmiri), Kerala (Malayalam), Karnataka (Kannada), Madras (Tamil), Andhra Pradesh (Telugu), Hyderabad (Telugu), Vidarbha (Marathi), Madhya Pradesh (Hindi), Rajasthan (Hindi), Bombay (Marathi and Gujarati), Punjab (Punjabi and Hindi). Delhi, Manipur and the Andaman and Nicobar islands were to be the three union territories (to be directly administered by the Union Government). Hyderabad was to remain separate for five years.

It was impossible for any commission to solve all the boundary problems of the states of India. But the major immediate reversals were the mergers of Vidarbha with Maharashtra and of portions of Hyderabad with Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Mysore (Karnataka), and the retention of some of the Union territories besides Delhi, Manipur and the Andamans.³⁴ The Laccadive, Minicoy and Amindivi islands were separated from Madras and made a Union territory.

A number of border problems were yet to be solved.³⁵ The border question between Bihar and West Bengal, together with the unsolved problems of Bombay and Punjab gave birth to a rather short-run experiment in bi-linguism. The first experiment in the merger of Bihar and West Bengal, mooted by the chief Ministers of the two states and blessed by the national leaders, aborted through popular pressure. Although the SRC found that the minority Gujarati community in Bombay were content to remain in the composite state of Bombay,³⁶ the addition of further Marathi-speaking area to the state made them apprehensive. In 1960, therefore, Bombay was split into the states of Gujarat and Maharashtra. The formula of bi-lingualism in Punjab also failed in 1966 when that state was split into Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh.

Border readjustments and creation of new states have, therefore, been a continuous story. Contrary to the desires of the SRC, in 1963, Nagaland was made a state. In 1969 Meghalaya became an 'autonomous state' within Assam. In 1972 there was a large-scale reorganization of northeast India. In 1975 after Sikkim joined India, the number of States and Union territories stood at 22 and 9 respectively.

34. The Union territories retained were Himachal Pradesh, with which Bilaspur was merged, and Tripura.

35. For a by no means exhaustive list of areas under conflicting claims after the 1956 reorganization see B.L. Sukhwal, India: A Political Geography, New Delhi, Allied Publishers, 1971, pp. 88-96.

36. Report of the States Reorganization Commission, Delhi, Government of India Press, 1955, p. 113.

The special problems

Reorganization of northeast India was not only contrary to the vision of the States Reorganization Commission, it was a departure from the erstwhile policy of forming linguistic states on the basis of the Eighth Schedule alone. In a way it was a negative reaction to the language approach. One of the stimuli for the movement for the creation of 'hill states' in northeast India emerged from the opposition to the adoption of Assamese as the official language in the composite state of Assam in 1960. On the other hand, none of the hill states that were created out of the territories of Assam did have any standard language of their own. They have retained English as the official language. These states can probably be regarded as 'tribal states' in the sense that the bulk of their populations belong to the 'scheduled tribes' (a constitutional category), and the customary rights of such tribes are constitutionally protected. Perhaps some racialist implications may be derived from their ascriptive origin from the great Tibeto-Mongoloid stock of the Himalayas or even their profession of Christianity. But such implications are hardly articulated by the political leadership of these states. At the level of articulation the creation of the hill states was based on grievances against the 'exploitation' of the 'plainsmen', particularly the Assamese.

For the Indian national leaders of all hues northeast India has been a 'special problem' (among many) left by the British Raj. Its intensity was partly due to the concentration of the scheduled tribes in relatively inaccessible and underdeveloped areas near India's international borders. Similar areas with less intense problems are strewn over the interior highland areas of the country. Around the hilly trijunction of Bihar, Orissa and West Bengal a multi-tribal Jharkhand movement has long been alive. Such problems are mainly viewed as emerging from the poverty and exploitation of the tribals by their advanced neighbours and sought to be tackled by the developmental and protective strategy of the Fifth Schedule and the Directive

Principles of the Indian constitution.³⁷

The more complex and more exclusive types of 'special problems' are treated as Union territories at present numbering nine : (1) Delhi is the national capital, and (2) Chandigarh is the common capital of Punjab and Haryana (3) Dadra and Nagar Haveli as well as (4) Goa, Daman and Diu were liberated from the Portuguese empire and are yet to be integrated with their neighbourhood. So is (5) Pondicherry, transferred from the French, although Chandernagar has been merged with West Bengal. (6) Mizoram is a small hilly tribal territory strategically forked by Bangladesh and Burma, while (7) Arunachal Pradesh is a larger but hilly and extremely backward tribal territory on the border with China. (8) The Lakshadweep and (9) the Andaman group of islands are small, isolated, extremely backward tribal territories, although parts of Andaman have been colonized. Even at the time of the framing of the constitution the state of Jammu and Kashmir was regarded as a special problem and a bar was put to the automatic application of Union laws to that state.³⁸ The state of Nagaland got certain other kinds of protection from Union laws in a subsequent amendment.³⁹ Certain special constitutional provisions were made in view of the political situation in the new and small state of Sikkim.⁴⁰ These special provisions are different from the ones which are intended for special areas in the states of Maharashtra,⁴¹ Gujarat,⁴¹ Assam,⁴² Manipur⁴³ and Andhra Pradesh.⁴⁴ This second category of special provisions relates to the specific necessities of backward regions with somewhat limiting effects on the powers of the concerned state legislatures.

37. Article 46 directs the state to 'promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of people, and, in particular of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes'. The Fifth Schedule provides for the administration of Scheduled 'Areas' (inhabited mostly by Scheduled Tribes).

38. Article 370 of the Constitution of India.

39. Article 371A, by means of the 13th amendment to the Constitution.

40. Article 371F, by means of the 36th amendment to the Constitution.

41. Article 371 by means of the 7th amendment to the Constitution.

42. Article 371B by means of the 22nd amendment to the Constitution.

43. Article 371C by means of the 27th amendment to the Constitution.

44. Article 371D by means of the 32nd amendment to the Constitution.

At the opposite end of this tendency towards segmentation is the scheme for inter-state collaborations through central intervention.⁴⁵

Further, in 1956, a Zonal Councils Act was passed creating five multi-state Zones for coordinating economic affairs. The number rose to six in 1972.⁴⁶ Such Zonal Councils are mainly consensual apparatus without affecting the local autonomy of the states. Only the North Eastern Council has statutory establishment with developmental funds from the Planning Commission of India.

The emerging pattern

The pattern of evolution of the state structure of India may now be summed up. Partition of British India was the point of departure. The size of the country since then has increased through the accession of territories under the pressure of democratic movements. One strong point of India is the growth of political democracy. Partly it has attracted the democratic elements in the neighbourhood and partly it works for the consensus which maintains the territorial integrity of the state. Of course the coercive power of the state is the ultimate sanction of this integrity through legal means. But the use of such coercive power in India has been rare.

The aversion to secession in India is no exception to the federal norm. More significant is the aversion to religious nationalism, springing from her historical experience, which disapproves of even the formation of states on the basis of religion, even though some states numerically dominated by the national religious minorities have actually come into being. As an alternative to religion language has been recognized as the sufficient ground for nationality-formation with three qualifications : (1) the process of formation of states has gone beyond the limit of language in northeast India, (2) in the case of Hindi one language spreads over several states, and (3) the language boundary occasionally differs from the political boundary on administrative grounds.

45. Article 263 of the Constitution.

46. By the North-Eastern Council Act. The Zones are the northern, the Central, the Western, the Southern, the Eastern and the North-Eastern.

Three notionally concentric circles may present the cultural topography of India in this way. The heartland consists of the Hindu-majority and Hindi-speaking states of north India. Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Chandigarh and Delhi contain 93.67% of the Hindi-speaking population of India which constitute 29.67% of the Indians. The inner periphery of the heartland consists of Hindu-majority but non-Hindi speaking states. The outer periphery contains the non-Hindu-majority and non-Hindi-speaking states of Jammu and Kashmir (Muslim, Kashmir), Punjab (Sikh, Punjabi), and the northeastern hill states of Nagaland, Meghalaya and Mizoram (Christian, tribal language/dialects).

The most impressive aspect of the linguistic composition of India is the strength of Hindi which is the national language of the country. Because of the official policy and by virtue of its commercial use it has become the most important second language of the non-Hindi speakers. English is of course the elite language. The bulk of the Indian elite, however, has come to have a fair acquaintance with Hindi making it the most effective link language. At the same time, it is the non-Hindi elite which mainly resents the status of Hindi as the 'national language'.⁴⁷

In the religio-linguistic complex of India Hindi has two major disadvantages : (1) All major languages of India, other than Hindi, extend beyond the religious boundary (see Appendix), and (2) By virtue of its antagonism with Urdu, Hindi has acquired a communal character. The dialectal difference between Hindi and Urdu is negligible. But Hindi is written in Dev Nagari script (like Sanskrit, the language of the Hindu scriptures), Urdu in Persian (a legacy of Muslim rule in India). Gandhi visualized Hindustani (including Hindi and Urdu) as the national language. The growth of communal politics pushed the two components apart. The partition was the final blow

47. See Jyotirindra Das Gupta, Language Conflict and National Development : Politics and National Language Policy in India, Bombay, Oxford University Press, 1977, particularly chapter V.

to the concept of Hindustani.⁴⁸ As Hindi was increasingly sanskritized the religious minorities came to regard it as the language of the Hindus, though many Hindus in northern India continued to use Urdu.

Brass observes that 'language in north India has generally played a secondary role to religion as a source of social and economic differentiation'. He is impressed by the speed at which Hindi has assimilated the wide spectrum of regional dialects of north India. Only Punjabi has been able to assert an autonomy, not because of any linguistic distinctiveness, 'but because it became an important secondary symbol in the struggle of the Sikhs to preserve their separate religious identity and to acquire a new territorial unit in which they would be dominant'. In South India, on the other hand, he finds language as the stronger basis of identity formation.⁴⁹ He could find it in eastern India too. In fact, the frequency and intensity of language riots in Assam have been fairly comparable to, if not greater than, those in south India.

Factors of unity

One of the factors of political stability in a plural society is claimed to be the existence of cross-cutting cleavages that neutralize themselves.⁵⁰ Federalism is a praxiological extension of this theory. The basic characteristic of a federation is the regionalization of diversities. Yet there must be some overwhelming considerations of common interest which must keep the diverse components together. The geographical implication of

48. *ibid.*, pp. 110-11. Also see Granville Austin, The Indian Constitution : Cornerstone of a Nation, Oxford University Press, 1966, pp. 273-78.

49. Brass, *op.cit.*, pp. 404-05.

50. Alexis de Tocqueville (The American Democracy) was the first proponent of this theory. Also see Seymour Martin Lipset, Political Man : the Social Basis of Politics, Garden City, N. Y., Anchor Books, 1963, p. 77.

this theory is that, when the boundary lines of the regionally identified diversities overlap to a certain extent, the ideal conditions for federalism are achieved.⁵¹ The question is if such overlap of diversities is in itself a sufficient condition for the formation of federation. The disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian, as well as the Ottoman empire, led to the birth of several successor states with overlapping cultural boundaries. No federation was born. This leads one to the conclusion that the birth of a new state, unitary or federal, is ultimately governed by overwhelming political-economic forces, rather than cultural considerations.

For India, not only the birth, but also the continued stability of the federation is hardly explained by the cross-cutting cleavage theory. Dikshit finds the persistence of the Indian federation against 'seemingly impossible conditions'. There is no regional specialization of production which necessitates complementarity as in the industrialized federations of the USA and Canada. Caste boundaries in India coincide with the linguistic boundaries giving the latter an exclusiveness. His explanation of the stability of India is cultural: (1) 'the fundamental unity of India preserved in the cultural realm', (2) the charismatic leadership of Gandhi and Nehru and (3) the new tirthas (places of pilgrimage) of industry where workers from different parts of the country mingle.⁵² The only continuous element is this mingling of the workers. The problem lies in that, to consider such mingling as a major factor of unity, one must assume the level of industrialization to be so high as to cover the majority of India's working population. India is clearly not that industrialized.

India's cultural layout in fact favours more division/fission than cohesion. Religion builds a strong case for constituting India into a Hindu

51. Ramesh Dutt Dikshit, The Political Geography of Federalism : An Inquiry into Origin and Stability. Delhi, The Macmillan Company of India, 1975, p. 234.

52. *ibid.*, pp. 125-28.

state to the exclusion of the states in the outer periphery. Language confines the focus to the Hindi heartland. Yet these cultural factors work against the political division of the country by disfavouing the growth of any counterpole. The religious minorities in the outer periphery are so small, so divided in language and ethnic affinities, so situated that there is hardly any option for them to secede. Only the Muslim-majority Kashmir valley has the option of joining Pakistan. But the leadership of the long democratic movement in Kashmir is shy to throw its lot with the unpredictable course of politics in that country. Anti-Hindi agitations have indeed occasionally rocked the country, but they could not crystallize around any other native language even on a regional basis. Only, sections of the English-knowing elite have joined temporary platforms of protest which lacked mass support. The anti-Hindi agitations never acquired democratic depth.

Besides this law of inertia which sustains the Indian political structure worked out through the transfer of power, the sub-regional conflicts contribute in no small measure to the federal unity of India. One view that emanated from the States Reorganization Commission, for instance, was the division of the big state of Uttar Pradesh for sheer administrative convenience. No heed was paid to it even though there are some noticeable cultural differences between the eastern and the western parts of the state and there is a demand for the formation of an Uttarakhand state with the northern hill areas of the state. In the big non-Hindi states of Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and Maharashtra, on the other hand, there are regions, under the 'special responsibility' of their Governors, which are administratively distinguished. In Andhra Pradesh the differences between the parts formerly belonging to Madras and Hyderabad threatened the integrity of the state. In West Bengal the question of the status of the Nepali language lurks behind the demand for autonomy of the hill areas of Darjeeling. Even after the 1972 reorganization of northeast India, the integrity of Assam is threatened by the regional pulls of languages and communities. The effect of all these is the fragmentation of the peripheral states which strengthens the bargaining position of the heartland.

The political unity of any country is ultimately dependent on the socio-economic factors rather than the ethno-cultural affinities. The plural and multi-structured Indian union is sustained by the dominant interest of capital that, because of the very fact of underdevelopment, needs to operate throughout the national market. The capital of the industry in West Bengal (one of the most industrialized states of India), for instance, is in bulk non-Bengalee. In this respect geography comes in aid of the federation. Most of the heavy industry of the country (metallurgical and chemical) are situated in the non-Hindi belt, while agriculture, husbandry and related middle-range and small-scale industry are the mainstay of the Indo-Gangetic Hindi region working for their complementarity.⁵³ The peasant and tribal pulls of 80% of the Indian population may disfavour centralism. The language and the counter-language agitations may further split the states. But there is no immediate possibility of a real disintegrative tendency to develop in its structure.

53. The following situation obtained in the industrial geography of the country in 1963: 'Amongst the five major industrial regions the Hooghly belt is prominent in the country with 0.59 million factory workers. It is being followed by the Bombay-Poona and Ahmedabad-Baroda Regions as the second and third major industrial regions of India. There appears to be a keen competition between the Hooghly and Bombay-Poona regions for the first position as the latter is on the way to catch up the former if its present rate of growth persists. The Bombay-Poona Region has increased her industrial labour force from 0.475 million in 1950 to 0.564 million in 1960 ... On the contrary the Hooghly industrial belt has declined in her factory employment from 0.594 million to 0.591 million during the same period. Among all the major industrial regions Chotanagpur plateau has recorded the maximum growth (26%). The annual rate of growth works out to be 2.6% as against 1.8% of the Bombay-Poona and Ahmedabad-Baroda regions. Madurai-Coimbatore-Bangalore region in the Peninsular India was a very slow annual rate of growth (only 1.6% per annum during 1950-60)' (B.N. Sinha, Industrial Geography of India, Calcutta, World Press, 1972, pp.19-21). Four of these five major industrial regions are in the non-Hindi states. Chotanagpur (in Bihar) is in a tribal area where a strong Jharkhand state movement is alive.

In 1973-74, basic metal and alloy industries were concentrated in West Bengal, Maharashtra and the tribal, hill areas of Bihar and Madhya Pradesh, cotton and Jute textiles in Maharashtra, Gujarat, West Bengal and Tamil Nadu, while chemicals and chemical products (except petroleum and coal products) were mostly in Maharashtra. Uttar Pradesh was second to Maharashtra as the manufacturer of food products. Her other industries were far below that level (Annual Survey of Industries 1973-74, Government of India, New Delhi, pp.38-45).

Reorganization of northeast India - a case study

A summary of the political evolution of the multi-ethnic and multi-structured northeast Indian region, brought forth from this writer's personal fieldwork,⁵⁴ may corroborate some of the above formulations. In 1950 the area comprised the composite state of Assam and the Union territories of Manipur and Tripura. Bulk of their territories were hilly and inhabited by scheduled tribes with different dialects and ethnic backgrounds but practising subsistence agriculture. The benefit of missionary education, however, had given rise to an educated elite who generally stood for integration with India but with autonomy over local affairs. The hill districts of Assam were constituted as Tribal Areas. The Part A Tribal Areas got autonomous district-councils, resembling the autonomous regional soviets, with the power of local authorities and of regulating tribal customary rights. The Part B tribal areas (the frontier tracts and the 'Naga tribal area' of the British days) were placed under direct administration of the Centre. By 1972 some of these hill areas grew into states and Union territories, but the autonomous districts system survived in Assam as well as the new hill states. In Manipur new district councils were created in the hills.

Superficial analyses of the northeast India situation put premium on 'tribalism' (by definition microcosmic), role of christianity (vis-a-vis the Hindu-majority plains), historical separation of the hills from the plains (through restrictions put on travels) and the language controversy in Assam. The arguments can be countered. First, the leaders of the hill districts are, except as a legal category, hardly 'tribal'. They are as much educated, sophisticated and affluent as most other Indian politicians are. The Christian church has always discouraged secessionism. Although there is a great deal of truth in the argument of historical separation, that will only partly hold good after 30 years of independence. The argument about the language controversy is partly valid too. While the negative attitude towards Assamese as a state language strengthened the autonomy movement in the hills, there was hardly anything positive about it. The hill states have no indigenous language with the status of a state/official language. In any case, these hypotheses fail to answer the supreme question: why have they not chosen to leave India?

54. See Chaube, Hill Politics.

The solution of the problem rests in the answer to a positive question : What have they achieved through the statehood? They have achieved a Council of Ministers of their own, responsible to an elected legislature. This is true not only of the new states (including Manipur and Tripura) but also of the Union territories of Arunachal Pradesh. The state bureaucracies are rapidly swelling with the induction of local bureaucrats not only creating employment opportunities for the local elite but also imparting them a voice in the local administrative policy. More important, it entitles them to a share of national revenue without the capacity for reciprocal contribution. Their political leadership is intensely aware of the impossibility of insular existence.

Part of this awareness springs from the apprehensions about the transborder situation : the uncertain political conditions in Burma and Bangladesh (formerly East Pakistan) and communism in China. (Acceptance of China's help by the Naga and the Mizo underground has been thoroughly disapproved by the church). The visionary in the north-east Indian Hills dreams of a prosperity along capitalist lines. With practically no industrial development and a low productivity of agriculture, the hills can provide for the affluence of their elite only out of central subvention (which flows at an annual average of Rs.30 crore). Whatever business there is, it is either directly or indirectly controlled by plainsmen. The economy of the hills is tied with that of the rest of the country by that peculiar component of twentieth century capitalism : underdevelopment. The secular cultural policy of the Union Government has, on the other hand, been reassuring to the hill men.

A proposal for small states

A new controversy over an old issue started ~~within~~ the ruling party with Lokanayak Jaya Prakash Narain's plea for the reorganization of India into smaller states - for the sake of reducing the distance between the people and the government.⁵⁵ It was somewhat promptly followed by the publication of the report of a plan formulated in the Union Home Ministry for such reorganization.⁵⁶ The plan, still tentative, concerned the states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra. The first four of these are Hindi-speaking and have been chiefly responsible for the emergence of the Janata party as the ruling power at the Centre. The last two were constituted as linguistic states (having Marathi and Telugu as their respective languages) after the transfer of power and still are Congress strongholds. While U.P. and Bihar are largely former British provinces, M.P. and Rajasthan are chiefly former territories of the native states. Maharashtra comprises chiefly territories of the former British provinces of Bombay and the Central Provinces and Berar. Andhra Pradesh includes former territories of the British Province of Madras and the native state of Hyderabad. The Prime Minister's quick disavowal of any such move did not rule out the possibility of its existence or future revival.⁵⁷ It only revived old memories pertaining to a critical debate on the political shape of the Indian federation.

The series of reorganizations has resulted in the creation of roughly homogeneous states subject to two qualifications : (1) there remain a number of border disputes some of which are clearly insoluble to the satisfaction of

55. See The Statesman, November 13, 1977, reporting J.P. Narain's speech at a Patna meeting.

56. See The Statesman, November 15, 1977, for details of the scheme.

57. See Morarji Desai's press conference report at Bhopal in The Statesman, November 21, 1977. See also the statement of Janata Party president, Chandrasekhar, to the effect that 'no decision' has been taken on the proposal. The Statesman, December 5, 1977.

all parties, and (2) a number of multi-lingual states have cropped up in northeast India. On the other hand, a number of states speaking the same language - Hindi - exist in northern and central India. Which does not derogate from their internal linguistic homogeneity, but somehow shows the shortcoming of the purely linguistic principle. One of the three members of the States Reorganization Commission in fact suggested the split of the large Hindi-speaking state of Uttar Pradesh. Indeed the language principle of statehood is not fool-proof as will be evident from the reluctance of the Bengali-speaking people of Tripura and the Cachar district of Assam to join in one state. It will be argued in this paper that language, as a cultural symbol, has only secondary significance in politics. The primary basis of linguism (like that of religious communalism) has to be traced in deeper political, and socio-economic factors.

The ground of 'administrative convenience', on the other hand, is not easy to define. It would mean reaching the maximum number of people at the minimal cost. For the British the need for reaching the people arose out of the primary need for maintenance of law and order. This remains the most crucial factor for even the national government. But obviously it cannot be all. With the increase of governmental commitment to public welfare, governmental service needs to reach most of the doors. With this changed context of administrative convenience two critical questions arise : (1) what kind of service needs to be catered and (2) which doors does it need to reach?

The answers to these questions bring the rather abstract theoretical problem into the realm of empirical investigation into the social bases of statehood demands and their fulfilment by the decision-makers. For, there are grounds to suspect that such matters are decided not by abstract logic or even the personal whims of politicians. Frequently, there are cool calculations behind them. In December, 1966, for instance, Indira Gandhi, faced with the threat of the All-Party Hill Leaders' Conference to boycott election, promised to reorganize northeast India. Leaders of Assam Congress, who disfavoured the reorganization, started putting pressure on

her by canvassing their point with those senior Congressmen who later formed the Congress (O). One result of this development was the Assam Congressmen's reluctance to take side^{immediately} after the Congress party split in 1969.⁵⁸ Mrs Gandhi stood firm by her commitment. After the reorganization of northeast India, however, Mrs Gandhi rejected the Telengana separatist demand. One ground she offered was that creation of small states can benefit some members of the middle class, but not the common men, whose economic opportunities are reduced.

The fact is that Union-state relations in a federal system like India are largely governed by partisan interest. As the criterion of 'administrative convenience' is less precise than the principle of language, administrative realignment is likely to be enmeshed in the manifold problem of regionalization. It can, therefore, be assumed that the Union government will, if at all, draw the new state boundaries with some consideration for the interest of the party that is in its control. It will probably help the intensification of the regional support of the ruling party at the Centre, or factions within it, and weaken the hold of the opposition. Whether such calculations will prove effective will depend upon the support structure of the respective parties; An enquiry into the motivational aspect of public demands and reactions consists in the question of who are likely to benefit or be adversely affected by such reorganizations. And, as all enquiries about motivation for human action must begin with the probe into the reward structure of a society,⁵⁹ one must ask the question: how does the Indian federal set-up reflect the structure of Indian economy?

58. See Chaube, *op.cit.*, pp. 126-27 & 169. Also K.M. Deka, 'Assam' in Iqbal Narain, *State Politics in India*, Meerut, Meenakshi Prakashana, 1976, pp.30-50, at pp.38-39.

59. See T. Parsons and E.A. Shils (eds.), *Toward a General Theory of Action: Theoretical Foundations for the Social Sciences*, New York, Harper & Row, Torchbook edition, 1962, p.242.

The meaning of statehood

The political essence of the federal system consists in the Union-state relations occasionally viewed in terms of bargain.⁶⁰ In this bargain model, the big states as vote gatherers and revenue earners may have a greater strength than the smaller states with small resources and voting population. Small states, therefore, are likely to strengthen the Centre through making increasing demands for grants-in-aid. The Congress record at the Centre in working for 'pliable' state governments, matched by the Janata government's dissolution of Congress-run state governments of northern India after the sixth Lok Sabha poll, corroborate this hypothesis.

The constitutional structure of India allows great concentration of power in the Union government. The Seventh Schedule to the constitution laid down a division of power which left unlimited scope for Central control over industry. It was left to Parliament to divide control over civic industry between the Centre and the States,⁶¹ while defence industry was placed under total Central control.⁶² The industrial policy resolutions of 1948 and 1956 left heavy industry under federal jurisdiction, medium-sized industry under concurrent jurisdiction and small industry under state jurisdiction. Yet, most of small-scale industry being, resource-wise, dependent on heavy industry, the Centre has the ultimate authority over them. On the other hand, agriculture was left to the states.

Secondly, property was guaranteed by the Union government. All legislations relating to private property were made subject to President's assent.⁶³ Such legislation included those which had been passed by state

60. See Marcus F. Franda, West Bengal and the Federalizing Process, Princeton University Press, 1968.

61. Entry 0 and 52 of list 1 of the Seventh Schedule.

62. Entry 7 of List 1 of the Seventh Schedule.

63. Article 31.

governments, relating to Zemindari abolition, that had been awaiting President's assent at the commencement of the Constitution. Although this provision has gone through several amendments, the President's assent is still required for all state legislations on acquisition of property.

The Seventh Schedule, in its original form, thus, placed industry under the overall control of the Union and agriculture under the control of state even though agrarian reform was subject to Central veto. Economic and social planning, which has played a crucial role in independent India, was a concurrent subject.⁶⁴ Further, although inter-state trade and commerce⁶⁵ has from the beginning been a Union subject, the third amendment to the Constitution, in 1954, made trade and commerce in foodstuffs, including edible oilseeds and oils, cattle fodder, including oilcakes and other concentrates, raw cotton, cotton seed and raw jute concurrent subjects.⁶⁶ Thus the Union government acquired commanding position even in respect of agriculture. With the induction of higher technology in agriculture this position acquired cumulative significance.

The social significance of this constitutional scheme would be industry's primary dependence on the Centre. Although agriculture would be primarily concerned with the state, the Centre would assume increasing role in its management. It is natural that the process of interest aggregation in Indian politics would generally follow this scheme of things. In other words, agricultural pressure groups would primarily organize themselves around state governments and the industrial interests around the Central government. Consequently, the Centre would show greater concern at industrial unrest in a state (as was seen during the United Front governments in West Bengal) than at crop failure in parts of the country which may at

64. Entry 20 of List 3 of the Seventh Schedule.

65. Entry 42 of List 1 of the Seventh Schedule.

66. Entry 33 of List 3 of the Seventh Schedule.

best invoke a spate of relief operations on the part of the Food Corporation of India. In any case, the Centre cannot undertake any vigorous legislative and administrative measures in respect of agricultural land management.

It is not that the Central government has been apathetic to the agricultural problem in a poor agricultural country like India. It has in fact assumed a great deal of responsibility in respect of food procurement within the country, food purchase from abroad and incentive to food production. 'The green revolution' was primarily an achievement of the Central government. The point is that the bulk of the Indian peasantry is still doubtful about surrendering agriculture to the Centre - as it was revealed by the All-India Congress Committee's refusal to accept the Swaran Singh Committee's proposal to make agriculture a Union subject. Such a move would surely enhance the pace of the 'green revolution'. But as the green revolution, by public policy, was territorially selective and biased for the rich former the bulk of the Indian peasantry would be exposed, in that case, to ^{competitive} unequal with the beneficiaries of the green revolution,⁶⁷ as they have been by the promulgation of the whole country as one food zone in 1977.

The Indian elite and regionalism

Pinpointing the political importance of the states in the Indian federation Myron Weiner wrote in 1968: 'While before independence political leaders in Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, Allahabad, Ahmedabad, and Poona often moved directly into national politics, today politicians first carve out their careers in state politics. Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri, for example, was a minister in the state government in Uttar Pradesh before moving to central cabinet, and K. Kamraj, the President of the Congress party, was for a decade the chief minister of the state of Madras'.⁶⁸

67. On the territorial and class bias of the green revolution see Biplob Dasgupta, 'India's Green Revolution', Economic and Political Weekly, Annual Number, February 1977, vol. XII, Nos. 6, 7 & 8, pp. 241-60.

68. Myron Weiner (ed.), Political Development in the Indian States. Princeton University Press, 1968, pp. 3-4.

While there is a great deal of truth in Weiner's assertion that 'the states are also training grounds for national politicians', his formulation about the pre-independence leadership is only partly correct. Several all-India leaders before independence had actually been trained in state governments. The tallest among them like the Nehrus, Patel and C. R. Das had not been in any state government. But they headed the municipal administrations of some of India's biggest cities. A distinction more appropriate may be on the line of the urban-rural discontinuities. Both Shastri and Kamraj are known for their rural moorings. Shastri became famous for his slogan: Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan (Hail to the soldiers, hail to the peasant). It was in Shastri's period that the green revolution was initiated.

Prior to independence the Indian middle class, in their preoccupation with the empire, could easily identify itself with the national aspirations, and operate on a national scale. The prestige of the freedom movement was built into the 'charisma' of our great leaders like Gandhi and Nehru. Yet, even Nehru was disturbed by the regional pulls on the national politics (as in the case of the States Reorganization demand). Although their prestige sustained Congress through the first three general elections, the trend was reversed in favour of the regional elite in 1967.⁶⁹

However the alliances that governed the states proved remarkably fragile. More important, the wave of defections and counterdefections that was released affected the stability of even the Congress-run states. This could only mean that the various social and political forces that came to the surface in 1967 were unable to sort out their equations. Which partly explains the reconsolidation of Congress in 1971-72. It was, however, beyond the capability of Congress to reforge the alliances, which had served as its basis prior to 1967. In 1977 Congress gave in to an alliance of a group of former regional parties.

69. See W.H. Morris-Jones, The Government and Politics of India, London, Hutchinson University Library, third (revised) edition, 1971, p.118.

In this regionalistic trend of interest articulation there is cause for concern of those who uphold the spirit of nationalism. From a scientific political angle, however, the most important question is if this will endanger the stability and the integrity of the Union. One of our primary assumptions being that small states will enhance the bargaining power of the Centre the concern with the national macro-psychology may be politically irrelevant. It will be more rewarding to probe the objective basis and consequences of the tendency towards fragmentation that has become prominent in recent years.

Classes in Indian politics

In his study of the members of India's second parliament, W.H. Morris-Jones found that inspite of their regional, caste and class affinities the Indian M.P. was a strong party member'.⁷⁰ He was confident that the loyalties of caste and locality 'have to compete with other newer loyalties, and the working of parliamentary institutions is one factor among many acting in the direction of weakening their hold'.⁷¹ The hold did not weaken apparently because the all-India parties themselves used regionalism and caste for their own purposes.⁷²

It is necessary to dispose of the question of class at this stage. Inter-class conciliation, in the form of consensus, is universally acknowledged to be a condition of liberal democracy. It is however necessary to distinguish the specific Marxist connotation of class from its generic meaning. In the latter sense, class refers to any aggregate of similar units of society. In the specific sense class has reference to the mode of production. In this sense classes may be in competitive relations - as between the industrial bourgeoisie and the rich farmers - and in contradictory relations - as between the landowner and the agricultural labourer or the share-cropper.

70. W.H. Morris-Jones, Parliament in India, London, Longmans, Green Co., 1957, p.

71. *ibid.*, 331.

72. See Selig S. Harrison, India: The Most Dangerous Decades, Oxford University Press, 1960, p.239, for how even the Congress party matched caste by caste to defeat the Communists in the Andhra elections of 1955.

Independence of India was a political revolution made with the consent of our former rulers.⁷³ It is now agreed among social scientists of all hues that national movement in the former colonies (in Asia, Africa and Latin America) can not be considered at par with the national movements in the 19th century which were capitalist democratic in content. There was indeed a budding capitalist class at the back of the national movement exercising a dominant influence on it, but this influence fell far short of what Gramsci called 'hegemony'.⁷⁴ In the Indian national movement there was on the whole a preponderance of the educated middle class, drawn from the metropolitan cities, who, notwithstanding their share of the industrial aspirations of the West, could exercise an autonomous role in the multi-structured set-up of the country's economy and refused to surrender to the way of laissez faire.⁷⁵

Indian political leaders - at least the section represented in the Constituent Assembly - laid down a constitution which can best be described as a bourgeois democratic character of a welfare state.⁷⁶ The constitution was built on the ashes of the princely autonomy and upheld the right to private property at the same time making allowance for the abolition of feudal land rights. The welfare principles were embodied in the chapter on the Directive Principles which, although supposed to govern public policy, was subordinated to the fundamental rights. The elective principle of

73. See Dharendra Nath Sen, Revolution by Consent? Calcutta, Saraswati Library, 1947.

74. Antonio Gramsci, Selections from Prison Notebooks, edited and translated by Hoare and Smith, London, Lawrence and Wishart, 1971, pp.57-58.

75. Rajni Kothari (Politics in India, Delhi, Orient Longman, 1970, p.40) writes of this middle class: 'The new middle class, created by English education and drawn by the concepts of liberty, democracy and socialism, was indeed the greatest legacy of the British Raj. This class eventually inherited power from the British and declared itself a modern nation and a "sovereign, democratic republic".'

76. See Shibani Kinkar Chaube, Constituent Assembly of India: Springboard of Revolution, New Delhi, People's Publishing House, 1973.

government was adopted, but franchise became universal only in 1975 when the people of Arunachal Pradesh were granted it. The industrial policy resolution laid down the scope of the growth of a public sector but no conflict with the private sector was envisaged within the framework of a 'mixed economy'.

Subsequent legislative and administrative steps aimed at the destruction of the feudal structure of Indian agriculture. All these created the conditions for the growth of bourgeois dominance but hardly led to a bourgeois hegemony.⁷⁷ The economy of the country remained multi-structured, while increasing state intervention in the economic affairs led to the preponderance of the bureaucracy manned by the educated middle class. Expansion of the state machinery as well as industry led to the growth of the white collar and skilled workers who, by virtue of their organizing ability, became a significant focus of political power. In agriculture, on the other hand, the decadence of feudalism was accompanied by the rise of the rich peasants slowly asserting themselves in the corridors of power.

The slow transformation of the Indian economic scene engendered not only competitive configurations of economic interests, but also contradictory ideological positions. The answer to the first kind of problems was ever-changing coalition of parties and factions in the politics of the centre as well as the states. The second kind of problem rendered greater strain to the Indian polity. Because of the multi-structured character of the Indian society, however, both these strains were naturally reflected most in the inter-regional variations of the economy and the polity. One major focus of such variations was the autonomy/power of the states.

77. See Asok Sen, 'Marx, Weber and India', Economic and Political Weekly, VII, 5-7, Annual Number, 1972, and 'Bureaucracy and Social Hegemony', Essays in Honour of Professor Susobhan Chandra Sarkar, edited by B. De, New Delhi, People's Publishing House, 1976. About the constraints of Indian capitalist development see Partha Chatterjee, 'Stability and Change in the Indian Political System', Political Science Review, January-March, 1977.

Class contradiction indeed affected the federal relations in India. Thus the Kerala Education Bill, 1957, affecting the interests of the educational trusts, was withheld by the Governor for the President's assent. Passing of a Land Reforms Bill in Kerala, in 1959, similarly withheld, hastened the fall of the first Communist government in Kerala. One of the causes of the fall of the first United Front government in West Bengal was alleged break-down of law and order over land disputes. One offshoot of the growth of class tension in particular regions may well be separatist demand particularly if the Union government is seen to be protecting the interests of the exploiting classes.⁷⁸

It so happens because of the absence of any uniformity in the production relation in this vast country. Thus the system of land tenure varies from region to region. Industrialization has been enclaved in selected pockets. Consequently, the objective basis of a broad working class unity which could horizontally split the country is lacking. On the other hand agriculture and industry are in competitive relation. Even different sectors and regions of industry and agriculture compete with each other, particularly for governmental patronage. The economy tends to be fragmented.

Behind the language movement: Case Study of Vidarbha

'Behind the banner of language' Selig Harrison suspected the role of caste-affiliations in anticipation of the intensification of caste conflict that linguistic reorganization of states might effect. 'The balance of power between castes in a multi-lingual political unit with its many caste groups differs radically from that in the smaller linguistic unit'.⁷⁹ The formation of Maharashtra, he suspected, would heighten political struggle among the major

78. In 1968, the Congress government at the Centre ordered that all entrants in the Union services from Kerala would have to get clearance of the Central Board of Investigation. In 1977 the Janata government at the Centre laid down the same requirements for the entrants from West Bengal. That these two states are under strong communist influence is more than coincidental.

79. Harrison, op.cit., p. 105.

regional caste groups -- the Marathi Brahmins, the Maratha peasant proprietors and the Mahar untouchables.⁸⁰ As it happened, the son of a Mahar, B.R. Ambedkar, and a Marathi Brahmin leader, M.S. Aney, opposed the merger of Vidarbha with Maharashtra, apprehending the growth of the arrogance of the Marathas who constituted 39.1% of the population of the Maharashtra region of Bombay and 24% in Vidarbha. In fact, the unification of Maharashtra was marked by the rise to the Chief Ministership of Maharashtra and then to a powerful position in the national Congress leadership of the Maratha leader, Y.B. Chavan.⁸¹ [The creation of Vidarbha, planned by the Home Ministry, may result in the diminution of this Maratha base of Maharashtra Congress].

But there was more behind the Vidarbha problem. Harrison himself noted the participation of the Chitpavan Brahmins of Maharashtra in the merger movement.⁸² In fact there was a much larger participation of not only the brahmins, but of all sections of Marathas in Maharashtra⁸³

M.S. Aney, a Marathi Brahmin in Vidarbha, might have been representing the vested interests in that region. A more plausible explanation of the upper caste reluctance in Vidarbha might be found in the economic field. Vidarbha was a Zemindari area while Maharashtra proper was ryotwari.⁸⁴

The second important force opposing the merger of Vidarbha with Maharashtra according to Harrison, was the Marwari interest. And he quotes N.V. Gadgil's charge that 'from the very minute of the report (of the SRC),

80. *ibid.*, pp. 106 & 108.

81. *ibid.*, p. 119.

82. Harrison, *op.cit.*, p. 108.

83. See Ram Joshi, 'Maharashtra' in Myron Weiner (ed.), State Politics in India, Princeton University Press, 1968, pp.177-212, at p.194 and V.M. Sirsikar, 'Maharashtra' in Iqbal Narain (ed.), State Politics in India, Meerut, Moenakshi Prakashan, 1976, pp.220-39, at p.222.

84. Sirsikar, *op.cit.*, 221.

land has been passing into the hands of capitalists who are rejoicing on the formation of Vidarbha.⁸⁵ Having noted the Marwaris' 'peculiarly cosmopolitan economic position and the supra-regional caste gestal's⁸⁶ Harrison, however, puts the Marwaris among 'the new caste lobbies'.

The proponents and opponents of linguistic state

The fact that Marwari power 'looms before the potential local investor' opens up the dimension of big money. The involvement of big money in the reorganization of Bombay was apparent when the Congress Working Committee proposed an independent status for the city of Bombay. Similarly, the Tata house persuaded the government of West Bengal to surrender to Bihar about 600 square miles of territory in the districts of Purnea and Santal Pargana containing the coal reserves and waterworks of the Tata Iron and Steel Company.⁸⁷

Big business would disfavour linguistic reorganization on two grounds. First, it finds its operation easier in a polyethnic state than in a uniethnic, and, therefore, more exclusive, state. Second, big business network, including industry, developed over a considerable period within boundaries of the British provinces. Linguistic reorganization, disturbing such alignments, would affect their operations adversely. By the same token, local investors or potentially local investors would want to carve out their own niches in the form of linguistic states where they could use their political leverage to reduce the impact of big money. Maharashtra is in fact a good example of the rise of the local entrepreneur (particularly, in the sugar industry) after its constitution.

Who else would favour a linguistic state? The British ruled India with the aid of a small English-educated bureaucracy. With their departure, the bureaucracy has been Indianized, vastly enlarged and made to conform with the

85. Harrison, op.cit., p. 119.

86. Ibid., p. 114.

87. Stanley A. Kochanek, The Congress Party of India, Princeton University Press, 1968, pp.152-53.

local norms and aspirations. The government is the biggest employer in this country. Private industry and business are tied to the government in several ways. On the one hand, English has failed to meet the demands of the new situation. On the other hand, increasing number of job-seekers from the lower middle classes, with decreasing knowledge of English, are thronging the gates of the public and private offices. The creation of new states and elaboration of their apparatus creates new opportunities for the local job-seekers, politicians and bosses. For many of them, the adoption of Hindi for official purposes would expose them to the unequal competition with those whose mother tongue is Hindi.⁸⁸ The most violent expression of the interest of the job-seekers in the official language can be discovered in the series of anti-Bengalee agitations in Assam till 1972 and the language disturbances in Tamilnadu, in the sixties. The interest of local businessmen may be reflected in the anti-Marwari riots in West Bengal (1964) and Assam (1968). In the hill states of northeast India, on the other hand, the entire political elite practically owe their origin to the agitation against Assamese language.

The above analysis is based on a rather simple functional logic. Big operators want big areas of operation, small operators want smaller ones. Big business and big industry would like to function unhindered by the political constraints of the linguistic states disturbing the traditional administrative boundaries. Smaller business and industry may similarly want the protection of their state. The most-educated professionals want all-India opening for jobs and occupations. The less educated and resourceful professionals can hope for safer berths in smaller states. For them statehood means the creation of a number of political and administrative offices. The increasing public functions of government are resulting in fast increase of government-controlled services. Linguistic states normally tend to confine such offices to the linguistic group dominating the population. As education tends to be increasingly imparted through the vernacular, for instance, the huge educational services are being increasingly exclusive. Promotion of

88. This advantage of the Hindi-speaking states may partly explain the absence of middle-class support for the fragmentation of those states.

agriculture, industry, health, banking and numerous other welfare activities require the appointment of people speaking the local language. Even the private sector has to go by the requirements of the new situation.

Beyond the linguistic state

This analysis fits well with Beard's analysis of big money favouring a centralized federation and small money favouring local autonomy, with the difference that, in the USA, the 'minority' problem was admitted neither by the big nor by the small Americans. It also fits in the theoretical paradigm of nationalism. In spite of the facts that Indian capital grew under the British umbrella and until now it maintains subordinate relationship with foreign capital, most of the Indian capitalists joined the national movement or backed it with the hope of getting the political leverage that independence would render them. It welcomed the integration of the native states and diminution of feudal privileges for the same class interest. On the other hand, they disfavoured linguistic reorganization to an extent which would radically alter the existing administrative alignments. With the rise of the middle class comprising the large span of the middle and small-scale entrepreneurs, the educated job-seekers and the substantial peasants the demand for linguistically homogeneous states had evolved and, to a large extent, materialized.

This process of what Kothari calls 'intermediate aggregation' cannot stop at the formation of the linguistic states. The desires for regionalization of linguistic/existing states opens up a new dimension of Indian politics. There is no denying the great economic disparity between the three regions of UP, the rich Western part and the eastern and the hilly northern parts. But the deficiency was filled up by the Central Congress leadership's concern for the retention of the political integrity of the state. In the Congress period all the Prime Ministers of India were from Uttar Pradesh, (the eastern cities of Allahabad and Banaras). The Chief Ministers of the state hailed mostly from the northern or the eastern part. It would be for the eastern and the northern areas to demand separation. But the articulation of any such demand at the elite level was thwarted.

One condition of elite articulation appears to be the presence of an urban focus. The question of Bombay city was one of the chief issues in the question of Maharashtra. Hyderabad presents the urban focus of the Telengana movement. On the other hand, the regional disparity between northern and southern Bihar has not formed the basis of such demand partly because of the absence of this urban focus. It is possible to argue that peasant distinctions are more likely to be articulated through the caste lobbies, along regional lines,⁸⁹ but their consolidation needs a distinct elite articulation frequently through factional fights.⁹⁰

Caste and the Kulak

Neither Nehru nor Shastri was at the helm of the Congress party when it was humiliated, in the fourth general election of 1967, by a number of regional and **casteist** parties. A comparative review of the first four Lok Sabhas showed a distinct improvement of the strength of the rural interests from 22.4% (1952), to 31.1% (1967). Of course the increase was statistically more significant at the second Lok Sabha (29.1%) [It was negative in 1962 (27.4)]. There was a corresponding decrease in the strength of the lawyers (1952 : 36%, 1957 : 30%, 1962 : 24.4%, 1967 : 17.5%). In the percentage share of the landed interests in the parties the SSP (42.1%), the Swatantra (40.5%) and DMK (37.5%) led the Congress party (36.8%).⁹¹ These figures do suggest a causal connection between the Congress losses and the rise of the landed interests.

89. 'It is because caste lobbies function coherently on the basis of entire linguistic regions ... that caste assumes such irrepressible importance' (S. Harrison, op.cit., p. 109).
90. Even within the same caste rivalry between Brahmananda Reddy and P. Chenna Reddy is believed to have been largely responsible for the demand for separation of Telengana. See G. Ram Reddy, 'Andhra Pradesh' in Iqbal Narain (ed.), op.cit., pp. 1-29, at pp. 13 & 24.
91. Ratna Dutta, 'The Party Representative in Fourth Lok Sabha', Economic and Political Weekly, Annual Number 1969, Vol. IV, Nos 1 & 2, pp.179-89.

The 'landed interests', like the 'urban' or 'professional' groups, are, however, assorted categories. They can hardly be understood without reference to the production relation that has determined the course of politics of the multi-structured society, that is India, since the British days. The question of statehood has been viewed in this model as a product of conflict between big money and the small, chiefly in the urban sector - the middle class being depicted as the main proponents of linguistic states and state autonomy. Yet, it is quite possible for small money to generate beyond the urban (business and professional) periphery, within the rural society, through the development of what may be called capitalism in agriculture. One of the chief protagonists of state autonomy in the USA was, as Beard shows, the farmer. The very real conflict between industry and agriculture in the USA was later reflected by Jefferson's Republican party, but most acutely by the American civil war. In India the reflection can be found in the Janata party's election manifesto promising to transfer the emphasis of national investment from industry to agriculture and the rather unhappy episode in the meeting of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce, in 1977, involving Prime Minister Morarji Desai.

Assuming that such conflict can divide business and profession on the one hand and the farming interest on the other even at the state level, consolidation of the power of the farmers may call for the creation of sub-linguistic states. And as in the peasant context of India caste is the most significant **ethno-cultural** stereotype, such regional, sub-linguistic states may develop on considerations of the caste. In other words, the castes that may impress the central leaders (who will decide on such reorganization) by virtue of its strength and/or friendliness are likely to obtain statehood to their advantage. In the prevailing political configuration of India, the Maratha caste's association with Congress puts it in a disadvantage. On the other hand, the separation of the Western part of Uttar Pradesh may benefit the Jat peasants concentrated there and in Haryana encircling the seat of federal power. The fact that the rich peasants belonging to this caste have been one of the main beneficiaries of the 'green revolution' may signify the emergence of a new Kulak power at the national level of Indian politics.

At this juncture caste enters as a consequence, rather than a cause. One of the consequences of modernization of the vast Indian sub-continent, according to several observers, is the changed role of caste. In its actual operation caste affiliations take not the form of homogeneous class and status (embodied in the varna model) but the horizontal, heterogeneous and segmented form of jati.⁹² Two results of the 'democratic politics', flowing from universalization of franchise, have been summed up by Kothari in this way: 'The caste system made available to the leadership structural and ideological bases for political mobilization, providing it with both a segmental organization and an identification system on which support could be crystallized. Second, the leadership was forced to make concessions to local opinions ...'⁹³ Selig Harrison observed that linguistic demarcation of state boundaries intensifies caste conflict, for 'the regional limits of the operative caste unit render it inevitable that caste — setting as it does the social boundaries of the competition for economic and political power — will be as divisive as it is unifying'.⁹⁴

Yet, it will be wrong to consider caste without its total cultural, including economic, context. Caste is predominantly a 'traditional' — peasant — category which emerged in India's agrarian structure. If, in the trend towards modernization caste acquires a 'new meaning', its functional relevance must be sought in India's new economy.

Rise of the peasant power

As early as 1960 Selig Harrison wrote: 'Today the peasant proprietors wield the economic powers which make them the most insistent immediate claimants to political and economic power'.⁹⁵ The peasantry, constituting

92. See M.N. Srinivas, Caste in Modern India and Other Essays, Bombay, Asia Publishing House, 1970 reprint, pp. 5-7, 15 and 23.

93. Rajni Kothari, 'Introduction' in Rajni Kothari (ed.), Caste in Indian Politics, New Delhi, Orient Longman Ltd., 1970, p.13.

94. Harrison, op.cit., p.105. See also p. 98.

95. Harrison, op.cit., p. 134.

nearly 80% of the Indian population, is supposed to have a micro-cosmic world view.⁹⁶ In the 'Asiatic mode of production',⁹⁷ further, his relation with government was confined to the payment of revenues, occasionally through a long chain of intermediaries. They got a more positive touch of the state power with the introduction of land reform measures -- through the abolition of intermediaries -- after the transfer of power. Politics came closer to their life with the intensification of the Community Development Programme. But they appear to have been motivated for politics not so much by the programme for abolition of intermediaries as by the urge for defence of the right to property in land against what they considered the socialist trend.

Land reform was on the agenda of the Indian national movement since at least the Karachi Resolution of Congress (1931). The important point is that the Indian industry was one of its strong advocates. As early as June 28, 1946, the Eastern Economist, controlled by the Birla House, wrote of the necessity of 'bringing into the service of agriculture a very much larger share of the organising ability and capital of the community, than it has received so far' and declared that the Zamindar 'has no economic justification for his existence'.⁹⁸ The feudal and semifeudal land relations were stigmatizing the country's industrial development and the Indian capitalists had reason to demand the abolition of this relationship.

Abolition of intermediaries in agriculture was however incomplete, for the legacy of feudalism in landownership retained much of the cultivable land in the possession of the remnants of the feudal owners who were turning

96. 'The small-holding peasants form a vast mass, the members of which live in similar condition but without entering into manifold relations with one another'. Karl Marx, 'The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte' in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Selected Works, Moscow, Progress Publishers, second printing 1973, Vol.I, pp.394-487, at p.478.

97. I am taking here the aspect of the peasant unconcern for political power rather than the more controversial aspect of communal ownership in Marx's concept of the 'Asiatic mode'.

98. The Eastern Economist, June 28, 1946, pp. 1071-72.

into Kulaks (rich landowners). Greater difficulty cropped up in implementing the ceiling laws due to the benami transfers. There was no uniformity in ceiling laws in states and the rich peasant lobby made such laws partly infructuous through pressures on the state administration.

There was indeed an excessive concern with the 'socialism' that Congress adopted in its Nagpur session, as it was expressed in the creation of the Swatantra party, 'the first primarily "ideological" and policy-based party of the right' in 1959.⁹⁹ The Swatantra party gave an impressive show in the elections of 1962.¹⁰⁰ After the political crisis of Nehru, following India - China war, the Nagpur proposals for lowering land ceiling and promotion of cooperativization seem to have been put in cold storage. The green revolution was introduced in 1965-66 to enhance agricultural production - that had become urgent after the food crisis of 1964-65 - sidetracking the issue of land-reform. The Congress president, K. Kamraj, tried to assuage the peasant misgivings by declaring that Congress land policy was merely aimed at 'a land of prosperous peasant proprietors with economic holdings'.¹⁰¹ The assurance did not cut much ice particularly because of the rigorous levy on food production by rich farmers.

The political impact of the peasant power

It is difficult to show a neat statistical correlation between the big farmers' reaction to the food policy of the government and the voting results of 1967. But certain nuances are available. First, in 1965 food procurement was reintroduced in the country. In the year preceding the election (1966) the total food procurement fell short of the record of 1965, particularly in the central sector. But the overall procurement of the state

99. W.H. Morris-Jones, The Government and Politics of India, pp.110-11.

100. See H.L. Erdman, The Swatantra Party and Indian Conservatism, Cambridge University Press, 1967.

101. K. Kamraj, 'The Food Crisis' AICC Economic Review, XII, No. 38, February 10, 1966, See also Stanley A. Kochanek, The Congress Party of India, Princeton University Press, 1968, pp. 195-99.

governments slightly went up.¹⁰² A number of rigorous legislations for procurement, cordoning and anti-hoarding operations were passed from the middle of 1966.¹⁰³ All the states so affected, except Andhra Pradesh, voted against Congress. In the Congress strongholds of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Mysore and Assam there was very little procurement in 1966.¹⁰⁴ Only Andhra Pradesh, India's rice bowl, stood out as an exception with a relatively good crop that year.

Secondly, as Franda showed in his study of West Bengal politics, Congress was able to win the first three general elections in West Bengal because of its success in putting together a coalition of urban businessmen, influentials and rural leaders from a variety of social groups.¹⁰⁵ 'Indeed, the Congress had based its electoral organizations in West Bengal on a number of groups that were especially significant in the state's food production and distribution network: large and small landholders, millowners, the transport industry, and a host of shopkeepers and merchants'.¹⁰⁶ The break-away Bangla Congress, with its opposition to the Congress food policy, made impressive results in the rice-growing districts.¹⁰⁷

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102. See Bulletin on Food Statistics, (seventeenth issue), February 1967, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Ministry of Food Agriculture, Community Development and Cooperation, Government of India, New Delhi, 1967, p.33.
103. For a list of such measures see *ibid.*, Appendix I. In Bihar, the only other state where Congress was defeated, no anti-hoarding law prevailed. But in December 1966, for the first time, food procurement was introduced there.
104. See *ibid.*; pp.24-31.
105. Marcus F. Franda, Radical Politics in West Bengal. Cambridge, Massachusetts, The M.I.T. Press, 1971, p. 38.
106. *ibid.*, p. 136.
107. *ibid.*, p. 144.

After the 1967 election, as the pressure on the food front was gradually eased and the pace of the green revolution increased, the Congress position improved in the elections of 1971-72. Simultaneously, the attention was shifted to the land-reforms problems. The United Front governments of West Bengal were the early victims of accentuation of agrarian tensions resulting from the shift. Shrinati Indira Gandhi's fall may also be partly credited to this tension. The lowering of agrarian ceilings and grant of tenurial rights to the sharecroppers which appear to have been started with some earnestness in her later days caused a bit of apprehension among the rich landowners in parts of the country. This may partly - but only partly - explain the Congress losses in rural north India in 1977. The Janata party's election symbol of the plough-carrying peasant was, on the other hand, an appropriate appeal to the new force.

The rich peasant has emerged as an important constituent of Indian politics. As this emergence is historically linked with the regional disparity of India, enhanced by the green revolution, it is possible that one result of this process will be an intensification of regionalism. Which in itself may not be sufficient cause for nationalistic concern. For such regional spirit will inevitably weaken the bargaining strength of the states and, instead of splitting the whole country, may strengthen the power of the Centre.

IV

Pattern of Centre-state relation

Our argument in the three previous sections can now be summed up. Federatism in India acquired some reality only after the transfer of power and in response to the cultural diversity of this country. A neat cultural provincialization was not possible due to (1) opposition of big capital entrenched in old administrative provinces, (2) special regional problems and (3) aspirations of small ethnic (including tribal groups). Linguistic reorganization was primarily a demand of the urban middle class. It has accentuated caste rivalries that are rooted in the peasant economy and has stimulated sub-regional aspirations which, if fulfilled, will fragment the big linguistic states and enhance central power over them. Thus, we fall back on the historical reality that, over the years, the Indian federation has become more and more centralized through legislations, including constitutional amendments, executive actions, planning and public expenditure. The political factor contributing to this centralism, has been the party system known as the 'Congress system'. Until 1977 Congress ruled at the Centre and at most of the states. As Franda shows in his study of federalism in the context of Congress-run West Bengal, the Central Congress leadership maintained 'the experimental attitude that has characterised federation-making in India since 1947'¹⁰⁸ in relation to the Congress-run states and, inspite of the existence of constitutional and institutional devices for the imposition of the dictate of the central government and the party centre, the central leadership preferred to resolve conflicts through negotiations rather than command or pressure. In this situation of intra-party bargain, the cohesion and strength of state party units and the capacity of the populace for political mobilization played a large part in determining the nature of centre-state relations in India.¹⁰⁹

108. Marcus F. Franda, West Bengal and the Federalizing Process, in India, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1968, p. 35.

109. *ibid.*, pp. 222-24.

There were limitations to the 'Congress system' right from the beginning. Congress could not get absolute majority in Madras, Patiala and East Punjab States Union and Travancore-Cochin in the first general election of 1952. But it ruled all the states through coalitions. In 1954 elections had to be held again to the assemblies of PPSU and Travancore-Cochin. In 1955 the newly constituted state of Andhra went to the polls. In all these states Congress had failed to retain a working majority. In the 1954 election Congress became second to the Communist Party of India in the Travancore-Cochin Assembly but supported a Praja Socialist Party-led minority government in order to keep the communists out. Between 1948 and 1956 ten ministries were pulled down in that state.¹¹⁰ In 1957 the communists obtained absolute majority, but were ousted in July 1959, through a managed mass movement.

A somewhat similar situation emerged in Orissa in 1957 when Congress emerged as the biggest party in the Orissa Legislative Assembly without achieving absolute majority (56 in a House of 140) followed closely by the Ganatantra Parishad, the local party of the Princes (51 seats). The others were: Praja Socialist 11, Communist 8, Jharkhand (a regional-tribal party) 5, other parties 1 and Independents 7. Congress formed the government with the support of the Jharkhand and six Independent MLAs. Altogether eight Ganatantra members and one Communist crossed the floor to bolster Congress. Counter-defections led to the resignation of the cabinet on May 8, 1958, but the resignation was not accepted by the Governor and the Congress ministry resumed office on May 24. On February 23, 1959, the ministry encountered a snap defeat in the Assembly but did not resign. The chronic ministerial instability was settled only when, after the 'unsavoury intrigues' of April-May, 1959, a coalition of the Congress and the Ganatantra Parishad assumed power.¹¹¹

110. D.D. Mathur, Mchanlal Sharma and Basu Deo Shastri, 'Kerala : Politics of Polarization', in Iqbal Narain (ed.), State Politics in India, Meerut, Meenakshi Prakashan, 1976, pp. 177-206, at p. 184.

111. F.G. Bailey, Politics and Social Change : Orissa in 1959, Bombay, Oxford University Press, 1963, pp. 4-8.

Hereafter, until 1967, Congress had sway in all the states though Madhya Pradesh suffered from ministerial instability arising out of factionalism. By the time the 'problems' and their 'solutions' had emerged quite fairly. Within the Congress system they related to factionalism and the strength of the state unit. Outside the party there was distinct preference for the conservative parties and alliances over the radical ones. The strategy to bring about the preferred government included factionalism, defection and, whenever necessary, the declaration of constitutional breakdown.

Federalism went through the greatest strain in the period between 1967 and 1972 naturally due to the Congress debacle in the 1967 election. A number of states refused to accord absolute majority to the Congress party. But the fact that Congress managed to retain absolute majority in the Lok Sabha suggests the fact that the challengers were mostly regional parties, yet unable to forge an all-India alliance. A peculiar twist was given to the situation by the split in Congress in November 1969 when the party barely lost absolute majority in the Lok Sabha. Mrs Gandhi's 'leftist' stance enabled her to retain the hold on the Union government by drafting the support of the Communist parties and the parties of the linguistic minorities. On the other hand, concerned with the problem of the Union government, Mrs Gandhi had little time to intervene in state politics until her rise to a new stature in March 1971.

This will be evident from the survival of the Congress (O) ministry in Gujarat and the survival of the Congress ministry in Assam inspite of its hesitance to throw in its lot with Mrs Gandhi, not to speak of the non-Congress alliances in several states. The non-Congress coalitions in Bihar and West Bengal fell through internal differences. She imposed an election on Orissa in March 1971 only after similar dissensions within the non-Congress coalition led to the joining of the powerful Harekrushna Mahtab in Congress. It is only after the March 1971 poll that Mrs. Gandhi's Congress acquired enough strength to capture most of the states. Between 1972 and 1977 the

only major state where the Congress writ did not run was Tamil Nadu where a regional party was entrenched. In Kerala, Congress could encounter the regional consolidation the CPI(M) by only forging an alliance with the CPI and a set of smaller regional parties. In the hill states of northeast India Congress was virtually absent till the 1972 elections. It was not until the emergency that Mrs Gandhi could undertake a fresh twofold political venture : (1) drafting regional parties of northeast India into the body of Congress and (2) replacing heretical Congress-ministries by more pliable ones, as in Orissa and Uttar Pradesh.

Impact of emergency

The 1975 emergency had important bearings on the federal structure of the country. First, it was an emergency within an emergency (prevailing since 1971). Second, its impact on the political freedoms was more severe than that of any other. (Emergency, incidentally, has become a part of the political culture of India). Hence it enabled the Union government to tackle dissidence within the ruling party as well as outside and replace the government which might have consolidated in any state. Third, it enabled the Union government to pass at least two important constitutional amendments affecting the federal structure: the 38th and the 42nd.

In the first place, the 38th amendment made all executive "satisfactions" (e.g., with regard to promulgation of ordinances and proclamation of emergency) beyond judicial review. Such 'executives' in the constitution of India are the President, the Governors and the Administrators of Union territories.¹¹² Normally, however, the powers of the President are the powers of the Union Cabinet which is controlled by the Lok Sabha. In the case of the Governor, on the other hand, an undefined discretionary jurisdiction exists. To the extent that the Governors choose to exercise their discretion, the non-justiciability of their 'satisfaction' reduces the federal autonomy. In the second place, the Union government got power to make different kinds of proclamations on different grounds, validating the emergency within emergency [Article 352(4)].

112. Articles 123, 213, 239B, 352, and 360.

Further enlargement of the scope of emergency was brought about by the 42nd amendment when the provision for general emergency under Article 352 was made applicable to parts of the country, meaning a state, a group of states or parts thereof. The implication would be that, even without constitutional break-down, a state or a part of it could be brought under the emergency powers of the Union. This will, however, not bar the Union government to issue emergency directions, legislate and exercise executive powers in relation to the affairs of the states which are not under partial emergency. The laws so made will have continued effect after the end of emergency.

A somewhat centrifugal effect appears to have been imparted by the confinement of the jurisdictions of the Supreme Court and the High Courts to Union and State laws respectively (Articles 32A and 226A), though the power of the High Court to superintend the tribunals has been taken away. Appeals from tribunals can now be made only to the Supreme Court with special leave (Article 136). A great deal of bureaucratic centralization is, at the same time, likely to take place through the creation of an all-India judicial service down to the district level (Article 312). So far the State alone had their judicial services. This restructuring has been strengthened by the shift of the entry 'Administration of justice, constitution and organization of all courts, except the Supreme Court and the High Court' from the State List to the Concurrent List.

The restructuring of the Seventh Schedule affects some vital and controversial aspects of the Union-State relations. A crucial power acquired by the Centre is to deploy the armed force of the Union or any other force subject to the control of the Union in aid of civil power and to control the powers, jurisdiction, privileges and liabilities of the members of such forces while on such deployment.¹¹³ This would mean that

113. The controversy regarding the deployment and control of the armed forces of the Union goes back to the first United Front government in West Bengal when the CRP was sent to Durgapur to protect the Steel Plant from industrial unrest. The then Home Minister of West Bengal, Jyoti Basu, protested against this Central overreachment on the state government's jurisdiction over 'public order', but the Union Law Ministry held that the Central government could send its forces to protect its property. Several state Governments subsequently complained about their lack of control over the CRP.

while on deployment in a state in aid of the civil power, Union forces will be under the Union government's control, and they will include such subsidiary forces as the Central Reserved Police. Education, forests, protection of wild animals and birds, and weights and measures except establishment of standards shifted from the state list to the concurrent list.

Regionalism in Indian politics

As it is already evident, emergency has been self-defeating. It has in the first place split Congress. Secondly, it has enabled the factions to grow into political groups and, finally, into the Janata Party. Thirdly, the benefits that Congress derived in northeast India during the emergency have proved to be largely elusive. Several Congressmen were defeated at the polls, several others changed their loyalty overnight afterward.

If Mrs Gandhi's political strategy was to use the powers of the Central Government to bring up Congress into a 'homogeneous' party and to eliminate non-Congress parties from the state governments, her greatest problem appears to have been coming from the regional parties. She could tackle the all-India parties with regional following [like the CPI(M) in Kerala and West Bengal]. She could not mitigate the challenge of the purely regional parties like the DMK in Tamil Nadu and the UDF in Nagaland. In the place of the DMK another regional party — the AIADMK — came to power. It is significant that her fall came about through the alliance/adjustment of regional parties like the Akali Dal in Punjab and the DMK in Tamil Nadu and the all-India parties with regional following like the Janata and the CPI(M).

It is necessary at this stage to distinguish between what we mean by 'regional parties' and 'parties with regional following'. The support-base of both the types of parties is regional, partly ethnic, but the political concern and programmatic commitment of the first type is more exclusive than those of the second. It is at the same time undeniable that the parties with regional following tend to focus issues of regional concern. Thus the CPI(M)

has always stood by wider autonomy of the states which is fairly an all-India issue. Its specific regional concern, derived from the all-India stand, was expressed during the Assembly elections of 1971 and 1972 when it campaigned against the 'colonization' of West Bengal by the Centre. The Janata party, like some of its original constituents, has shown a great deal of interest in spreading the Hindi language. Comparatively, although Congress has been confined to southern India after the defeats of 1977, its programmatic commitment is still all-India.

It is possible to view the Janata party as still drawing the bulk of support from the Hindi-speaking region. In effect the analysis will picture political India as a mosaic of regional, regionally oriented or regionally supported political parties competing for intensifying their following rather than broadening their bases. Yet it is undeniable that, at least since its capture of the Central government, the Janata party has acquired all-India aspirations and is behaving in the way that Congress did after the debacle of 1967.

In calling for Assembly elections in the states where Congress was mauled in the Lok Sabha election, the Janata party showed as much eagerness about spreading its rule as Congress always had. This time, however, the Governors, appointed in the Congress days, refused to oblige the Centre by reporting constitutional breakdown. The possibility of alteration of the Central government is likely to reduce the Governors' political role, even

though the Janata government has recently appointed senior politicians of its own following. In fact these appointments themselves may encourage the reduction of such roles. It was Mrs Gandhi's practice to appoint senior bureaucrats in the problem states¹¹⁴ so that they would be more faithful in pursuing the Central line and the Centre could easily fall back upon them in case of the imposition of a Governor's rule. Most of the retired politicians who are now being appointed Governors may lack the bureaucrats' energy and alertness.

Conclusion

Franda's bargain model of the Indian federation was valid within the confines of the 'Congress system'. It can however be considerably enlarged in the context of a multi-party system that has been developing since 1967. In the revised model cohesion and the capacity for mobilization must of necessity remain the main factors of the strength of the Central government as well as the respective state governments. Cohesion is a subjective phenomenon arising out of inter-dependent social forces. The capacity for mobilization will be derived from the extent of the social forces they represent and their interdependence. The party which seeks to command the Central government must derive its support on a national scale. Intensification of regional support may give it numerical advantage in the national government. But the lack of support from the other regions will incapacitate it to cope with the never-ending demands of a federal polity.

114. Before Mrs Gandhi's rule the only important Governor who had not come out of the cadre of politicians was General Srinagosh in Assam threatened by violence in the hill areas.

AppendixEthno-cultural composition of the Indian States

<u>States</u>	<u>Size in Km²</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>% of religious majority</u>	<u>% of linguistic majority</u>
Andhra Pradesh	276,754	43,502,708	Hindu (87.63)	Telugu (85.35)
Assam	78,523	14,625,152	" (72.50)	Assamese (60.88)
Bihar	173,876	56,353,369	" (83.46)	Hindi (35.11)
Gujarat	195,984	26,697,475	" (89.28)	Gujarati (89.39)
Karnataka	44,222	10,036,808	" (89.23)	Hindi (88.48)
Himachal Pradesh	55,673	3,460,434	" (96.08)	Hindi (41.59)
Jammu & Kashmir	138,124	4,616,632	Muslim (65.85)	Kashmiri (52.48)
Kerala	38,864	21,347,375	Hindu (59.41)	Malayalam (96.01)
Madhya Pradesh	442,841	41,654,119	" (93.68)	Hindi (78.91)
Maharashtra	307,762	50,412,235	" (81.94)	Marathi (76.60)
Manipur	22,356	1,072,753	" (58.97)	Manipuri (64.46) ²
Meghalaya	22,489	1,011,699	Christian (46.98)	Khasi (36.00) ²
Mysore	191,773	29,299,014	Hindu (86.46)	Kannada (65.96)
Nagaland	16,527	516,449	Christian (66.76)	Naga dialects (96.00) ²
Orissa	155,842	21,944,615	Hindu (96.25)	Oriya (84.12)
Punjab	50,362	13,551,060	Sikh (60.22)	Punjabi (79.64)
Rajasthan	342,214	25,765,806	Hindu (89.63)	Hindi (60.82)
Sikkim	2,818	209,843	" (66.69) ²	Nepali (45.82) ²
Tamil Nadu	130,069	41,199,168	" (89.02)	Tamil (84.51)
Tripura	10,477	1,556,342	" (89.55)	Bengali (68.78)
Uttar Pradesh	294,413	88,341,144	" (83.76)	Hindi (81.41)
West Bengal	87,853	44,312,011	" (78.11)	Bengali (85.31)

<u>Union territories</u>	<u>Size in Km²</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>% of religious majority</u>	<u>% of linguistic majority</u>
Andaman & Nicobar	8,293	115,833	Hindu (60.92)	Bengali (24.42)
Arunachal Pradesh	83,578	467,511	others (63.46)	Tribal dialects (N.A.)
Chandigarh	114	257,251	Hindu (71.68)	Hindi (55.61)
Dadra + Nagar Haveli	491	74,170	" (95.83)	Marathi (57.68)
Delhi	1,485	4,065,698	" (83.82)	Hindi (75.28)
Goa, Daman & Diu	3,813	857,771	" (64.18)	Marathi (19.73)
Lakshadweep	32	31,810	Muslim (94.37)	Malayalam (83.90)
Mizoram	21,087	332,390	Christian (86.08)	Mizo (79.22) ²
Pondicherry	480	471,707	Hindu (84.97)	Tamil (89.00)
all India	3,196,371	547,949,809	Hindu (82.72)	Hindi (29.67)

1. Based on 1971 census
2. Based on 1961 census
3. As on January 1, 1966.

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