

CHAPTER III

YASHWANTRAO CHAVAN : PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY, CHIEF MINISTER
OF BILINGUAL BOMBAY STATE AND THE
MAHARASHTRA STATE.

The Indian National Congress was established on 28th December, 1885 in Bombay. (It's establishment was a turning point in the freedom movement of India. In three phases - from 1885 to 1905 (The period of Moderates), from 1905 to 1920 (the period of Extremists) and from 1920 to 1947 (the Gandhian era) the Congress played a pivotal role in making India independent of the yoke of the British slavery. The Non-cooperation Movement, the Civil Disobedience Movement and the glorious Quit India Movement were launched by Mahatma Gandhi from the soil of Maharashtra. All these movements had disheartened the British rulers and greatly shattered their foundation in India with the result that India achieved its independence on 15th of August, 1947. However, it should be noted that to lessen the unrest among the Indians and to decentralise the power the rulers had passed a series of Acts, in 1858, 1861, 1892, 1909, 1919 and the Govt. of India Act, 1935. The Montford Reform Act of 1919 was responsible for the introduction of the scheme of dyarchical governments in Indian Provinces and the Government of India Act, 1935, had introduced the Provincial Autonomy. In the then Bombay Presidency the dyarchy was in operation

operation from 1920 to 1937. It was replaced by the Provincial Autonomy in 1937. All the aforesaid agitations and the political experiments had helped to make the people of ~~th~~ this region politically more conscious and active. (Hon'ble Shri. Y.B.Chavan was one of them. Since 1930 (onward) he had thrown himself (soul and heart) into the freedom struggle brilliantly led by Mahatma Gandhi. In 1946, Yashwantraoji (contested) the election to the Bombay State Assembly and was returned to it. In effect he (assumed) the post of Parliamentary Secretary in April, 1946. Later in 1957 he became the Chief Minister of the bilingual Bombay State and as he had played a pivotal role in the creation of the State of Maharashtra he became its first Chief Minister.

In this chapter an humble attempt has been made to study the work and achievements of Yashwantraoji Chavan as the Parliamentary Secretary, as the Chief Minister of bilingual Bombay State and as the Chief Minister of Maharashtra.

The glorious period of freedom movement in India proved to be a producer of intellectuals and men of character who not only forget their self before the nation but gave ideal leadership to India. Several personalities

were developed in the movement whose greatness is still an example worth analysing, understanding and emulating.

Innumerable persons right from the lower strata to the higher strata of the Society shone like stars in the firmament of National life in those days. Shri. Yashwantrao Chavan was one such ~~wh~~ in whose life we see the reflection of all these forces of idealism and changing life. He gradually came out of the narrow confines of the Satara Dist. and emerged as a leader in the broader politics of Maharashtra.

Shri. Yashwantraoji went to live in Bombay when he assumed the post of Parliamentary Secretary on ~~April~~^{the}, 14th 1946 in ^{the} Kher Ministry. The city of Bombay is in a way the economic capital of India. It was the nucleus of all cultural, social, educational, religious and political activities in India before the independence. Shri. Morarji Desai who was the Home Minister in the Kher Ministry learnt that this young man could not be firmly established in the Bombay Administration till he was able to secure an honourable place in Maharashtra politics. He felt that it was necessary to train Yashwantrao, an able youth from the common strata of the rural area. So Morarji Desai inquired of Yashwantrao courteously and asked him

to join the Home Ministry. How could Yashwantrao refused to accede to such a courteous request ? He joined Shri. Morarji Desai as his Parliamentary Secretary.¹

Shri. Morarji Desai belonged to the tradition of British I.C.S. Officers. Yashwantrao^{he} skillfully tried to become the pet of Morarji and became a good administrator like Morarji. Though Shri. Desai was stern and stubborn, ~~yet~~ Yashwantrao was able to please him and learnt the pros and cons of police administrative machinery. Compared to Morarji, Yashwantrao was a novice in the field of political administration then. But he made the most of the opportunity of his post as a political and administrative experience. All this resulted in a close association between the two personalities who were to play a major role in the future of the State as well as in many political developments in the country.

Yashwantrao^{he} handled the departments of Police set up, Civil supplies, Forest and Home Guards. He deeply studied the political and administrative intricacies involved in the working of these Ministries. His first work as Parliamentary Secretary was regarding the books proscribed

By the Government. He had to give his opinion regarding these books. He read all these books and gave his opinion and thus set forth his Parliamentary Secretaryship. During 1948-1949 there was a spate of Hindu-Muslim riots in the country. At that juncture Yashwantrao restructured the Homeguards Organisation and established a sort of Army of volunteers who could protect themselves and the people.² He also disciplined the department of Civil Supplies.

Yashwantraoji was a lover of Art, ^{particularly} and folk arts.

He very much appreciated classical literature and was enamoured by folk dances and Shihiri played to the tune of 'daf' and 'dholki'. During his Parliamentary Secretaryship, he put up a note to the Home Minister (Shri.) Morarji Desai to convince him to set up a Tamasha Board. Yashwantrao was the first minister who succeeded in giving Government recognition to the Tamasha which is Maharashtra's popular folk dance as well as drama.

On 15th August, 1947 India became independent from the clutches of the tyrannical British rule and the flag of independent India - the (tio) colour was unfurled on the Bombay Secretariat at the midnight stroke of twelve.

Yashwantraoji as a member of the ruling congress party was a witness to this glorious event. His mind must have gone back to the day on which he had hoisted the national flag atop the tree which is in his school, almost ~~seventeen~~ years ago. Then it was a symbol of revolt and now a fulfillment of a sublime dream. He had remained loyal to the congress organisation and had chosen it as his instrument of political action. Many new political parties had emerged in the country. New groups were formed in the Congress itself after independence. Currents and cross-currents in the political life divided the loyalties of many workers. Casts and sub-castes also played an important role. But for Yashwantrao the Indian National Congress was the mother institution and Mahatma ^{Gandhi} and Pandit Nehru were the father figures of National politics.³ From 1947 Yashwantrao also continued his political and social career with confidence and with the purpose of consolidating his base as a most astounding and successful politician and administrator.

During the Chief Minister, Mr. Kher's regime there was a good deal of misunderstanding between him and Mr. Keshavrao Jedhe, the President of ^{the} Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee, which arose out of the demand by Jedhe and his Associates for greater representation in the cabinet to the rural areas. Though Morarji Desai ~~was~~ introduced a new

tenancy law which was considered at the time by some Congressmen as a progressive measure, the general feeling among the peasantry was of resentment against the administration. The Congress leaders in the rural areas were radical in their outlook and felt that the Government's welfare policies were slow and that the administration was largely in the hands of urban- educated gentry, did not have a rural bias. Many important congress leaders, mostly the non-brahmins, left the congress and organised the Peasants and Workers Party with a positive marxist ideology. Most of Yashwantrao's friends and associates who were influential leaders like Shankarrao More, Bhausaheb Raut, Tulsidas Jadhav, Datta Deshmukh, etc. shared the dissatisfaction of Jedhe. The emergence of the P.W.P. in Maharashtra was ^a challenge not only to the congress but to Shri. Chavan himself. Two meetings of the members of legislative Assembly were ~~held~~ held in Bombay prior to the formation of the P.W.P. Shri. Chavan attended one of the meetings and was persuaded to preside over it. The next meeting was presided over by Shri. Shankarrao More. Both Jedhe and More were vocal and vehement in their criticism of the lapse on the part of the Congress Leadership in Maharashtra, in not giving adequate representation to the sons of the soil, and whatever representation was granted did not go to real

of the people. Their ~~father~~ further complaint was that when it came to sharing of power they were neglected and survivable elements were given ministerial and other posts. Shankarrao more elaborated his ideas in a statement made in the Conference held at Dabhadi in Ahmednagar Dist. The statement came to be known later as the Dabhadi thesis.⁴

Shri. Yashwantrao Chavan was not ready to leave the Congress. He had made his position crystal clear from the very beginning of his political activity and polarisation in Maharashtra. In this contest he said,

" This Non-Brahmin dominated group identified itself with rural objectives. I was invited to join the P.W.P. and there was quite a controversy over my attitude. My friends in the new group wondered why I should not leave the congress and join them. They felt that my whole background made it clear that I had to be with them "5.

He thought ^{that} if the leaders who represented the masses left it, the powerful organisation of ^{the} Congress would fall into the hands of the reactionaries who would thwart its efforts at progressive ~~transformation~~ transformation and weaken the /Socialist forces/ in the country. It was, therefore, the duty of those leaders to remain in the Congress and fight the reactionaries trends and

strengthen the socialist forces led by Pt. ~~Jawarha~~ Jawaharlal Nehru.

(Shri.) Chavan, as (a) emerging leader of Maharashtra had to take note of this force of (Shri.) Jedhe and (Shri.) More in addition to that of ^{the} Congress Socialist Party, which had seceded from the Congress about the same time. He was at this stage not in a position to guide the policy of the Congress. He was just making his personality felt, though he was still far away from the Centre of leadership. He belonged to a small group of Congressmen who had leanings towards the left and were to some extent conscious of the progressive forces which were coming up not only in India but throughout the world. The staunch Gandhians were not only ridiculing the socialists outside the Congress but even those inside the Congress. Yashwantrao was an exception to this because as a follower of M.N. Roy in the earlier stage of his political life, he had a firm grounding in the philosophy and practice of socialism. Chavan distinguished himself from other Congress leaders by a conscious effort to understand and impliment Nehru's ideas on building up a Socialistic India while reorganising (Thy) Indian Society.

After Mahatma Gandhi's assassination on 30th January, 1948, the whole of Maharashtra was in ^a ferment and violent outbursts against the brahmin community ^{villages} erupted in some cities & particularly in Western Maharashtra. Because a person named

Nathuram Godase of that community had assassinated the father of the nation. The result was that the Brahmin - Non Brahmin controversy which had been growing for the last so many years turned violent and destructive and a whole community, its life and property was held to ransom by organised bands of people who roamed in cities and villages uprooting many Brahmin families. They were resisted at some places by Congress workers belonging to the non-rahhmin communities. The most successful resistance was offered by Shri. Chavan and his band~~ed~~ of workers at Karad and neighbouring places. As a result of their vigilance not one untoward incident took place in Karad. He sent his colleagues and comrades to different villages to check the fury of mob violence. He succeeded a good deal in pacifying the people and in preventing anti-social elements from taking advantage of the situation.

Shri. Chavan's humanatarian role in the aforesaid riots brought him to the forefront of the leadership in Mahagashtra. By his actions, he showed that the communal feelings had no place in his heart. This was revealed all the more clearly when later, while outlining his policies as Chief Minister of Maharashtra, he announced remission of all the outstanding dues of loans given to Brahmin families who were affected by the riots. It may

be stated that his hold over the people of Karad and that adjoining it during 1948 to some extent, paved the way for his rise in the hierarchy of the Maharashtra Congress.

In the course of these riots the spontaneous outbursts, some non-brahmin congress leaders were charged with complicity. The bonafide of ~~many~~ others were challenged. The non-Brahmin leadership was stung to the quick. The P.W.P. took full advantage of this prop^aganda against non-brahmin leaders and called upon the non-brahmin masses to get out of the Congress and join its ranks. Chavan sensing the danger called a meeting of the Congress legislators on 30th March, 1948, in association with Deogirikar, to bring about greater co-operation between the Chief Minister Mr. Balasaheb Kher and the M.P.C.C. President Shri. Jedhe. Over 72 members of the Legislative Assembly attended the meeting ~~xxxx~~ where a statement was issued outlining a programme for strengthening the Congress and the Central and Provincial Congress Governments. The meeting entrusted Chavan with the work of soliciting the support of other Congressmen for the task ~~xxxx~~ enunciated in the statement. This was an attempt to resist the onslaught of the P.W.P., and meet the danger posed by the newly formed Socialist Party. Shri. Chavan was eminently successful in the

task though (Shri.) Jedhe finally left the Congress to join the P.W.P.

It was a peculiar convension in Maharashtra that a non-brahmin alone was entitled to leave the Congress in the State because the strength of the Congress was in the rural areas where the majority of non-brahmins lived. (Shri.) Bhausahab Hire was the most prominent congressman and had been elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1937 and had served as Parliamentary Secretary to the then Chief Minister. When he took over the Presidentship of the Maharashtra Congress he respected him and gave him his unstinted and loyal support, as the general secretary of the M.P.C.C. By 1950 (Shro.) Hiray had been elected the Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Nasik Session of the Congress and soon after *was* nominated to the Congress Working Committee, Thereby becoming an All India figure. As a result of this, larger organisational responsibilities fell on the shoulders of (Shri.) Chavan and gradually he came to be recognised as a force in the ~~provincal~~ provincial Congress.

Though Yashwantrao was working as Parliamentary Secretary in Bombay his mind was with his villagers and relatives. His brother Ganpatrao died of tuberculosis in December, 1947 and his wife who had been attending him also caught the disease and followed him soon after. (Shri.) Yashwantrao now had to undertake

the responsibility of bringing up his brothers' children. In the meantime his wife Venutai had also developed Tuberculosis while taking care of their two patients and had to be taken to Miraj for treatment. However she soon recovered under the treatment of Dr. Johnson, a Missionary Doctor there.

As per the constitution of India, newly formed, elections were held in 1952 to the Maharashtra State Assembly. The responsibility, total and final for the Maharashtra of tomorrow rested on the shoulders of Bhausaheb Hiray and Yashwantrao Chavan. They had to run ^around the whole of Maharashtra and campaign for all the Congress Candidates⁶. Yashwantraoji did not restrict his election propaganda to his own constituency, but brought his brilliant oratory in full play all over Maharashtra and kindled in the hearts of thousands a great feeling and fervour for the Congress. He faced the 1952 elections with a feeling of ease and confidence. He had no doubt whatsoever about his own election and had practically left his own campaigning to his wife Venutai. She was shy by nature and had avoided participation in politics and public functions till then. But she did her duty as Yashwantrao's main campaigner in his constituency. In her appeal to the voters she said, " My husband has dedicated himself to the nation. If you

feel he has served you and the nation well, he has a claim on your vote. What more can I say?"⁷ Chavan won the election by an overwhelming majority. (Shri.) Morarji Desai was elected as the leader of the Congress Party and he became the Chief Minister. Yashwantrao was offered the portfolio of Civil Supplies in his Ministry. (Mr.) Tapase and (Mr.) Naik Nimbalkar were also included in the Ministry. As a Minister of Civil Supplies (Shri.) Yashwantrao Chavan had to deal with one of the most difficult problems of food distribution. There were controls on the movement and price of food and those were the days of rationing. In the Central Ministry Pandit Nehru had given the portfolio of Civil Supplies to the illustrious son of India (Mr.) Rafiq Ahmed Kidwai. (Mr.) Kidwai had come to Bombay to discuss the problems of Civil Supplies with Yashwantrao. There was a general dissatisfaction and loud clamour by political parties against the mal-distribution as Bombay State was deficit in food production and a compulsory food grain levy was in operation.⁸

(Shri.) Chavan explained to (Mr.) Kidwai the position in Bombay State and said that rationingⁿ was considered in the State as a means of removing inequality between the rich and the poor and distributing essential food products equitably

among all sections of the people. So while removing controls, an assurance must be given to consumers that their needs would be satisfied and assurance must be also given to cultivators that their product would get higher prices to enthuse them to produce more. (Mr.) Kidwai was very much impressed and accepting (Shri.) Chavan's line of thinking and insight, could build up a buffer stock of food grain. The Governmental policy introduced the levy system through which food grains could be purchased at higher rates from the cultivators. Thus, the success of decontrol in the Bombay State resulted in closing down of the Civil Supplies Department. Shri. Yashwantrao's new dispensation was calculated to do ~~the~~^{to} good of the masses. He gave the following address to 9 food growers and selles over the air. :

" The sucess of our new experiment depends on the good sense and co-operation of the food producers and the food merchants with the Government and will take pains to keep off rising prices, will freely and unreservedly book food grains to deficit places..... The Government will take severest possible steps against hoarding, profiteering and such other anti-social activities..... Our policies are in consonance with the food position in our state."

Wheat restrictions were modified and controlled from all the grains, except rice, was lifted. Sugar, cloth and kerosene was free?

Shri. Yashwantrao Chavan was then entrusted with the portfolio of Local Self Government, Forest and Community Development. In working for these departments he showed a basic understanding of the problems and laid down guide lines which would be useful to both - who had to lay down policies and those who had to execute them. Shri. Chavan gave these local self government institutions directives asking them to deal with immediate problems and pick up non - party workers who could devote themselves to the development works which was ^{the} main task before them. In reply to a delegation of a Municipality which asked for Government aid for slum clearance, Shri. Chavan said,

" It is more important to remove the causes which breed slums." ¹⁰

Shri. Yashwantraoji Chavan wanted the decentralization of power . Grampanchayats and their development was a subject to his heart. He had his own ideas regarding the decentralization of power. In 1955 he had stated that Grampanchayats would have to take up the entire responsibility of directing and moulding the socio-economic life of villages. Thus the decentralization of authority was effected and large powers were given to Zilla Parishadas and other local bodies along with resources for

carrying on their developmental work.

As ^h(a) Minister of Forest ^h(Shri.) Chavan gave protection not only to the trees and forests But also to the wild animals. Speaking on the subject of 'Protection to Wild Life' on the All India Radio on 1st October, 1956, he said,

" We call them wild animals and try to destroy them. But the most poisonous snake helps human society because (he) ~~is~~ eats rats and mice, (who) destroy the crop..... So, however cruel the wild animals may be, possibly they know the art of co-operating with the life of human beings."

In 1953 a ^hThreeman commission of Supreme Court Judge Fazal Ali, Dr. Hrudaynath ~~Kananga~~ Kunzru, and Dr. K.N.Pannikar was formed to reorganise the states on linguistic grounds. At that time in Maharashtra a 'Samyukta Maharashtra Parishad' was formed which included the Congress and other major political parties. (Shri.) Shankarrao Deo, Keshavrao Jedhe, Bhausaheb Hire, Devakinandan Narayan, Dr. Dhananjayrao Gadgil, Mr.A.S.Dange, Dr. Narawane, Principle ^aB.R.Charpure, Y.B.Chavan, N.G.Gore, S.M.Joshi and the Republic Party, the P.W.P. - with their leaders ¹¹ had joined this Parishad .

The report of the Commission was published in October, 1955. When (Shri.) Chavan was asked to comment on it, he ~~categorically~~

categorically stated,

" We do not express individual opinions in Maharashtra. We shall ~~not~~ give collective opinion after considering the report. " ¹²

It was rather unfortunate on the part of the States Reorganization Commission, while granting separate states for almost all linguistic areas, made a totally unexpected proposal in the case of the former Bombay State. It suggested a bilingual state for Bombay keeping the Marathi and Gujarathi speaking people together. This proposal gave rise to a tremendous resistance movement in both Maharashtra and Gujarath. The Maharashtra Congress Leaders were taken by surprise when the Commission's verdict went in favour of Bilingual Bombay. In this period Yashwantraoji had to go through the worst forms of ~~ritu~~ vituperative abuse and calumny. He had to face physical assaults and angry outbursts. It was hell and fire let loose on Shri. Chavan by the fanatical supports of the Samyukta Maharashtra Movement. He did not mind the unpopularity he incurred because he had tremendous faith in his actions and he felt sure about the correctness of his stand. His attitude and actions at the time of this violent agitations of Samyukta Maharashtra was an eloquent instance in this connection.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru became the target of oppositi

attack. Chavan was one of the principle leaders who opposed any drastic measures. He was against Pt. Nehru's image getting tarnished on the issue of Maharashtra. He had faith in Nehru and he wanted to have Samyukta Maharashtra, through persuasion and not through pressure. He even announced at Phaltan ,

If there was a choice between Samyukta Maharashtra and Nehru, I would choose the latter at any cost".¹³

As Chief Minister of Maharashtra he later told Welles Hagen :

My present responsibility is Maharashtra. But my approach, my background, everything is absolutely All India. As a member of the Congress Working Committee, I have to take the larger view. Even my thinking about Maharashtra flows from my thinking about National problems".¹⁴

He sponsored the idea of formation of Samyukta Maharashtra as any one of those who were carrying on keen agitation for it. But he sincerely and rightly believed that the way to attain the objective was not by weakening or breaking the great party to which he belonged by causing a split in it, but by persuading its high command to realise not only the justness of the demand but the desirability and inevitability of it as well. He accepted the decision of the Parliament establishing bigger bilingual state of Maharashtra and Maha-Gujarath, and gave it a fair trial with all the sincerity and earnestness that a Chief

Minister placed in its charge should bring to bear upon it.¹⁵

(Shri.) Chavan's affirmation of loyalty to (Pt.) Nehru contributed to his selection as the Chief Minister of the New Bilingual State in 1956 in succession to (Shri.) Morarji Desai. (Shri.) Chavan described regional integration as a political problem. He separated it from the (fear) of Maratha Caste domination. Brahmin elites many of whom (who) had actively supported the cause of ^a unified Marathi State openly questioned its possible direction under (Shri.) Chavan's leadership. Other minority leaders specially the Dalit leaders were only less overt in their expression of such fears for obvious historical reasons.¹⁶

(Shri.) Chavan, a non-brahmin from the regionally pre-dominant Maratha Caste, thus came to power in Bombay as the candidate of the Non-Maharashtrians, while his opponents included many of his fellow Marathas, particularly in Western Maharashtra, namely (Shri.) Y.J. Mohite and (Adv.) Anandrao Chavan of Karad. Yashwantraoji brought them back to the Congress fold from the P.W.P. after he came to power.

Though this was an auspicious start for (Shri.) Chavan, between 1956 and 1960 he skillfully moved to strengthen the support base of the Congress in Maharashtra by accommodating the interest of the non-brahmins, particularly the Marathas, into the

organisations. At the same time he took the advantage of agitation by others on the Maharashtra issue to strengthen his case with the national leadership for the creation of a separate Maharashtra with Bombay City as its capital. His arguments were effectively driven home by the heavy losses the congress suffered in the 1957 state and national elections at the hands of an opposition front created to agitate over the Maharashtra issue. It may be stated that as a clever politician, (Shri. Chavan) maneuvered to get on the occasion what he wanted all along, viz. the creation of the State of Maharashtra. As a matter of fact the situation confronted him in all its complexities and the issue for a man of conviction and values was extremely difficult. As stated earlier the decision of the parliament was to be carried out and Yashwantraoji was prepared to persuade, plead, to argue and to administer. It was perhaps necessary for the Parliament to have second thoughts on the matter. The force of persuasion was thus turned in the other direction and the result was the bifurcation of the bilingual state. This steady movement in the context of an explosive situation dominated by ~~gingogum~~ jingoism and chauvinistic passion, to the humanist care of democracy on which he maintained a fixed gaze all through this period shows the real democratic and diplomatic

approach of an ~~astute~~ politician that he was. He thereby set an example which effectively educated a whole segment of our population in democratic procedures and practices. As a result, the Central Govt. altered its attitude and an agreement was eventually arrived ^{by} at which ^{we} allowed the new states of Gujarat and Maharashtra to emerge on May 1st, 1960. The latter State received Bombay City, though a minor concession was made to non-Maharashtrian interests in the form of a Congress Unit that operated autonomously from the Congress organisation in the rest of the State.

With the realisation of Maharashtra, ^{Shri.} Chavan could extend many political prizes to members of opposition parties whose ranks had swollen as a result of the Maharashtra agitation. Since the Government of India was involved in an ~~expensive~~ extensive programme of economic investment using states as major conduits for its developments activities, a wide range of economic benefits was to be gained from ^{the} association with the ruling party. Thus ^{he} ^{Shri.} Chavan created the conditions for the consolidation of ^{the} Congress strength in Maharashtra - a strength which has not been seriously challenged to this day since the State emerged. The strength of the Congress today owes much to the availability of other institutional opportunities as it

^{does}
~~does~~ to any inherent appeal of the party as an opportunity structure.

Once the State of Maharashtra was assured (Shri.) Chavan turned for support particularly to those political activities whose base was among the non-Brahmins in the country-side. In the process, he severely undercut the position of the P.W.P. among rural / Non-brahmins and effectively suffocated the ambitions of the urban based (often Brahmin (laid)) parties both to the left and right of the congress. While he and his successors as Chief Minister of Maharashtra have attempted to conciliate Gujarathis and other communities living in major urban centres like Bombay, Poona and Nagpur, the Congress organisations that Chavan (strengthen) and the State Govt. that it (has) supported were to be increasingly based among the more substantially peasantry of the State.

The leadership role of (Shri.) Chavan (has) served as a major (partner) of ^{the} Congress party and Maharashtra Govt. Activity over the past few decades. Some of the major opportunity structure developed for the politically ambitious under the guidance of (Shri.) Chavan and of the national leadership of the Congress. Under (Shri. Y.B.) Chavan's Govt. and its successors, opportunities (have) been provided for Maharashtrians in legislative roles and

in administrative positions. The presiding officers of the local development bodies were often~~ing~~ leading Congressmen. In this way (Shri. Chavan was able to assure ~~x~~ himself that men loyal to the Congress Party would participate ~~x~~ in making decisions and distributing resources made available for developmental projects.¹⁷

Thus in such a socio-political situation (Shri. Chavan took the oath of the Office of the Chief Minister of unilingual Maharashtra State on 1st May, 1960 which he described as : Dnyaneshwar in a different context has said, " Soniachadiwas "(Gold~~en~~ day) and this really is a Golden Day for Maharashtra.¹⁸ Making his first policy statement Chavan announced the Government's⁹ decision to replace English by Marathi as the State's official language. He said that the change over would be made with due regards to efficiency and despatch of work. A Directorate of Languages¹⁹ was set up a few days later to initiate the process. In his first speech as the Chief Minister he said,

" The Government functioning should be made in Marathi instead of English and our Government is fully aware of this".¹⁹

He reiterated~~ed~~ his assurance to the people

of Vidarbha, Marathawada and Konkan and the scarcity areas of the State that their interests would be safeguarded by the Government. To let at rest the doubts entertained by many in Vidarbha, he assured that the Government would endeavour not only to maintain but also to enhance the importance of the city of Nagpur. He had already brought a resolution in the Assembly on 17th August, 1958 in which the two major steps recommended were (1) at least one session of the legislature should be held every year at Nagpur. , (2) Government should move to Nagpur every year for such period as may be decided.²⁰ This is followed until todate. The legislature meets in its winter session at Nagpur. He also established a permanent Bench of High Court and gave adequate representation in the appointment of High Court Judges. (Mr. M.S.Kannamwar was the main leader advocating separate Vidarbha and he was in the Chavan Cabinet. (Shri. Chavan took him into full confidence and incidentally^{ally} (Shri. Chavan's 47th birthday was celebrated at Nagpur in 1961. He made a touching reference to (Mr. Kannamwar saying,

" There was a time when Kannamwar honestly felt that he should strive for Vidarbha. Today he equally and honestly feels that Maharashtra State should remain united ".²¹

he sort of gradually disarmed the opposition party leaders as well as his antagonistic colleagues from Vidarbha and other parts of the State by a peculiar Gandhian way of dealing with them. That is 'the more critical they were the more friendly I was to them'.²² This makes it clear that (Shri. Yashwantraoji) Chavan was a shrewd and heart-winning politician.

An another problem on which (Shri. Chavan concentrated his attention was the emotional integration of the Neo Buddhists with the other section of the society, particularly the people in rural areas. Even earlier when he was the Chief Minister of Bombay State, he had introduced the Bombay Inferior Village Watan's Abolition Act and ^{had} freed the entire Mahar Community from ^{the} "Slavery of the 20th Century" as called by (Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. The Mahar Watandar were given a small piece of land on the condition that he and his family would serve the village community. The whole family could force the helpless Mahar Watandar to do any duty at any time and in any circumstances. This so called Watandar was defacto the slave of the community. When the Maharashtra State was established he set his mind on dealing with the other problems of the former scheduled castes who had become neo- Buddhists along with (Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in 1956. Chavan had taken note of the fact that mere change over to Buddhism

would not signify the disappearance of the economic and educational backwardness of the community so he thought the prevailing concessions and privileges which this section of the society had been granted earlier should continue. In accordance with this he announced the continuance of these concessions and privileges as the policy of the Government in 1958.²³ He was the first Chief Minister in independent India to take initiative in this regard. The leader of the Neo-Buddhist in Loksabha, (Mr.) Gaikwad, complementing (Shri.) Chavan on this action, implored all other State Governments and Central Governments²⁴ to emulate his example in this respect.

During the tenure of his Chief Ministership a Draft Bill regarding the Co-operative Movement was introduced and it was declared in the gazette. The Government had prepared this Bill as per the Directive Principles of State Policy enshrined in^{the} Indian Constitution to systematically bring about economic development in the rural sector of Maharashtra. This bill was prepared, taking into consideration the suggestion of the Committee appointed by the Bombay State Government.²⁵ In this Bill the rights of nominal members, affiliated members and sympathiser members were clearly demarkated. This made the functioning of the Co-operative Societies more smooth and

cohesive. ~~Even the~~ precaution was taken regarding the financial aid which the Government was to provide to the societies, was taken care of. This was due to the fact that in 1955 a survey by the Reserve Bank of India found the structure of co-operative credit and marketing in ²⁶Shambles. Thus it was included in the Bill that a Government's nominee would be on the Board of Directors. The right of classification of societies went to the Registrars. If a society wanted to change its by-laws for their convenience of functioning and development that right also went to the Registrar. Thus, the changes made in the Co-operative Act and giving it a new face lift made the functioning of the Co-operative Societies easier and in consequence co-operative sector reaching the lowest strata of the society.

Loan for agriculture, marketing of agricultural products, marketing of consumer goods, projects of food processing units, co-operative societies and federation of milk producers and Co-operative Housing Schemes were established during his tenure. For this Central Co-operative Bank, Land Development Banks were established. In 1957, when Yashwantraoji took over as Chief Minister of Bilingual Maharashtra eighteen sugar factories were registered in Maharashtra which was the

highest number in the country. Another four sugar factories were registered during the Second Five Year plan.²⁷ This strong foundation laid by Yashwantraoji was subsequently helpful to Maharashtra in effectively running more than 70 odd sugar factories in the Co-operative Sectors which is leading in the country. These long sighted policies and programmes were mainly instrumental in radically changing the rural economy in rural Maharashtra. This indeed is a land mark in the co-operative and economic life of Maharashtra. Once during 1920-50 the spinning mills in Bombay which were the centres of economic power has since shifted to the rural based Sugar Factories and other agro-based industries. In the year 1984-85 there were 172 Co-operative Sugar Factories in the whole country out of which 75 Co-operative Sugar Factories were in Maharashtra. This means 40-42% of the total co-operative Sugar Factories in the country are in Maharashtra. Another factor to be noted about co-operative sugar factories in Maharashtra is that the majority number of share holders in these sugar factories are small farmers. An organisation entitled ' Council for Social Development' which has its headquarters at Delhi had taken a survey in March, 1981 of the Co-operative Sugar Factories in India with particular reference to their socio-economic impact

on the rural areas. For this purpose the council had selected few sugar factories from Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra. After studying in detail the council has come to the conclusion that compared to other co-operative sugar factories in the country, the co-operative sugar factories in Maharashtra have greater impact on the rural economic and social progress and development. In Maharashtra, 93% of the shareholders are within a group of 1/2 acre to 5 acre of land holders whereas this percentage in Andhra Pradesh is 57 and in Uttar Pradesh is 55 only.²⁸ Further studies indicate that 68% of the Directors in these sugar factories are small landowners while in other sugar factories in our country according to their respective co-operative laws only 2 seats are reserved for Directorship for small land owners.

Various studies and surveys made after the inception of the Co-operative Sugar factories shows the progress and development of this sector in general and its impact on the rural society in particular. In 1960 the co-operative sugar factories had a deposit of Rs. 2 crores only while (till) 1983, 1984, these deposits went upto Rs. 250 crores. In 1961-62 factories own funds were limited to Rs. 12 crores whereas in 1984-85 the figure went upto Rs. 410 crores. In 1961 the membership of

Co-operative Sugar Factories was numbered at 37,000 whereas in 1984-85 the membership number rose up to 6 lakhs and 30 thousand.²⁹

These figures will suffice to prove the point that over the years the rural based leadership could stabilise these industries on their own.

Besides these statistical data^s when we think in terms of its social effects, the picture would have been totally distorting if these co-operative sugar factories were not to come up in the rural areas. Lakhs of people who were getting jobs in these factories would have ~~been~~ thronged cities like Bombay and Pune and their problems would have become more complicated. Due to this Industrial decentralization crores of rupees remained in the rural areas and thereby their progress and development could be initiated. It may be stated that these co-operative sugar factories ^{are} not only sugar producing industries but they have also become centres of social and economic changes in these areas. Schools and colleges have come up in the vicinity of these factories. The number of subsidiary small industries have also developed. In the last couple of years ~~a~~ Poly-technique, Engineering, and Medical colleges imparting professional ~~educations~~ have also come up with the help of these sugar factories. The simple farmer of

of Maharashtra has got the self confidence of running industries which involves crores of rupees. We can never say that this system has no shortcomings. But still it was indeed an invaluable contribution on the part of Shri. Yashwantrao's progressive and socialistic approach towards the co-operative structure. This is the outcome of ^{his} the foresight of Shri. Yashwantrao) ~~to who gave~~ ^{He gave a} clear cut theoretical base and ideology to the co-operative sector in Maharashtra, and ~~in~~ practically some of his colleagues and lieutenants like Late Vasantdada Patil, Vikhe Patil, Tatyasaheb Kore, Ratnappa Kumbhar and Shankarrao Mohitepatil to name a few were a totally dedicated and sincere band of constructive workers who gave a real shape to the cherished dreams of Shri. Yashwantrao.

The first five year plan of the unilingual Maharashtra was estimated at Rs. 350 crores while the (country's) Second Five Year Plan was estimated at Rs. 4800 crores. And in this ~~plan~~ the largest share was received by Maharashtra. Bilingual Bombay States Five Year Plan was estimated at Rs. 146.31 crores. Compared to this the Second Five Year Plan estimated, was quite larger in its amount and plans. Agriculture and social development, Irrigation and Mines, Industries and Energy, Communication, Education, Health, Housing development

and other social amenities, scientific and industrial research were some of the main heads included in the Plan.³⁰ In one of of his speeches Yashwantrao said,

" I am not looking at the creation of Maharashtra unilingual state as the only aim (Sadhya) but the constructive thoughts of Maharashtrian people and their zeal to work hard, using both these means I want to boost up the development work of Maharashtra and in this regard, I have always considered Maharashtra State as the medium³¹".

The Maharashtra State has already accepted in principle the 'Kul Kayada' - the Tiller's Land Act on 1st April, 1957 and that day was declared as the "Day of Land Tillers". The new Tiller's Act had a very important provision by which if the Tiller with his own will returned the land to the landlord then the landlord could keep that land for himself to cultivate. The land which the landlord could not hold was to go to the Dist. Collector and the Collector was to allot it to the landless tiller. This Act when implemented brought about a sort of revolution in the Agriculture^{al} Sector.

Passing of the Land Ceiling Act in which holding of the Agriculture Land was restricted was a real progressive step taken by the Govt. of Maharashtra. This was the first state that enacted and implemented this act in India to a larger extent.

The Central Government thought about this act ten to twelve^{years}/later. Still a number of states in the country have not implemented the Act practically, ^{but} and with certain amount of convictions. Many leaders talking the language of progressive theories were in Delhi but (Shri.) Yashwantraoji had already put his stamp as a progressive leader during his tenure as the Chief Minister of Maharashtra State, Before leaving for Delhi to join Pt. Nehru's Ministry. In January, 1961 a bill was moved in the State Assembly concerning the limits of holding land and this bill was the corner stone of the agricultural development. Going into the details of this bill, there were 74 divisions made of the Maharashtra State. There was a limit put on the holding of agriculture land. The excess land was to be distributed with priority to the landless. The Compensation to the owner of this excess land was to be given on the basis of the tax(sara). Even the definition of a land was explained in details in this bill. According to that agricultural land, grazing land(Kuran), land used for animal husbandary, viz. poultry and dairy were determined. The limit of the holding of the land was fixed in the following terms : Maximum limit for the 'Zerai'(naturally cultivated land) land was fixed at 8^{1/2} acres to 156 acres. Where there was continuous water supply the land holding was fixed at Maximum 16 acres and the land in which the agriculturist took two crops with provisional

water supply(Rabi and Kharip) was fixed at 24 acres. But the cultivator who took only one crop with provisional water supply was fixed at maximum 48 acres. The bill was prepared with the basic idea of the family and its members to be numbered at five. On 8th February, 1961 this bill was actually submitted and after a detailed discussion on the floor of the State Assembly it was passed and in the same year in the month of June the President gave his consent to the bill which became an act subsequently.³² Talking in a Seminar of Congress workers held at Mahabaleshwar on 7th October, 1960, Yashwantrao had spoken to the workers on the subject of "Planning, Human Resources and Agriculture". He said,

" First let us take the ownership problem of lands, Maharashtra State has been hailed throughout India as the best State in handling and implementing the Land Ceiling Act. We are quite experienced in terms of this Act. Today we are thinking in terms of maximum land holding in the State. I have no doubt about the fact that we must accept the theory of land ceiling at any cost. I leave the outlook of implimentation of this Act and its details to be discussed by our Hon.'ble Revenue Minister Shri.

Vasantrao Naik. We all must follow his directions. I am sure about one thing that one who is tilling the land should be the owner of the land and his efforts should be boosted by service co-operatives and that should ultimately culminate in co-operative agriculture".³³

He also thought in depth about the irrigation and energy development in Maharashtra. He knew that they had to take into account both irrigation and energy through Research of Maharashtra's rivers and landscapes. (Shri.) Yashwantraoji's attitude towards planning used to be meticulous and it had a scientific approach which made his ~~plan~~ planning successful. Hence he formed 'Water Resources Research Dept.' which came to be known as Circle. For energy from Water he constructed an other department which had four divisions. These four divisions were of Krishna, Bhima and all the rivers of Ratnagiri and Colaba which were westprone; the area covered by river Godavari, the valleys of Banaganga and Manjra rivers; rivers of Thane district which were westprone; and all the valleys of Saurashtra and Kachha. For Vidarbha and Marathwada the Government established a division and five sub-divisions and they were ordered to look into the affairs of the existing water resources of those areas.

(Shri.) Yashwantrao Chavan was quite disturbed about the fact that the development of agriculture depended upon the

irrigation and in those days only about ~~the~~ ten percent land in the state was properly irrigated while the other 90 percent of the land totally depended upon the whims of nature. Thus to study the irrigation and other water^{re}resources he appointed a committee of which Mr. S.G.Barve was the Chairman and such eminent persons, who were agriculture and economic experts, like Shri. Dr. Dhananjayrao Gadgil, Shri. Annasaheb Shinde, Shri. Datta Deshmukh, Shri. Shankarrao Mohite, Shri. K.G.Deshmukh to name a few were included. The Maharashtra Government has report of this committee with them and unfortunately taking into account all the factors of this problem it had come to the conclusion that the nature was against Maharashtra and even if crores of Rs. is used in the projects for the coming year with maximum efforts only 22-25% of the land could come under water. However, this did not disillusion Yashwantrao. He executed some of the positive ^{recommendation} of the report. He concentrated on smaller irrigation projects like Vasant Bandhare and Kolhapur type bandhare(percolation tanks) through which small rivers and streams flowing water was brought into the agricultural land of the

farmers, converting these lands into fully irrigated ones.³⁴

A few new dams, thermal power projects, hydro-electrical projects were planned and executed during the Chief Ministership of (Hon.'ble Shri. Yashwantrao Chavan of bilingual and unilingual Maharashtra. A concrete dam of 207 ft. high was started at Koyana hydro-electricity project on 1st March, 1958. This project was first of its kind in the country. It was the future of Maharashtra which was ^{constructed} ~~estimated~~ at the cost of Rs. 300 crores and was to be completed in three phases. This project which was to create five lakhs watts of electricity has proved a boon not only to Maharashtra but to the country on the whole. The first phase of this project was inaugurated by Shri. Yashwantraoji himself on 16th May 1962 and then onwards the Industrial development of Maharashtra was given a great boost.

As for Marathawada he put up a project of 'Poorna' Project which cost Rs. 17.50 crores. This was a large project to have dams at Sidheswara, Beldari and Basmat. To make a full development of Nira Valley there was a project started on Neera River known as 'Veer Dam', during his tenure only. This

Project was included in the IInd ^{State} ~~State~~ Five Year Plan. A total of Rs. 584.33 lakhs were spent to complete this project and it changed the complexion of the Neera Valley. Similarly in Vidarbha he completed a Project of thermal power station in Paras. The Paras project was started in 1956 and commissioned in 1961 when the real electricity was produced. This work was completed during the second plan only. The project had a capacity to produce 30 thousand kilowatt of electricity. All these projects contemplated and executed by (Shri.) Yashwantrao Chavan were defacto the major instruments through which the foundation of modern agro-industrial base of Maharashtra was made strong. He has said in one of his speeches while dedicating the Koyana Project to the State,

I see before my eyes today, the hopeful picture of all round progress of rural Maharashtra of tomorrow. We are presently implementing another gift for the new year in the Koyana Plan. This is a new place of working in Maharashtra. It will brighten entire Maharashtra with its thousands and thousands of lights. A new hope will pervade throughout Maharashtra. Koyana is (a) immortal symbol of our onward march towards progress!"³⁵

It was also essential to look into the matter of education if the dream of a new and modern Maharashtra was to be

brought into reality. Coming generations should be educated and they should be well acquainted with the new and scientific progresses and developments in the world. That is why Shri. Yashwantrao contemplated some changes in the pattern of education. The ~~main~~ thing behind it being - the education should reach the masses and the lowest strata of the society. Regarding education Yashwantrao had his own ideas. In this context he said,

" An educated person who knows² whatever things happen around him and whatever things are happening in the world and one who co-relates them, one~~who~~ tries to understand those things which affect his own life and character and its impact on society - I consider it as a real education"³⁶.

In those days the Bombay State was comparatively considered to be more developed than the other states of the country. There were approximately 62 thousand educational institutions in the State³⁷. To boost educational activities in the State, Yashwantraoji decided to give emphasis on both

academic as well as professional and technical education. The primary education was made compulsory as well as free and along with that technical education was also given a guideline for proper development. Even the concept of adult education was given greater emphasis. In those days the expenditure on education was estimated at Rs. 20 crores which was almost 1/5th of the total expenditure of the State. In the Second Five Year Plan this amount was raised to 23.75 crores of rupees. The concept of free and compulsory primary education was introduced for the first time in Maharashtra. Consequently there was a kind of revolution in the field of education. According to the 46th Article of the Indian Constitution, the State Governments are directed to give emphasis on people's education, especially the backward society and to implement this directive principles Yashwantraoji decided to take into consideration the annual income of the family instead of any cast or creed. The programme of free and compulsory primary educationa, free education at all levels to the children of citizens whose annual income is Rs. 1200/- (now raised to Rs. 1800/-) and the various social,

economic and educational concessions given to the neo-Buddhists have already had an impact on rural society³⁸. Thus the concept of free and compulsory education and its implementation was effective in providing opportunity to take education to all stratas of society.

For the spread of higher education in Marathawada, ~~an~~ Yashwantraoji decided to establish an University there. For this purpose a nine men commission was formed which included Setu Madhavrao Pagadi, S.F.B.Tayabji, Dr.D.D. Shoundarkar, and other educationists and social workers. This Committee submitted its report in December, 1957 and recommended to the State Govt. to open a separate University for Marathawada. At that time the Colleges of Marathawada were affiliated to the Osmania University and its tenure of affiliation with the Osmania University was soon coming to an end. So the Committee had suggested to start a separate Marathawada University from the Academic year of 1958. Thus the Marathawada University was established accordingly and Pt.Nehru inaugurated it on 23rd Aug. 1958. In his inaugural address, Panditji hailed and complimented

(...105)

Yashwantraoji's leadership. Shri. Yashwantrao Chavan gave utmost important to India's safety and its integration. To serve this purpose he wanted to imbibe the importance of military or defence forces into the minds of youth. So he thought of establishing a Military School at the Historic City of Satara. Due to his efforts the Sainik School came to be established in Satara. It is the first of its kind in India. It is also Yashwantrao's spectacular achievement.³⁹ The then Defence Minister of India Shri. Krishna Menon in his inaugural address praised this scheme very much in which the boys were to be trained in all fields of education and ultimately join the N.D.A. (National Defence Academy) which produces stout, skilled studied and disciplined officers to the Defence forces of India. This school was inaugurated on 23rd June, 1961. Even the Engineering Colleges at Karad and Aurangabad were established during his tenure and the Govt. Engineering College at Nagpur was turned into a Regional Engineering College.

Shri. Yashwantrao had contemplated the Marathawad University for the Marathawada region. In the same way he

planned to start a separate University for the South Western Maharashtra. He was also responsible for the establishment of Shivaji University. A sum of Rs. 50 lakhs was demarcated in the budget. The inauguration of Shivaji University at Kolhapur was performed by the auspicious hands of Dr. Sarvapalli Radha-Krishnan, the then President of India on 18th November, 1962. After that Shri. Yashwantrao had to go to New Delhi to join the Central Cabinet and infact this inauguration was his last public function as the Chief Minister of Maharashtra.

In cultural and mass entertainment fields also he took some bold decisions. For improvement of stage dramatics a project of Rs. 84 thousand was established in 1959-60. There were also some new provisions made to tax-free or curtail some amount of entertainment tax for the movies which were social and imparted some kind of good knowledge to the society. His intellectual upbringing also imparted to him love of cultural and literature. Maharashtra was in fact fortunate to have a Chief Minister like him, for he had deep interest in everything that the people of Maharashtra cherished. As the

Chief Minister he founded the Board of Literature and Culture and installed one of the greatest scholars of the time

Tarkteertha Laxman Shastri Joshi as a Chairman. ⁴⁰ This

Maharashtra Rajya Sahitya and Sanskrit Mandal was inaugurated on 21st December, 1960 at the First Session of Nagpur by

Yashwantrao Chavan. The Government instructions through which

the birth of this board took place included some of its policies

to be followed. But during his formal inaugural speech of

this Board (Shri. Chavan categorically stated that these policies

were not binding on the Board. The way of its working and

planning was to be determined by the Board itself and the

Government did not want to put any restrictions as regards

to its policies and programmes and their implementations. On

personal level when a great dramatist Narayanrao Rajhans alias

Balgandharva was seriously ill and bedridden, the famous literary

(Mr. P.L. Deshpande brought this fact to the notice of Yashwantrao,

who immediately sanctioned an honorarium pension of Rs. 300/- to

be given to the dramatist till his death. Shri. Chavan also

sanctioned a monthly honorarium of Rs. 400/- till death to the

great Marathi poet Yashwant Dinkar Pendharkar.

Suddenly a disaster in the form of a natural calamity struck Pune. On 12th July, 1961 the Panshet Dam and immediately after, the Khadakvasala Dam collapsed as a result of incessant rain in the catchment area and some part of the city of Poona were almost washed away. Hundreds of people died in this flood and thousands of them became homeless. This was one unprecedented incident in the history of Maharashtra and Yashwantraoji shocked on hearing the sad news. He immediately rushed to Poona and initiated the relief work through Government as well as through voluntary organisations. As per his instructions an advisory committee was formed under the Chairmanship of (Shri. S.G. Barve, for the proper planning of the relief work. ⁴¹ (Shri. Chavan appealed to all the Maharashtrians for help and the whole state took the Pune disaster as the problem of their own and helped in various forms started pouring in from every nook and corner of the state. The opposition tried to make the political capital of the disaster and accused Hon'ble Chavan's administration of negligence. The

(....109)

Government appointed a Commission to enquire into the Panshet

Khadakvasala Dam episode on 24th July, 1961. It started its

working on 11th August, 1961.⁴² Justice Bawdekar had decided to

work impartially without any political interference from either

Government or from opposition. But unfortunately the Bawdekar

Commission landed into a lot of controversy immediately after it

started functioning. On September, 16th an all-party meeting

was held in Bombay to protest against the functioning of the

Commission⁴³. In the meeting the Bawdekar ~~was~~ commission was

criticised a great deal and a demand was made that the commission

should be scrapped and a new Commission be appointed. On 13th

October, 1961 Bawdekar wrote to Shri. Chavan requesting to be

relieved and a few days later Justice Bawdekar committed suicide.

This was totally unexpected to Shri. Yashwantrao and the opposition

political parties again tried to capitalise on this sordid incident.

Shri. Chavan faced all this with a lot of patience and courage.

Consequently a no-confidence motion against Yashwantrao's Government

on the Assembly floor was defeated.⁴⁴

~~In the~~ Meanwhile a new Commission under the Chairmansh

of Justice V.A.Naik was appointed and it submitted its report after detailed investigation and thus the Bawadekar Episode was put on the shelves. Thus Yashwantrao thwarted all the attempts made by the opposition to make a political gain out of this episode, and emerged as the most powerful, popular and constructive leader of Maharashtra.

The people had started expecting more and more from his astute leadership. And this aspiration of people culminated into Yashwantrao getting elected to the Working Committee of the Congress. At the Bhavnagar Session of the Congress in December, 1961, he won more votes than any other Congress candidate except (Smt.) Indira Gandhi in the election to the ~~member~~ membership of the Congress Working Committee. Many political observers predicted that with ^{his} the soaring popularity of (Shri. Yashwantrao Chavan) as the Political leader of Maharashtra he would one day surely occupy a very high office in New Delhi. But at that time, Yashwantraoji had little intention to join the central politics. But his desire was to consolidate his and his party's position in Maharashtra. In this context

(Shri. Sadiq Ali, the former General Secretary of All India

Congress Committee said, " Chavan would not consider going to

the Center for anything less than the Home Ministry⁴⁵". Even

(Shri. Jyaprakash Narayan described him as the best Chief

Minister in India. He considered him as the real leader of

the proletariat and he hoped that this young man from a poor farmers family would lead the country in future.

In the 1957 General Election, as we have observed earlier, that the congress had slumped to a thin majority and its

clout in Maharashtra had diminished to a great extent. Between

1957 and 1962th General Election, ~~were~~ under the able leadership

of Yashwantrao, the Congress had not only consolidated its

position but it had emerged as the most powerful political force

in Maharashtra a. (Shri. Chavan's calculations pertaining to

the economic, social and political development of Maharashtra,

had paid rich dividends. Elite Marathas who had supported

opposition parties prior to the formation of Maharashtra State

began to return to the Congress in large numbers. The delima,

whether to assert dominance in the name of Maratha State through

support of opposition and thus risk access to public resources controlled by the Congress was resolved when the Congress under Y.B.Chavan brought Maharashtra into being. Between 1960-62 over forty legislators and hundreds and thousands of regional and local political workers left the opposition to join the Congress party.⁴⁶

In these favourable circumstances the General Elections of 1962 were held in Feb.1962. This election to the Legislative Assembly was won by the Congress with a thumping majority in which the Congress won 214 seats out of a total of 265 seats.⁴⁷ The changing pattern of political life in Maharashtra was symbolised by Shri Chavan's own success in his own constituency. He defeated his rival by a margin of over 25,000 votes.⁴⁸ The Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti, the main opposition party contested 231 seats and won only 32 seats.

The Congress Legislative ~~Assembly~~ Party immediately reelected Shri. Yashwantraoji as its leader and resultantly he became the Chief Minister of Maharashtra. Now with this kind of majority and the support of the people, Chavan wanted to carry

forward Maharashtra with his progressive ideas and plans.

In his last words as the Chief Ministers of Maharashtra, he said,

" We came to the Legislature in 1962 with a huge majority. I had some ideas, ambitions and plans to take the new state forward, to make the administration more popular and purposeful. The Administrative Reforms Committee and the Irrigation Commission were appointed. The Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation was brought into being. In the next five years, I was hoping to do my best to make Maharashtra a progressive and a prosperous State. But all of a sudden I was called away to Delhi."⁴⁹

Thus, Yashwantraoji had to end his tenure as Chief Minister of Maharashtra abruptly and was thrown into the National scene with a greater political and administrative responsibilities. While his achievements till then were quite outstanding still more important than that Yashwantrao's significance in political life rested principally on the promise he held for the future. He represented the emerging leadership in the Congress Party and the National Politics. The age of political legendary giants like Mahatma Gandhi, Vallabhbhai Patel, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad had all departed from the scene. The last of the giants

Pt.Nehru was fortunately living, but obviously the country had to seek a new leadership in its youth for carrying ahead the Indian nation towards progress and prosperity. It was the promise that Yashwantrao Chavan held as a prominent member of such a new leadership that was of significance from the point of view of the contemporary political life. The number of such leaders from the younger generation had been painfully inadequate hitherto-fore. It was, therefore, inevitable that a good part of the burden of the new leadership fell on Shri. Yashwantrao's stout shoulders.

Thus, Hon'ble Shri. Y.B.Chavan as a Parliamentary Secretary, as the Chief Minister of the bi-lingual Bombay State and as the first Chief Minister of Maharashtra always kept himself busy in meticulously studying the various problems and difficulties of the people and that of the Congress Party and by providing them with proper solutions and guidelines. Because of dedication, herculian efforts and his various constructive socio-political manourers Maharashtra could register astounding progress in various fields and could set an ideal example regarding meaningful progress for the rest of the states in India to follow.'

R E F E R E N C E S .

1. Tarkateerth (Joshi), Laxmanshastri, Yashwantrao : An Intellectual Statesman with Character. an article in LOKRAJYA, p. 41.
2. Joshi, Rambhau, Itihasache Ek Paan : p.86.
3. Karnik, D.B., : Yashwantrao Chavan : A Political Biography, p.36.
4. ibid, p. 37.
5. Kunhi Krishnan, T.V., Chavan and the Troubled Decade, p. 44.
6. Shah, Chandulal M., : Yashwantrao Chavan, p.48.
7. Karnik, D.B., Op. cit., p. 42.
8. Kunhi Krishnan, T.V., Op. cit., p.43.
9. Shah, Chandulal M., Op.cit., p.p. 51-52 .
10. Karnik, D.B., Op.cit., p.44.
11. Joshi, Rambhau, Op.cit., p. 111.
12. Sakal, 18th October, 1955.
13. Patil, R.T., : Yashwantrao Chavan - Ek Vadgrastha Pan Kartabgaer Mutsadi, p. 36.
14. Hangen, Welles, : After Nehru Who ? p. 140.
15. Altekar, G.S., Shri. Chavan - a Man of Courage, an article in the Abhinandan Granth, p.28

16. Stern, R.W., The Process of Opposition in India, pp.32-38
17. Rosenthal, Donald.B., ' Making it' in Maharashtra, an article in Contemporary India - Socio-Economic and Political process, p.7.
18. Chavan, Y.B., Shhyadriche Ware., p.54.
19. Ebid., p. 56.
20. Karnik, D.B., Op.cit. p.79.
21. Times of India, March 31st 1961.
22. Lele, Jayant, Transcripts of the Interview of Yashwantrao Chavan, p. 182.
23. Dr. Mangudkar, M.P., Yashwantrao Chavan - Prerana Va Karya, p.2.
24. Karnik, D.B., Op.cit., p.82.
25. Joshi, Rambhau, Op.Cit.p. 260.
26. Reserve Bank of India, All India Rural Credit Survey, Vo.II.
27. Joshi, Rambhau, Op.cit., p.259.
28. Report of Council for Social Development - 1981
29. Dr.Mangudkar, M.P., Op.cit., p.45.
30. Joshi, Rambhau, op.cit., p.261.

31. Chavan, Y.B., Op.cit., p.116.
32. Joshi, Rambhau, Op.cit., p. 263.
33. Chavan, Y.B., Op.cit., p.127.
34. Patil, R.T., Op.cit., p. 48.
35. Shah, Chandulal, M. Op.cit.p.95.
36. Chavan, Y.B., op.cit., p.140.
37. Joshi, Rambhau, Op.cit., p.252.
38. Karnik, D.B., Op.cit., pp.88-89.
39. Patil, R.T., op.cit., p.47.
40. Sakrikar, Dinkar, : Yashwantrao Chavan - A Literary politician, an article in the LOKRAJYA, p. 26 .
41. Joshi, Rambhau, op.cit., p.325.
42. Karnik, D.B. Op.cit., p. 85.
43. Sakal, 17th September, 1961.
44. Joshi, Rambhau, Op.cit., p. 330.
45. Kunhi Krishnan, T.V., Op.cit., p.48
46. Sirsikar, V.M., Political Behaviour in India, pp.32-33.
47. Dr.Mangudkar, M.P., Op.cit., p.74.
48. Sakal, 27th February, 1962.
49. Kunhi Krishnan, T.V., Op.cit. pp.48-49.
