CHAPTER – VII
CONCLUSIONS

In the twenties and the early thirties of the 20th century, the Non-brahmin movement dominated the political scene in Princely Mysore. Several scholars have written on the nature and the programmes of the non-brahmin movement. Among them, mention may be made on Lelah Dushkin, James Manor and Bjorn Hettne. While Lelah Dushkin’s thesis is the first indepth study on the Non-brahmin Movement in Mysore, Manor focused on the emerging scenario of caste and politics in Mysore. On the other hand, Bjorn Hettne mainly dealt with the question of political evolution and economic development. While the Non-brahmin movement in the Madras presidency was more anti-brahmanical with an ideological base, built on the Dravidian identity, the non-Brahmin movement of the Backward Class movement of Princely Mysore was devoid of these pretensions.

By the late 1930s, there was a considerable change in the perceptions of the non-brahmin political outfit, Praja Paksha. The membership of the Praja Paksha was thrown open to all communities, including Brahmins. It did not want to sustain mainly on the backward class plank, but to build up the political outfit on a more broader basis. Along with the Mysore Congress, the Praja Paksha also began to distance itself from the princely
regime and increasingly demanded responsible government. This helped the Praja Paksha politically. In the 1937 elections to the Representative Assembly the Praja Paksha defeated most of the Congress candidates. Despite their victory at the elections they increasingly came under the influence of the emerging national politics though they did not have much admiration for the Brahmin leaders of the Mysore Congress.

Similarly, some of the Congress leaders like K.T. Bhashyam realized the necessary of broadening the base of the Congress for national struggle and a regional struggle. K.T. Bhashyam, though belonged to the Brahmin community, had a progressive, secular outlook and considerable experience in the trade union movement. It was therefore, easier for him to get closer to the Praja Paksha leaders, which eventually led to the conviction, that the state needed a joint political activity. Perhaps the Mysore Congress leaders also realised the fact that they also lacked a popular base which the Praja Paksha had cultivated over the year. The Mysore Congress plank of “responsible government” was also cleverly snatched away by the Praja Paksha.

In the 1937 elections to the Representative Assembly, the Praja Paksha stood victorious. Hence, the conventional narrative that the Praja Paksha merged with the Mysore Congress was not what had happened. On
the other hand, what really happened was the merger of Mysore Congress to
the Praja Paksha, surrendering its name, and accepting the Praja Paksha
leader Siddalingaiah as the Congress President.

In October 1937, the AICC meeting in Calcutta protested against the
repressive policy of the Mysore government. The resolution strengthened
the hands of the Mysore Congress and the movement was intensified. The
Party issued an appeal to observe the 6th Nov. 1937. “The Mysore
Repression” Day and 14 November as the “Patriots Day” in honour of those
who went to jail. This was in sequence to serious discussion in the
Assembly on various cases of violence and repression. One incident that
nationally provoked many protests was the arrest and the removal of Shri
K.T. Bhashyam from the representatives Home in dead night as though he
was criminal and this happened when the assembly was in session. There
were several incidents in the country side. During this period, Jawaharlal
Nehru wrote to Dewan Mirza Ismail saying that all this shows that the
Mysore Government is inspired by a spirit of hostility against the national
Congress. Nehru openly supported the movement of the states whereas
Gandhi was more restrictive on the issue. Gandhi also openly criticized the
Calcutta resolution which has given support and encouragement to the
struggle in Mysore.
The process of mobilization continued and took up momentum during 1938. In January, the state Congress celebrated 26th January an Independence day. The main ceremony was the hoisting of the “National Flag” and nationally the government placed ban on the programmes.

It was at this juncture that the All-India Congress Committee alarmed by the violent trends in Mysore, changed its policy towards the princely states. At Calcutta the Congress in the previous year, the committee had appealed to the Indian people to give all support. During the twenties, before it adopted the name Praja Mitra Mandali or Praja Paksha, the dominant non-Brahmin caste- community combination had expressed themselves mainly against the lack of opportunities for them under the new dispensation. In the early years after the rendition, the conflict between Madrasi versus Mysoreans was also essentially between two groups within the Brahmin community. But when other communities received the benefits of modern education, they became conscious of their socio-economic existence. This led to the massive mobilization of the non-Brahmin castes and communities. The policy of the princely regime to focus more on the rural localities and the peasantry after the disastrous famine of 1876-78 also indirectly contributed to the assertion of the cultivating classes, who constituted the bulk of the backward classes. The strengthening of the local
arena through the Local Fund Board and other institutions, significantly helped the political mobilization at the rural level. Again, the significant representation of the ryots and the merchants in the Mysore Representative Assembly was a significant factor, which helped the mobilization of these caste-community groups. The appointment of Leslie Miller Committee, the recommendations and subsequent introduction successfully helped the Praja Mitra Mandali and the Praja Paksha.

The socialist ideas began to spread in India from the thirties, whether it was through the Congress Socialist Party (CSP) or outside it. The emergence of democratic socialism, which increasingly became a combination of Marxism and Gandhism, particularly under Acharya Narendra Dev, J.P. Lohia and many others became a stronger force in the forties and the fifties of the twentieth century. Their role during the Quit India Movement became an inspiration for the rest of India.

In Mysore, socialist ideas had a great acceptance from the days of the Quit India Movement in a big way. In the fifties and the sixties, Mysore State witnessed several struggles of the marginal peasants in Kagodu, Sandur, Hubli and many other places. The Raitha Morcha of 1965, Land grab Movement of 1969 and the continuous socialist campaign for land
reforms from 1952, resulted in the enactment of land reforms in Mysore State.

The Kagodu movement of 1950s and other peasant Movements were successful in getting lands to the *genidara* peasants and the landless peasants of Sandur and Hebballi. Politically, in the fifties and the sixties, there was closer co-ordination between the national level socialist leaders like Jayaprakash Narayan, Ram Manohar Lohia and George Fernandes and state level leaders like Gopala Gowda, Maheswarappa, J.H. Patel, Konandur Lingappa, Kagodu Thimmappa and others. In fact, in the 1967 elections, PSP and the SSP got 25 seats and became the main opposition to the Congress party. Unfortunately the decline of the Socialist Movement at the national level also had its weakening impact at the state level. On the whole the socialist movement was a great influence on the socio-political, cultural and literary areas of Mysore State.

The Communist ideas began to spread in India from the days of M.N. Roy and M.R. Masani. But an official Communist Party was not founded for many years, due to the opposing view points on the attitude towards the Indian National Movement. While in Bombay, the communists did not go along with the Congress, in Kerala, the future communists were the most active members of the Indian National Congress and the Freedom struggle.
In Mysore, from the late thirties of the 20th century, a group of leaders like N.D. Shankar, C.B. Monnaiah, Savoi Aswath Rao and others were inspired by the Leftist Communist ideology. But they did not try to form an Independent Communist Party in the early days. They continued to be a part of the Congress struggle for responsible government. During the forties the conditions of the workers in the mills, factories and the mines became highly exploitative, these leaders involved themselves successfully in the trade union activities. They were also responsible for the formation of Mass Awareness Union, Mysore Youth League and many trade unions in the urban areas of Mysore State.