

12. COLOURFUL POLITICS (1994-2004)

Let us look back and recollect the periods of the Prime Ministers and their parties which had impacted this colourful decade in Indian politics. Late Sri P.V.Narasimha Rao worked as Prime Minister for full term from 21-06-1991 to 16-05-1996.

Sri Atal Behari Bajpai, the leader of the BJP led the Central Government from 16-05-1996 to 01-06-1996; one month, Sri H.D.Devegauda of Janata Dal held the reins of power as Prime Minister of India for a period of ten months 01-06-1996 to 21-04-1997.

Sri Inder Kumar Gujral ruled as the P.M. of India from 21-04-1997 to 9-03-1998, for eleven months representing the left and democratic coalition.

Sri Atal Behari Bajpai wielded the Prime Ministerial power for a period of six years and two months between 19-03-1998 and 22-05-2004 and had provided a stable government at the centre.

The government of united progressive alliance(UPA) led by Sri Man Mohan Singh is ruling the country from 2004 till the date with stability. One can easily realize from the above decade of change in political power that the time of a single political party wielding power at the centre had come to a close and the era of a coalition of like minded parties had begun. National Democratic Alliance under the leadership of the Bharatiya Janata Party(NDA) and the United Progressive Alliance(UPA) led by the Indian National Congress are vying with each other for central power. Efforts for evolving a third front as an alternative have failed twice.

Inside our state of Andhra Pradesh prior to 1994, congress party had to change three Chief Ministers within five years and had to hand over power to the TDP. I had to face defeat in 1989 elections and again got elected in the year 1994 and worked as President and leader of the CPI Legislature party.

A) Crisis in TDP

TDP with resounding electoral victory in 1994 unanimously elected its legendary leader N.T.R. as Chief Minister. NTR with his team of ministers had planned to run the government drawing lessons from his previous failures. But most unexpectedly, the growing personal differences inside the CM's family had cast their shadow on his political life resulting in a serious crisis inside the legislature party of the TDP in August 1995. The trouble emanating from the formation of the cabinet and the reorganization of the party, very soon developed into a serious political crisis. NTR pulling on one side and his own son-in-law

Sri N.Chandrababu Naidu on the other side, making their political differences irreconcilable. NTR, the tallest in the party, refused to patch up his differences and came to a bold decision to recommend for the dissolution of the Assembly despite having comfortable majority for his party. He wanted to avenge all those who dared to challenge his unquestioned leadership and show them the door. The CPI, as a friendly party wanted to intervene and use its good offices to patch up the differences and avoid the dissolution of the Assembly. We rang up the Chief Minister and expressed our desire to meet him before he meets the Governor to handover his papers of resignation. He responded positively and asked us to see him before 6 AM, the next day. Accordingly late Mr.Dasari Nagabhushana Rao, the party secretary and myself reached his house before the appointed time. But to our utter surprise the CM had already left for the Governor's residence and handed over papers of his Cabinet's resignation along with the resolution to dissolve the Assembly. He came back and revealed to us what had happened. We only expressed to him our party's view and came back with a sense of *fait accompli*. The news spread and all well-meaning citizens expressed their surprise at the way a leader commanding comfortable majority recommended for its dissolution based on family feuds. All the elected TDP members, who remained with NTR flocked to the camp of Mr.Naidu located in the hotel Viceroy. A few were sitting on the fence or very close to NTR also had shifted their loyalty to the young and able political manager Sri Chandra Babu Naidu. Babu moved fast and adopted well advised legal steps. Immediately he addressed a letter to the Governor challenging the right of the CM when a majority of his own party had disowned him as leader, and had elected him as a new leader. He also managed to physically produce the majority of MLAs before the Governor making it impossible for the Governor to act upon the so called resolution submitted by the C.M. The Governor had no alternative before him except to invite the new leader of the majority party to form his cabinet. Law took its own course and the over estimation and the conceit of an individual, however popular otherwise, had to bow before the rule of law. A few of the MLAs remaining With NTR, too, had joined the camp of Mr.Babu, leaving NTR to his fate. Sri Nara Chandra Babu Naidu was formally invited by the Governor, to constitute his cabinet and steer the government.

The hasty decision of NTR to recommend for the dissolution of the Assembly despite commanding clear majority was disliked by the public at large. A legendary leader, who for the first time emerged as an acceptable alternative to the age old congress, and who headed the government once for five years and three months and then for nine months, had to enter the house as an ordinary member and occupy his seat usually meant for the Deputy Speaker, and leave the house unnoticed. This is the power of democracy I had the rare opportunity to closely observe this phenomenon. An individual, however big in his own field is subjected to the discipline of the party of his choice and the party however strong has to be accountable to the people, its electorate.

B) Sri Nara Chandrababu Naidu, as the Chief Minister

Sri N.Chandrababu Naidu assumed power as the CM of the AP state on 1-9-1995. He had the experience as Minister in the Cabinet of NTR. He also had very good experience as the general secretary of the TDP ably managing the party affairs and assisting the CM in solving the complex and technical problems arising out of the administration. As a post graduate in economics he had enough knowledge about the fast changing economics in the world and their impact on Indian economy. His sincere efforts for an all round development of the sagging rural economy attracted the attention of the common people. People expected that very soon he would succeed in translating his promises into practice and open a new chapter in the participatory democracy by involving the people at large.

CPI and the CPI(M) two left parties with a very good background of fighting for the solution of peoples' problems had extended their support to the government from 1985 to 1999, for a period of 15 years. Despite ideological differences, they offered their active support in elections and in all developmental activities reserving their right to criticize or even oppose the government's anti people policies. This general tactic of "unity and struggle" proved successful all over the world in the interest of the promotion of democracy as against conservative and reactionary forces. These two left parties which conveniently worked with the TDP in spite of its alliance with the BJP till 1999, suddenly delinked their alliance with it in the year 1999 on the ground of its alliance with BJP. In the general elections held in 2004, left parties made common cause with the congress to defeat Chandrababu's TDP. Yet again in the following general elections held in the year 2009 they united with TDP and TRS to defeat Rajasekhara Reddy led congress. Such a tactical line of the left parties, according to me does not behove of the seasoned left and smacks of their political opportunism. However, Sri Nara Chandrababu Naidu elected as the Chief Minister in the year 1995, continued in this position for 8 years and 8 months in all. Such a long period of governance is enough for its assessment by any political critic. I myself had the opportunity to closely observe his government for five years as a leader of the party in opposition extending its critical support. Before an analysis of the broad items of policy, let me dwell upon the contours of any good government.

TDP's ideology as expounded by its founder late Sri N.T.R. and repeatedly reiterated in all its annual conferences known as Mahanadu, consists of the eradication of poverty in the state by ensuring socio-economic justice to all the down trodden and backward classes, through their empowerment. It guaranteed equal status to women and full security to all minorities. If we peruse the ideological and programmatic documents of the Indian National Congress and its splinter parties and groups, as also the BJP, we find no qualitative difference in making promises. Then what is the reason for their signal failure to translate their promises into practice, despite the fact of their rule for decades together,

even with the support of the left? It is simple and clear for any political analyst. In an era of political democracy parties have to attract the voters and obtain political power to rule. This single need forces them to leave no stone unturned in making promises. Once elected, all the vested interests who managed the electoral victory through money and muscle power, supported by the iron frame of bureaucracy, raise their ugly head to utilize the political power for the furtherance of their own selfish interests, even going to the extent of putting down and suppressing the resistance of the people. In a country with appalling socio-economic backwardness, the proverbial saying about the “forgetfulness of the people” works wonders. The same political parties with new promises and new faces, mislead the people making the electoral democracy a farce. It is high time political thinkers on democracy and the left join their heads, ponder over the fast decline of democratic and social values leading to moral degeneration and act in unison to restore the public life. Reorientation of the left and centrists’ parties to rediscover democracy and to use the electoral machinery to form governments committed to a systemic change without any more delay will go a long way in the achievement of an inclusive socio economic progress paving the way for socialism. Or else, the parties of right reaction, with their religious fundamentalism, cultural revivalism, pro feudal anachronism will successfully arrest the social progress for another sixty and odd years making the given parliamentary democracy ineffective for a few more decades. Let us realize the gravity of the situation indicated by the fact finding report of late Sri Arjun Sen Gupta committee appointed by the UPA government which categorically stated that about 83 percent of the country’s population consisting of 77 crores of people are today leading a miserable life with an income of Rs. 20 per head per day. The human development report of the united nations for the year 2009 states that India stands at a shameful place of 134 among 182 countries of the world. Our own neighbouring countries are climbing up a few steps while our blessed country has fallen six steps down in a year. Despite a considerable growth in the GDP for the last two decades of open economy, our failure to reduce the poverty level should mainly be attributed to our following inherent weaknesses in our system of governance. The prioritization in the distributive justice of our national income is biased in favour of the rich classes and their corporate bodies which are spreading their tentacles to all fields of public life; leaving a meagre amount for the public sector and the measures of social welfare. Secondly, the large scale evasion of taxes at the state and central levels is reducing the very income of the state. It is agreed on all hands that at least fifty percent of the tax income, is being stashed in foreign banks as black money. An estimated amount of 2.5 billion dollars ie., over Rs. 12 lakh crores of unaccounted money is lying without any productive use. This is increasing with every passing year. Thirdly the corruption from top to bottom with the connivance of bureaucrats and politicians is eating into the vitals of our progress. All this can be arrested only if the modes of governance are radically reformed on war footing. Our constitution provides for the institutions to hold impartial

elections periodically, to administer the state with all its wings to function efficiently being accountable and transparent. The quality of the personnel manning all such institutions is crucial for the successful functioning of any constitutional democracy. Political party or the coalition of political parties running the governments in states and centre hold the responsibility for good or bad governance. Ultimately the level of political and social consciousness of the electorate determines the future of any democracy. Our political democracy, despite the passage of sixty long years has not yet achieved enough maturity to face the challenges. It is up to all political parties and civil societies to cultivate the public opinion through actions infusing in it the required dynamism imbued with social and human values. My own experience for the last over half a century, has convinced me about the invincibility of the mature public opinion with its capacity to change the social order, making democracy a powerful instrumentality. Broad based, conscious, united and militant peoples movement alone, and not mere slogan mongering and sectarian actions, devoid of a strong social capital in the form of strong public opinion, will succeed in changing the social order.

Chandrababu as the CM: I can say with full responsibility that Sri Nara Chandrababu Naidu's government was qualitatively different when compared to all previous congress governments. The content of change was that while the previous congress governments were run in a routine manner giving upper hand to the seasoned bureaucrats, Chandrababu led government gave a changed appearance with an apparent impact of his personal imprint on each and every policy pursued by the new government. He had tried his level best firstly to change the old mind set of the bureaucrats and secondly to involve the people at large in the day to day administration. Such an effort on his part won the appreciation of one and all who were fed up with the officialdom and its authoritarianism. In the beginning he even invited public response to his new policies with a clear purpose to make democracy to function. Credit goes to him for initiating the innovative concepts like "Prajala Vaddaku Palana", "Janmabhoomi" "elected education committees" "mothers Committees" and "Raitu Seva Samithies". Above all his dedicated efforts to initiate and establish women's self help groups(DWACRA) to promote austerity and empowerment of womenhood in their day to day life independent of their men folk has opened an entirely new chapter in the rural social life. This concept of promoting women's self help groups, successfully developed in Bangladesh, was efficiently executed in Andhra Pradesh yielding wonderful results, giving freedom to womenhood as well as expounding the lofty principle of 'dignity of labour'. Self help groups' commitment to such innovative, reformative ideas and boldness to execute them despite odds earned an all round support to the young and new Chief Minister. His innovative practice of holding classes for bureaucrats of all levels and to very frequently hold teleconferences to check up their work won laurels to him, even though a section of bureaucrats accustomed to their out moded practices, did not relish this change.

Sri Chandra Babu Naidu had a strong will to tread this new path and sincerely put all his energies in this direction personally undertaking hard work. His innovative ideas in industrializing the state and the development of Hyderabad city as the hub of advanced studies in science and technology added feather to his cap. The new city known as Cyberabad with sky high buildings and wide roads as also the construction of flyovers to facilitate and regulate the heavy traffic of the city, speaks volumes about his government's plans to modernize the city. Within a limited period of five years he achieved a national and even international fame for his efforts to modernize the life in the developing state of A.P. A number of men of science men of letters and outstanding statesmen from inside and outside our country made it a point to visit Hyderabad and exchange their ideas with Mr.Naidu. With such a back drop the electorate of AP reposed full confidence in his leadership and his party TDP giving it another term to carry forward its cherished ideals. Some more reflection on his good ideals would satisfy me.

1) DWACRA Scheme: This scheme now named as "Indira Kranthi Pathakam" has really revolutionized traditional, conservative mind of the rural working women folk. It started with the formation of a viable group of 15 women and saving a rupee per head per day and after a month, utilize the accumulated amount by any one of the members of the group, through auction on a rate of interest payable at the end of every month adding to the principal amount. In course of time such a collective and cooperative venture inculcated in them the values of cooperation, regular saving, and productive work culture, as against idleness and slavish mentality. Such a practice of running 'chit funds' already existed in a number of villages, operated by men of a particular caste or a particular work. Women's groups on the other hand received good encouragement from the state government in the form of grants and guaranteeing loans from the banks. The so called voiceless submissive women folk learnt a number of lessons through life of collective functioning in the form of educating their children and health care apart from exercising their independent role in their family life. Hardly within a period of two decades thousands of DWACRA groups with their village level and mandal level federations have emerged as companies or firms with enough financial resources to undertake any trade or business. Women who would otherwise feel shy and suffer from inferiority complex are today in a position to independently deal with the bankers and other government officers. It is really miraculous and marvellous

However a micro level study of the subject, reveals its inherent weakness to empower women in the real sense of the word. Empowerment in essence means their active participation in the process of production of material wealth of society which means their education and employment. What is achieved is very limited when considered in the back drop of over all poverty and socio-economic backwardness. We are facing with a gigantic task of promoting manufacturing industry capable of providing employment to crores of skilled

youth. Education system at all levels requires total overhauling to ensure a variety of skills to our young boys and girls. Presentation of the success story of DWACRA beyond proportion might help populism for short sighted politicians; but is only a very good beginning, not an end in itself.

2) Janmabhoomi: This was a programme intended to involve the people at large in the functions of participatory democracy when people have the liberty to represent to the officials and non officials about their felt needs along with complaints if any. Mandal level officials and the elected leaders were expected to visit every village once in every quarter of a year and sit in the local Gram Sabha, give patient hearing to each and every representation of the people. They were directed to solve problems then and there if they can or else they were bound to solve them within a short time and report back to the Gram Sabha in its next visit. At a time when the government officials behaved with the common man in an authoritarian manner, a hangover of the imperialist and semi feudal days, such an innovative practice of officials themselves visiting every village periodically with accountability appeared to be novel. The very name of the scheme as “Janmabhoomi” spelt the sense of patriotism and attracted people suffering with inferiority complex and servitude.

It boosted the image of the CM. Mr.Naidu manifold. An unforgettable event from my memory is worth mentioning. C.M. Mr.Naidu decided to personally participate in the launching of his prestigious programme. He had come to Karimnagar and asked the district Collector to take him to any village where Janmabhoomi programme would be conducted under the presidentship of the local MLA. The Collector in his wisdom suggested my own village Marupaka in Siricilla constituency with full confidence that I would surely be conducting the programme. CM with his convoy proceeded to our village on the road side. I was busy with the programme in accordance with the agenda as proposed in the government order. The news of CM’s visit surprised me and within minutes he reached and came to the place of the meeting of Grama Sabha. I was conducting the meeting as planned with a gathering of over one hundred men and women. The news of Chandrababu Naidu’s arrival spread in no time and very soon the school compound was full to its brim. I had the experience of seeing the Ministers and the Chief Minister visiting villages but this was unprecedented. Public at large, ladies in particular, were fond of seeing him in their own village from close quarters. CM in his speech expressed his profound happiness to visit a village of a freedom fighter, an MLA, as an auspicious day of launching his prestigious programme of Janmabhoomi. Our villagers were happy to see him speaking. When meeting was over, we proceeded. The CM asked me to tell him about any peoples’ demand deserving immediate sanction. I asked the driver to take the route of Sircilla town. Very soon we reached the weaver’s town facing many a problem deserving quick solution. We went straight into the local government hospital which was in a dilapidated condition often visited by stray animals like pigs and asses. Doctors

were not to be seen. We took a round talking to a few inpatients. It was enough to understand the most deplorable condition of the government hospital. The news of the CM's surprise visit to hospital spread throughout the town in no time and people thronged there to see the CM of their dream. The Chief Minister spoke for a few minutes and promised to sanction a hundred bedded hospital for Sircilla. The hospital was sanctioned and inaugurated by the same CM who was reelected for a second time.

However, very soon such a patriotic gesture got its glamour faded up. The movement which had received the utmost support from the government, and was regularly reviewed and monitored from the Collector to the highest level, lost its glamour when the action taken reports(ATR) exposed the inefficiency of the government machinery and the paucity of funds. The people's needs, along with the demands for white ration cards, old age pensions and pensions for the disabled, increased up to unmanageable levels. People started grilling the government officers with their angry questions. Officials had to escape their accountability on some lame excuse or the other. Gradually people's attendance to the Gram sabhas got thinned, excepting a few who awaited their ration cards and pensions. Instances of people's boycott of the meetings came to light. A programme dependent entirely on officials, without the initiative from the people and adequate funds to finance the schemes is bound to be drowned creating chaos. The CM very skilful in imagining the populist programmes was riding on a tiger not knowing how to retreat from the possible political calamity. Planning from village level to the level of state, with a clear vision about the prioritization depending on the availability of resources and under the leadership of the elected local bodies alone can be expected to succeed. That is the real meaning of a participatory democracy.

3) Village Level education committees and mothers' committees: It is yet another statutory measure to involve the people in the management of the local school by an elected committee. Mothers' committees were intended to encourage their children at home which will go a long way to create among students a proper mind set at their young age. The idea appeared novel and attracted the people very much in its early stage. It did work yielding good results in the form of reducing the dropouts of students at the very primary education stage and encouraged the people to supervise the functioning of the schools. As time went on, the election to the education committees got politicalised fuelling village factionalism. Such steps of involvement of people should arise out of the voluntary and free will of the parents, with the active support and even incentives from the local self governments. A government through its administrative machinery already over-burdened with other populist programmes cannot be expected to discharge such a delicate job. Experiences of a few years have proved the futility of statutory bodies and the above statute has now become defunct.

4) Mutual Aid Cooperative Societies(MACS): The co-operative movement in the country including our state of A.P. is very old. The law governing this movement, enacted during the British days is most unfit under conditions of freedom and democracy. The cooperative act, despite amendments, has many loopholes inviting official interventions, sapping the people's role. Almost all the cooperatives, covering different fields of life, had lost the real spirit of people's own creative contribution and became the tools in the hands of corrupt officials who made money at the expense of common working people. It had created and promoted a class of people who acted as parasites and made the societies bankrupt reducing them to mere ornaments.

We in an Assembly committee had decided to visit Anand in the Gujarat State where a mutually aided cooperative society worked very well as cooperative of dairy farms known as Vijaya dairy cooperative led by the star cooperator Dr.Kurian. This cooperative, worked wonders involving the farmers and their elected leaders without the least interference by the government. We had a rare opportunity to study this society in its details. Accordingly we had prepared a detailed note on it and submitted it to our state government. I had even a bigger opportunity to study the working of the mutually aided cooperatives societies in Germany. We could easily convince the then C.M.Sri Naidu about the utility of such a cooperative act. He moved in the matter very quickly and very soon the bill was moved in our Assembly by Sri Devender Goud the then Minister. I was allowed to speak at length supporting the bill. All the party leaders and the entire house agreed to adopt the bill into law without any more discussion. It was a rare occasion of unanimity on any bill. We expected such an act to attract the attention of one and all and thus rejuvenate the decadent cooperative movement. But to my surprise and dismay, despite the passage of over a decade's time the registration of cooperative societies under this new act (MACS) is not even one percent. The reason is not far to seek. The very registrars and the bureaucrats sitting above are discouraging the promotion of such cooperative societies. The political leadership is totally silent over such an inaction. Corrupt bureaucracy is equally responsible, along with short sighted politicians for tarpedoing and sabotaging the good policies and acts of the governments. A committed bureaucracy hand in hand with politicians with a vision and will power is needed to replace the present out moded structure of administration.

5) Committees to conserve water and protect forests: These committees are yet another well intended brain child of the innovative CM Mr.Naidu. Age old ignorance of the life giving gifts of nature led to the indiscriminate use and irresponsible behaviour of the societies towards them. Expansion of population, development of towns and cities and the consequent pollution of air and water as also the spread of scientific knowledge are opening the eyes of societies to correct their irresponsible attitude towards nature.

It has yet to catch the imagination of all the members of society whose collective efforts alone can take effective steps to conserve water and forests. Statutory measures in this connection can at best work as warnings but to believe in their efficacy to ensure conservation is simplistic. Bureaucracy, left to itself, can never shoulder such an onerous responsibility. Population at large with civic societies, through sustained activity on awareness in this direction can succeed in arresting the further deterioration. The state government under Mr.Naidu, tried to enforce laws on Vanasamrakshana Samithies, Raitu Mitra Sanghams but such success was short lived as unhealthy competitions for capturing their leadership marred the real purpose behind such enactments. In a very short period of time government itself had to stop such venture. During the term of late Sri YSR, the movement to appoint paid Adarsha Kisan leaders for every village had become a laughing stock. The paid kisan volunteers, supposed to guide the agriculturists in modern farming operations, were filled with the political volunteers of a particular party having no knowledge about agriculture and even new to the village where they were supposed to work. Ultimately such a malpractice had to be given up under the pressure of the public at large.

6) Adarana Scheme: Another scheme for cheap propaganda is adarana. Its purpose was to provide the villagers of different occupations with the implements required. Providing bicycles to the school going girls ironing instruments to the Dhobees etc., appeared to be very attractive as the beneficiaries vied with each other in obtaining such free bees. Even the few educated in each village exclaimed at such cheap propaganda measures. A popular Chinese saying : to teach fishing instead of serving the cooked fish” appeared to be apt. Backwardness, both economic and social can be eradicated in a process of educating the people in all trades and making them skilled to work hard and earn their living through self help. Such a sustainable productive labour is bound to evolve into a self reliant economy of Gandhijees dreams. Present day politicians are impatient to obtain political power by hook or crook caring a hang for the lasting development. Sree Chandrababu Naidu’s good intentions behind such short cuts need not be doubted. He, with all his academic qualifications, just forgot the histories of all developed nations, and had resorted to schemes yielding quick political results.

7) Neeru Meeru: This is the best scheme inculcating in every citizen the importance of the conservations of water. Execution of water shed schemes, conservation of water by constantly replenishing the ground water, preventing the soil erosion and water harvesting schemes along with the desilting the reservoirs are the various forms of this ideal programme. I personally had extended my total support and had initiated a number of programmes in my Sircilla constituency. The ideal and most productive programme had very soon become unwieldy as its funding position became precarious. The role of the irrigation department with its contractor system hastened its end. Many projects undertaken had to be stopped midway because of the paucity of funds.

8) Ethics Committee of the Assembly: A.P. stands first in the whole country in giving a shape to the long felt need to check and control the unparliamentarily behavior of the Honourable members of the house. C.M. Mr.Naidu evinced his keen interest in the formation of such committee with strict rules. Mr.Yanamala Rama Krishnudu, the then Speaker headed this committee while myself along with other leaders of the parties had the pleasure to function on such committee. We gathered the public opinion by interviewing all concerned with particular reference to senior citizens and journalists. We succeeded in framing the rules for the effective functioning of the committee. The committee examined the honourable members who had made it their habit to misuse their privileges and perquisites. A few misdeeds deserve mention. Hon'ble member's behavior on the floor of the house should never cross the rules of the house and the established conventions there of. Members are bestowed with certain facilities and perquisites. There are a few who misuse them. I had the misfortune to handle few cases where the Honourable members had misrepresented and cheated the Assembly office to obtain money illegally. Medical reimbursement facility very often was misused by producing false certificates. Members facility to get house sites almost free of cost was shamelessly misused tarnishing the image of law makers. An instance of such a nature when the honourable member had earned the name of a realtor had pained me a lot. My experience had suggested me that the committee should function with greater independence avoiding pressures on it. However with little more sharper teeth incorporated in rules it can deliver goods expected of it. The all round deterioration of values in the society is bound to reflect inside the August house. It is up to the political parties and their leaders to select the candidates possessing good character and then get them elected to adorn the house.

C) Chandrababu Naidu's Progressive outlook

All said and done the then young CM Mr.Naidu;s almost two terms of stewardship was more positive, full of a number of good initiatives to change the governance and make it more democratic and popular. Politician often faces a conflict or contradiction between the short term; populist measure and the long term sustainable interest of the people and is expected to take a quick decision. A statesman politician naturally prefers a sustainable policy measure and subordinates the short term interest to long term interest irrespective of the popularity gained or lost. Such conflicts between individual and community interests bother the social workers. It would be ideal if both the conflicting interests could be harmonized, or else, a seasoned leader always prefers lasting maximum good to the maximum number of people. Mr. Naidu's decision making was mixed. He did prefer sustainability durability and a lasting good to a maximum number of beneficiaries. However he could not always stick to such principles and had to give in to the pressures. In a backward and under developed society, faced with the frequent electoral needs, political leaders have to be flexible and accommodative without sacrificing the principles. Public opinion

about a leader, positive or negative, takes a definite shape after a thorough stock taking of a leader's behaviour, his precepts and practices, promises and performances good or bad intentions. Mr.Naidu who assumed power from his powerful politician father-in-law late Sri NTR, did his best and won the following elections with comfortable majority by dint of hard work with wisdom and pragmatism. His period of Chief Ministership had impacted the public opinion with unprecedented uniqueness and a big change in governance.

He was the first CM who understood the importance of infrastructure for rural development. Protected water supply schemes, rural roads, school buildings, primary health centres were taken on a large scale. My own experience in Siricilla constituency testifies to such an understanding. Most neglected R&B roads from Sircilla to Sirikonda, Vemulawada to Korutla, Vemulawada to Jagityal and road from Vemulawada to Sirikonda, were restored and widened. Protected drinking water schemes were taken up and completed in about fifty and odd villages. School buildings in almost all villages were constructed to the extent of the local necessity. Power supply through CESS increased and the power tariff for the power looms was reduced to fifty percent giving the status of the small scale industry to the power loom industry. It is giving immense relief to the owners and workers of the industry. Such a developmental atmosphere was not confined to few selected areas. It was a general phenomenon and the people at large expressed their satisfaction.

Political Leaders: According to my own experience and understanding, any good political leader is one who has a social outlook and a minimum commitment for a social change. This may vary in its degree, never-the-less its possession and persuasion towards perfection is a must. The very nature of the work indicates the leader's close contact with the mass of the people and their local leaders. A political or social leader can never do the job alone; collective thinking, cooperative spirit, and uniting with ever larger number of people in action to achieve the cherished goal, immediate or distant, are his primary prerequisites. Individualism, intolerance to public opinion are alien to this job. Such recognized social or political leaders through their new and progressive ideas and their relentless actions make such ideas acceptable to the mass of people. Then the idea becomes a powerful force taking the shape of a social capital. Such an ever widening and ever growing social capital is the real capital capable of changing the old social order with their antiquated, outmoded and even reactionary implications. Creation of such a social capital and harnessing it to change the existing decadent social order is the duty of political leaders with common understanding, about collective work, and united action to resist and defeat the tottering systems of society or governance. Such a gigantic task can never be executed by a single leader, however rich with material wealth or caste and community backing. It requires an army of the committed force led by the youth and commanded by the tested leadership. Politics, in an age of democracy means generating the above social capital, polishing it with tested humane finer

values of life handed over to us as our legacy by our hoary past, culture in short and then use it to change the society for the better with a conviction to achieve the distant goal of an inclusive social justice-socialism. Ideals of achievement of political power by hook or crook, amassing of wealth by all foul means and methods never touch the contours of peoples democracy and hence require to be detested, over thrown, lock, stock and barrel.

D) Self Employed Welfare Society (SEWS)

Right from my school days, thanks to my close association with Gandhites, Aryasamaj leaders and then the selfless hard working cadres of the Andhra Mahasabha and the CPI, the ideas of self help, constructive work had impressed me, giving a shape to my mindset. With my involvement in large scale socio political activity under conditions of anti imperialist and anti feudal movements the above mindset helped me to face all kinds of problems boldly as a committed patriot. “Service before self” is the essence of patriotism.

The SEWS was registered as a non governmental organization in the year 1990 just after my return from Germany in the earlier months of the same year when the Berlin wall dividing Berlin and Germany into East and West Germanies was dismantled uniting both the Germanies. Ramesh had already settled down working as lecturer in Humboldt University with his family. On a day I had opened the subject of voluntary organizations and its necessity to develop particular areas through ceaseless work above politics. He readily agreed with me and informed me about his formal membership of an organization known as G.S.E. meaning an organization to promote cooperation for development. Seeing my interest, he had arranged a visit to its central office. I had the good opportunity to discuss with its leaders who told me about their services in countries like Bangladesh and South Africa. My idea to form an NGO and promote the development of the Sircilla constituency got strengthened. Ramesh promised to extend his helping hand provided the proposed NGO works well. I assured him of that. Immediately after my arrival I got an NGO with a name “Self Employed Welfare Society” registered in Hyderabad under societies act. Mr. Prem Chand son of late freedom fighter and my good friend Sri Venkatachari of Avunur near Siricilla and my own brother Sri Ch. Venkateswara Rao’s names struck me to man the above society. They expressed their readiness and the society was formed. It took some time to get it registered with government of India under Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA). I, with my contacts with the ministers and officers of the state government had developed a desire to involve the state government with equal funds in all major projects executed with foreign funds to ensure transparency and accountability. However such a good expectation was disproved and even proved counter productive in our two decades long experience. We could somehow manage with it with minimum difficulties. People at the grass root level extended their whole hearted cooperation, even by rendering Shramadan. We succeeded in initiating and executing a number of schemes novel to the area.



Delegations from the GSE Germany and the SEWS Sircilla meeting the dynamic Chief Minister of A.P. Sri Nara Chandrababu Naidu.



Dr.Ramesh Chennamaneni, MLA with the then Chief Minister, Mr.Chandrababu Naidu

Briefly, following developmental schemes were executed by SEWS costing roughly 40-50 crores shared by both government of Germany and the Government of Andhra Pradesh.

- 1) Construction of a high capacity over head tank and laying the distributory system of pipe lines in Sircilla town.
- 2) Construction of over 250 school rooms in Siricilla division for promoting primary and secondary education.

- 3) Construction of OHSRs and laying the distributory pipelines for drinking water supply in about 75 villages of Sircilla division. Construction of minor irrigation tanks with the cooperation of Minor irrigation department. Joining Erra Cheruvu with Patel Cheruvu in Sanugula Village etc.,.
- 4) Arrangement of a mobile health van to take care of pregnant women, children and the aged.
- 5) Construction of a modern drainage scheme in Vemulawada, a pilgrimage centre where such a scheme was a badly felt need
- 6) Drilling about 500 bores all over Sircilla Taluq to mitigate the drinking water problem and to reduce the burden of the women folk in drought years.
- 7) To supply fresh and florid free drinking water to all the villages of the present Vemulawada constituency with peoples cooperation. Already about 50 villages have been covered.
- 8) On the request of the health department SEWS is supervising in the successful management of an urban health centre at Siricilla as an ancillary to the 100 bed government hospital.
- 9) SEWS succeeded in undertaking the identification, and prevention of AIDS with foreign funds, mainly 'ALLIANCE' of England, through running 5-6 centres in the whole district of Karimnagar.
- 10) Construction and development of water shed schemes with NABARD assistance and Indo-German funds Via NABARD. This prestigious scheme to promote ground water and prevent soil erosion is working wonders with peoples cooperation. It is progressing very well in 10 villages at present.

E) An unforgettable experience of simplicity in a German Court: I wanted to visit any court and see its functioning. Necessary arrangements were made. Our delegation with our guide reached the court. A lady welcomed us inside and asked us to be seated in the entrance room. She helped us by providing some more chairs from the adjacent room. We waited there till the court time. As the Court commenced, we went inside the court hall and occupied our seats in the gallery. Advocates, bench clerks, and the contestants had occupied their respective seats. There was a pin drop silence, all awaiting the arrival of the judge. A lady judge in her robes entered the hall from a special door on the back side of the rostrum and occupied a little elevated chair meant for the presiding officer.

We were astonished to realize that the lady judge is none else than the same lady who had received us, arranged for our comfortable seating, and served us with the soft drinks. It was unbelievable for all of us who had enough of experiences of courts in our country with a number of clerical staff assisted by attenders and orderlies.



Mr. and Mrs. Chennamaneni meeting their closest friends Mr.A.Guruva Reddy, Mrs.SATyavathi Guruva Reddy and Mr.D.S.Ramachandra Rao, Mrs.Late Hemalatha Ramachandra Rao



Mr. and Mrs. Chennamaneni with Palvai Seeta Ram Reddy and late Dr.Ravi Bharathi, daughter of late Sri Ravi Narayana Reddy



Felicitations by the leaders of the Singareni Collories Workers Union at Godavarikhani by Sri Gattayya and Narayana on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the CPI



Felicitating Sri Durgalal Gupta the President of Khammam District Freedom Fighters Organisation

We observed the proceedings comprising of the arguments of the advocates from both the sides, the gentle interruptions by the judge. The subject matter of the litigation, we were told, was that an elderly man was in possession of some antiques and shining artifacts, inherited from his father and grand father. He was very keen to preserve them. His two sons, on the other hand, wanted those monumental pieces to be divided and handed over to them as they had their legal rights. The old man, father, refused to part with them till his life. Such a family dispute was dragged to the court of law for adjudication. We were least interested in the ultimate result. We were only inspired by the simplicity appearing all around. A judge's courtesy shown towards a visiting foreign delegation was beyond our comprehension. It speaks volumes about their simplicity dignity of labour and modesty. Our guide and interpreter told us that it was very common there. Despite having the richest culture behind, our country has yet to learn many lessons from the civilized west.

F) The milestones of my chequered life: I am fortunate to have spent major part of my public life in the kisan movement. A decade's period from 1942 to 1952 passed off in the student movement, youth movement, movement for forcing the Nizam to merge the erstwhile state of Hyderabad with Indian union, under ground and jail life, full of uncertainties and insecurity.

1952 to 1972, two decades, I devoted myself as full timer working as the Secretary of the Karimnagar district unit of the CPI, Secretary and President of district Kisan Sabha mixing with the rural population, leading their struggles and learning from them the practical lessons to solve their problems. I was elected to the A.P. State Legislative Assembly for the first time as the candidate of CPI representing Choppadandi Constituency in 1957 and again was elected from Sircilla constituency in 1967, worked as the Chief Whip and floor leader of the CPI respectively. From 1973 to 1998, 25 years, I had the golden opportunity to serve as the General Secretary, President of the A.P.Kisan Sabha and finally as the working president of the AIKS. Side by side I had the good opportunity to serve as the member of the state executive and member of the Secretariat of the A.P. unit of the CPI. I was elected to state legislature from Sircilla thrice during this period in 1978, 1985 and 1994 and discharged my duties as the floor leader of the CPI.

I was inspired by the left intellectuals like late Ravi Narayana Reddy, Maqdoom Moinuddin and Sri Dr.Raj Bahadur Gaur and by the dedicated hard work of the pioneers and founders of the Telangana kisan movement late Sarvasree Baddam Yella Reddy, Arutla Laxmi Narasimha Reddy and Arutla Ramachandra Reddy right from the days of Andhra Maha Sabha and continued in the All India Kisan Sabha, as their colleague and comrade in arms. Working in company with the All India Kisan Sabha leaders like late Z.A. Ahmed and Sri Indradeep Sinha and Y.V. Krishna Rao enriched my knowledge about the glorious peasant movements of our country. Inside A.P. I had the pleasant time to work hand in hand with the tireless kisan leaders like Alluri Venkata Rama

Raju and the late Valluri Gangadhara Rao. I had the rare occasion to share the rich experiences of the researcher cum active leader of the Kisan Sabha, Sri Kolli Nageswara Rao Garu. In the year 1999 I had taken a decision to quit the CPI purely on personal grounds, which we will discuss later. From 1999 to 2009, for the period of a decade I continued my public life as the TDP leader. My health totally cooperated to work hard. Though defeated in 1999 elections, I was elected from the same Sircilla constituency as TDP candidate and worked as the vice president of the legislature party of the TDP serving the constituency as usual. Thus, I had the opportunity to actively serve the people of the AP, with particular reference to Choppadandi and Sircilla constituencies in Karimnagar district for over 65 years in the capacity of a legislator, kisan leader the CPI leader and finally as the TDP leader keeping my socio-political outlook intact. Kisan movement in our country, passing through many ups and downs, succeeded in enlightening and uniting the most backward strata of the society into a powerful fighting force emerging as the beacon light and path finder for abolishing feudalism of all hues including the autocratic rule of the princes, the Rajas and Nawabs paving the way for a democratic system of government. Kisans today, while facing the ever new problems in producing for the growing and expanding food needs of our rising population, are facing the problem of near stagnation in the agricultural growth. The share of agriculture in the rate of growth of gross domestic production is most discouraging when compared with its greater share in the working population. It is agreed on all hands that the agricultural rate of growth cannot be on par with the rate of growth of industrial income or income through services. Never the less agricultural growth impacts the qualitative growth of the entire society by supplying its ever changing food needs.

- i). It is the kisan movement which had forced the abolition of Jagardari and Zamindari systems by the end of the fourth decade of the last century.
- ii). Fifth and Sixth decades of the last century saw the statutory abolition of the landlordism with its concentration of lands and rise of the slogan of land to the tiller thanks to the wide spread kisan movement.
- iii). Since the tenth decade of the last century up to date the kisan movement is forcing the governments of the day, central and states, to see that the toiling kisans get the remunerative price for their produce. It is also making green revolution a grand success through modernizing the agriculture. Kisans today are preparing for a second green revolution with the help of biotechnology and produce more for internal consumption and for export purposes. In the backdrop of all round capitalist globalization, which is hitting the peasantry very hard, both as producer and as consumer, a new and greater responsibility devolves on the governments to come to the rescue of the peasantry by taking every possible step to protect agriculture from the day light robbery by the middle men, the crony capitalists. Kisan sabhas are preparing themselves to face this capitalist offensive intellectually

and organizationally, and there is no doubt about their yet another great success. Kisan Sabha is conscious of facing the problems of corporatization of agriculture, a new form of capitalist landlordism, fight for “mutual aid cooperative societies (MACS)” of all small and marginal farmers to protect the farming community from being reduced to the position of agricultural labourers to work according to the beck and call of corporate bodies. As already indicated the governments of the day have to realize the qualitatively new nature of agriculture and must divert sizable funds to agriculture in the form of subsidies to enable the eligible poor producers to lead a life with social security. Kisan Sabhas are also faced with the problem of forcing the governments to desist from compulsory acquisition of agricultural lands in the name of the establishment of industries, in the public sector or for the so called special economic zones. Kisan Sabhas are realizing their crucial role in protecting and promoting the healthy climate. Agriculture in all its forms is the most nature friendly and helps reduction of global warming which has become a big challenge to the civic society of the whole world.

G) Bright future: I very much wish to share my vision of the unfolding golden age before us all. In the wake of scientific and technological revolution, under the inevitable globalization of human life, there is going to arise a situation when industrial production and its productivity will reach a point of saturation when its further growth requires regulation and control in the interest of promotion and protection of a healthy climate for humanity. Agriculture in all its forms, being the most nature friendly attracts the people from the fast polluting urban life to rural life with all its modernity. Major industries releasing carbon dioxide will have to be strictly regulated and made subordinate to the emerging green revolution and rural life. Present urban life expanding with an exodus from rural India, will undergo a u turn, forcing the administration to make radical change in its strategy and disciplines. Horticulture, agricultural forestry, animal husbandry and modernized small scale and cottage industries, will occupy a primary position in the new scenario. May be, it will be criticized as a day dream at present, but my own training, and study of the fast changing views of the visionaries emboldens me to stand firm on such views. It may take a long time but one should not miss the direction of change. A second green revolution which envisions a revolution is bound to herald a new era in human history with its nature friendly way of life. There is no reason for the activists of kisan sabhas and the social scientists to continue to suffer from the demoralizing ill effects of the present science and technology, and should confidently work for unfolding an ever green golden age.

H) My unavoidable exit from the CPI. The truth and untruth behind it: I joined the CPI as its candidate member at the age of 19 years as a high school student in Karimnagar in the year 1942. My association with late Sree Baddam Yella Reddy and his close colleagues, their rational thinking and restless service

to the poor attracted me towards the party. In the presence of Sri B.Y. I had filled up the format of party membership and the great martyrs of the heroic Telangana movement Sri A.Prabhakara Rao and Sri S.Bhoopathi Reddy signed the format as witnesses. In 1943, I continued my education as a student of intermediate in the Osmania university and also continued my work among students as an activist of the All Hyderabad students union(AHSU). In the year 1944 I was enrolled as a full member of the CPI, while Dr.Raj Bahadur Gour and late Sri Md.Jawad Razvi signed the paper as witnesses. I am ever grateful to these leaders who had put me on a right path of rationalism and humanism, the essence of Marxism. This single event had endowed me with a mindset to always be in quest for truth without fear or favour and with abundance of self confidence and sense of optimism despite odds. I had succeeded in the student movement, finally discharging my responsibilities as the General Secretary of the AHSU. The role played by the students in the great struggle for the integration of the erstwhile state of Hyderabad into Indian union was marvelous. I had to lead an underground and jail life for over five years starting from 15th August 1947 passing through 17th September 1948 when the Nizam had surrendered to Indian union and the period up to 1952 when the great Telangana peasant uprising continued and the first general elections were notified for February 1952. Continuation of armed struggle after the police action up to mid 1951 when it was officially withdrawn, though ill advised and miscalculated, tactically, was yet a peasant uprising against feudalism and its inhuman atrocities against the toiling peasantry at a heavy cost in terms of human sacrifices and sufferings. After my release from jail on parole, restricting my movement to Karimnagar district borders. I was forced to work among the peasantry in the district and had emerged as the kisan leader step by step up to the level of the general secretary and the President of AP Kisan Sabha. I was elected to the A.P. Legislative Assembly five times as the CPI candidate serving once as its Chief Whip and then four times as its floor leader up to 1999, earning the appreciation of the party and the people all over the state. Another decade thereafter, from 1999 to 2009, I had to undergo a technical change in form ie., delinking myself with the CPI and continuing my public life as the TDP leader and its MLA from 2004 to 2009 without any change in the content of my struggle and service to the people. The unexpected change in the route, we will discuss below.

I had discharged successfully all the duties entrusted to me by the party winning its appreciation and the approbation of the people of the state at large.

However I had to submit my resignation to my 55 years long membership of the CPI on 09-08-1999 voluntarily, at a mature age of 77 years. State party secretary tried his best to persuade me not to resort to such a drastic step but I pleaded my inability to honour his good gesture and went ahead with my own decision. Announcing my dissociation with the CPI with a heavy heart, I had publicly expressed my heartfelt and profound thanks to the CPI which

had provided me with rare opportunities, extended full cooperation to serve the people, to the best of my ability. I had also publicly pledged not to speak a single word against the party throughout the rest of my life.

Party colleagues, friends and admirers, people at large all over the state were taken by surprise to know about such a sudden decision. Different stories and conjectures were circulated. I had to desist from offering any explanation lest it should involve the party and its image. I continued my work without any interruption. My continued service of 12 years to the people of my area in the capacity of a recognized social worker as also an MLA for the sixth and last term(2004-2009) from the same Sircilla constituency has provided, with ample explanation to all concerned, Yet it is my duty to deal with it at some length in my autobiography, to furnish the whole truth.

There are no political and ideological reasons behind my resignation from the CPI. Hundreds of my party colleagues and thousands of party cadres know fully well about my political views. I had never concealed my views from the party and was always with open mind to be convinced. I differed with the official line of the party on some occasions ever since I joined the party in the year 1942, and never such differences detracted me from my normal work. Let me recall a few of such occasions.

- 1) CPI had denounced historic “Quit India” call given by the Indian national Congress. I vehemently opposed it even as a candidate member of the CPI in 1942 itself.
- 2) Party had refused to accept the transfer of power on 15th August 1947 as political independence, and had declared that it was one of the forms of slavery. I was one of the few comrades who opposed this line and tried in vain to convince the party that political independence should not be confused with economic independence which we have yet to achieve.
- 3) The second party congress of the CPI held in Calcutta in 1948 passed unanimous resolutions giving a call for the violent overthrow of the Nehru Government naming it as a lackey of Anglo-American imperialism. Within a few months, basing on the bitter experiences in the Telangana armed struggle, I had joined hands with the stalwarts of the historic Telangana movement late Sri Ravi Narayana Reddy and Baddam Yella Reddy sharply differing from the central line to overthrow the Nehru government by spreading the armed struggle throughout the country and had addressed strong letters to the centre. We had again strongly differed from the changed leadership at the centre to adopt the China way of guerrilla warfare instead of the Russian way.
- 4) CPI refused to celebrate 26th January 1950 as the Republic Day and instead issued a call to observe it as a black day. While executing the wrong line I had vehemently opposed such a suicidal line of thinking.

I had repeatedly written letters to the centre strongly opposing the characterization of the Nehru Government as a government representing the feudal and big capitalist classes. In almost all the party congresses after the second congress, I tried my best to propose amendments to the sectarian formulations which were generally defeated.

- 5) I was among the few party spokesmen who condemned the Chinese aggression on India in the year 1962-64, which culminated into the vertical split of the CPI and the formation of the CPI(M).
- 6) I had criticized the blind anti-congressism of the party and its campaign through conclaves joining hands even with communal forces.
- 7) When the issue of the day light hanging of Imrenegi, the Prime Minister of Hungary, during the era of Stalinism, came for debate, I had raised my lonely voice inside the party, condemning it as an inhuman act, when the majority of comrades remained neutral or silent.

My intention behind recalling the number of occasions of my differences with the party line is not at all to belittle the image of the CPI and the left movement, on the other hand it is only to underscore, uphold, and reiterate my total commitment to the science of Marxism and its philosophy of dialectical and historical materialism. I myself do not claim to have mastered such a science or its social application. My humble submission is that a party or an individual committed to such a scientific thought is closer to reality and truth and will achieve great success in his or her public life. Petty politics of power and pelf are alien to such social outlook which preaches human values, selfless and dedicated social service with a spirit of sacrifice. Parties committed to scientific socialism, despite their differences are qualitatively superior to all others. Unity of all such parties at least unity on a minimum programme of action will open a new chapter in Indian politics generating hopes for a better future in the near future. Such a pragmatic approach yielding fruitful results in the near future can become a possibility only if the brotherly parties of the left agree to, not to insist upon the so called self criticism about the past as a precondition or pre requisite for future unity and united action. Or else, the future of the country's politics will be rudderless thrown to wilderness.

India today is passing through a complex stage of democratic revolution. In the wake of scientific and technological revolution and the consequent globalization, world capitalism is facing crisis after crisis in its management of finances, trade, and production of goods, and this is impacting the development of the under developed and the developing countries of Asia. India's economy is growing under the peculiar conditions where semi feudal, land lord, capitalist, small and big, even multinational capitalist classes co exist. Industrial working class has not yet grown numerically enough to socially and politically influence the society at large. Peasantry the leading work force is facing the problems of remunerative farming. Middle class is growing numerically thanks to general

growth of the economy. Export of blue collar and white collar labour force as also the policies of out sourcing adopted by the developed countries are contributing to the fast growth of middle class in India. Our road to complete the democratic stage of revolution and then take the road towards socialism appears to be long drawn demanding mature social scientists to delineate it with vision. Objectivity in taking note of the complexities in the process of social change, creativity in adaptation, and above all radicalism in building the social capital are the needs of the hour. It is a big challenge thrown by the unfolding world events and the Indian people with the help of their mature politicians have to accept it boldly. Planning Commission's emphasis on faster rate of growth of the G.D.P. crossing 9 percent, on inclusive growth with complete social justice is most welcome. But the most disheartening factor is the unbridled growth of corruption, with ever increasing scams, black money being stashed in foreign banks. The signal failure of the ruling parties in bringing about systemic changes in all wings of governance through far reaching reforms is responsible for this unfortunate state of affairs. It is up to the political parties, with special reference to the left to objectively take stock of things and build a powerful movement in a correct direction.

I was very much inspired by the way Deng Tsiao Peng of China, who undertook the socio-economic reforms to radically reorient the suicidal left sectarian path of the ruling Chinese communist party, and put it on the right track. Maotse tung's famous statement "let hundred flowers bloom and thousand thoughts flourish" was materialized by the new leader, yielding wonderful results in terms of faster rate of growth and quicker reduction of appalling poverty. India is endowed with all potentialities of growth. Modern economists can rightly envision a situation where India, China and Brazil will lead the world by the end of two decades ahead. Good governance capable of abolishing all kinds of corruption, ensuring faster rate of inclusive economic growth with social justice will definitely hasten the completion of democratic revolution and pave the way for the onward march to "Sarvajana Sukhaya, Sarvajana Hitaya" – socialism in terms of Marxism.

I earnestly hope that my optimist position is properly understood and appreciated with an open mind. As briefly referred to above, I never yielded ideologically and never stopped my work on the grounds of ideological and political differences. It is the way of thinking and working for the cherished social change and I did it with that spirit without any ambitions, prejudices, and fear or favour. In short, my problem was and is to creatively apply the science of Marxism to Indian specific socio-economic conditions under the unprecedented favourable conditions of globalization. I reiterate with full responsibility that my decision to dissociate myself organizationally from the CPI was never the product of my ideological and political differences with the party which, I reiterate had attracted me towards social and rational out look. I was never subjected to any kind of disciplinary action by the party during the course of

55 years of my membership even under suffocating conditions of inner party struggle, but was rewarded with the compliments for my tolerance and balance of mind which I owe to our rich culture and heritage.

i) Out come of my exit from the formal membership of the party:

Hundreds politically conscious men and women cutting across their political affiliations have been expressing their desire to see Dr.Ramesh Chennamaneni elected as their legislator in the ensuing general elections of 1999. It had developed into a public opinion and representations to this effect were made to me by many friends. Ramesh too was mentally prepared to sacrifice his lucrative profession of professorship in the prestigious Humboldt University of Germany, come to mother land and join politics. He had even got constructed a spacious guest house, named Sangeeta Nilayam at Vemualwada for his residential and office purpose. Our NGO “SEWS” office is located in it.

He had to obtain German Citizenship for his promotion in his university giving up his Indian Citizenship a decade back. He seriously started his efforts to regain his Indian citizenship in the earliest possible time. His closer association with the then C.M. Sri N.Chandra Babu Naidu in the promotion of SEWS and its multifarious activities of rural development had made them good friends. He was very much attracted by the innovative ideas of Mr.Babu and his commitment to a number of reforms. He almost made up his mind to contest from Sircilla as the candidate of the TDP. The CM Mr.Naidu initiated his efforts with the central Home Minister Mr.L.K.Advani to get the Indian citizenship certificate for Ramesh in the earliest possible time and pursued it seriously in view of the fast approaching notification for elections.

I was keenly observing these developments with utmost responsibility as the sitting member representing the CPI. The growing popularity of Dr.Ramesh and the possibility of his victory with hands down if he contests as TDP candidate pleased me as the father of Dr.Ramesh who wishes to come home and serve the constituency. Following questions of propriety engaged my mind and I did apply my mind with all the seriousness it deserved. The questions were: what should be my role if he contests? What should be my political attitude as a senior leader of the CPI who had won five times on CPI ticket and successfully performed the role as its floor leader? Should I not read the writing on the wall that Dr.Ramesh’s victory is a foregone conclusion? Should I, as a disciplinary, face him as a traditional CPI candidate and get defeated badly and thus put up a façade of show of discipline, and will the electorate digest it? How to reconcile the above contradictions and arrive at a rational conclusion befitting a seasoned thinker which I cherish very much? The Karimnagar D.C. of the CPI had unanimously proposed and forwarded to the state committee my candidature from Sircilla constituency despite my request to give me some time to think over the critical subject matter. I was confronted with the above questions demanding quick answers. I had no doubt in my mind that the state committee of the party would finalise my candidature as there was no alternative

worth consideration. Opposing the party decision and mechanically executing it would amount to the total blindness to reality and truth, apart from going against the public opinion deliberately. My own experience of long public life as also the teachings of the great leaders have helped me to arrive at an inescapable conclusion that when a question of choosing one equity out of two equal but conflicting equities arises, choosing that equity which satisfies the majority of people involved therein is a matter of wisdom. It subordinates the smaller truth or smaller reason to the larger truth and larger reason. Hence my irrevocable decision to tender resignation to the formal membership of the party, however painful it might be. Party Secretary, Com.S.Sudhakara Reddy himself personally tried his best to persuade me to desist from such a drastic decision. I thanked the party profusely for having made me what I am and publicly promised not to speak against my party for the rest of my life, instead serve the party as its close sympathizer. Such a categorical stand though surprising to many of my comrades in arms and friends proved rational. Some news papers, dragging Ramesh's name had attributed to me the charge of nepotism and favouralism. I stood my ground firmly without fear or favour. Peoples' support provided me with the requisite energy to face all odds.

ii) Unexpected turn in the political situation: Two to three weeks passed by, and the expected positive decision from the then Home Minister Sri L.K.Advani, granting Indian citizenship to Dr. Ramesh did not see the light of the day despite the repeated reminders from our C.M. Mr.Naidu, who had left no stone unturned in his sincere efforts. Political correlation of forces too changed. The friendly relations between T.D.P. and the communists, which had a salutary effect in the general elections held in 1985 and 1994 had broken down by 1999 due to TDP's continuation of its political alliance with the BJP. Elections were notified. Ramesh could not continue his efforts to obtain Indian citizenship. The C.M. Mr.Naidu expressed his helplessness. After very deep consideration he suggested to me to contest the elections as a TDP candidate. I was really in a soup. Equally confusing was the public opinion. A situation of most uncertainty prevailed all around. Meanwhile my brother Ch.Vidaysagara Rao the BJP leader rang me up to meet Mr.Naidu and obtain the B Form as the TDP candidate from Sircilla.

iii) TDP and me: "old wine in new bottle!" In parliamentary democracy, for a skilful and sincere politician, political power at any level enhances his capacity to serve the people four fold yielding the desired results. It works both as a shield and a sword in the hands of a social warrior. This has been my experience. Changed circumstances, though unexpected, forced the pragmatist in me, to reconcile with the new and unavoidable realities of life. I had nothing new to learn from the new party except skilful adjustment and management with it without sacrificing even an inch of space acquired by my half a century old value based public life. In that respect I was an old wine in a new bottle, surprising my old admirers and new contacts alike.

Sri Regulapati Papa Rao an experienced political leader was the congress candidate while the CPI had chosen Sri Premchand, my own follower in SEWS as its candidate to contest against me. Main contest was with the congress candidate Mr.R.Papa Rao who defeated me. The electoral disadvantages I had faced were obvious. I was quite new to the TDP and a few local leaders of the TDP were not happy with my candidature. Youth at large got disarmed when they learnt that Dr.Ramesh is no longer a candidate. CPI cadre was in total confusion and disarray. Congress candidate apart from cashing in on congress vote bank, had earned the sympathy of the voters for having twice suffered defeat from the same constituency. Over and above, he served well as the Sarpanch of his village and as the Samiti President of Vemulawada Panchayat Samithi which went in his favour. Ramesh, as the Chief Election campaigner put his heart and soul, only to realize the voters' desire to have some change despite their admiration towards me.

Gradually I developed a desire to keep away from the active politics. My good health and the activities of the SEWS headed by me did not permit me to do so. On the other hand I was able to pay my undivided attention towards the constructive work on hand. Ramesh's encouragement and assurance to continue to help development provided me with an added strength. Over and above, the unprecedented and consecutive droughts and the consequent shortage of even drinking water in the constituency made me restless. The credit goes to Smt.Sumita Dawra, the then Collector of Karimnagar District, who rendered yeoman service to rescue the suffering people. Funds were never a problem. SEWS could add another feather to its cap thanks to the timely help from Ramesh who was heading the NGO in Germany, namely the GSE(cooperation for development). I was happy I could devote more time rendering better services to the people in need. Five years passed off with utmost satisfaction. General elections of 2004 were notified and I was the natural choice of the TDP for Sircilla. Ramesh had no desire to come into the electoral fray despite repeated requests from his admirers. I had to face the same congress candidate Mr.R.Papa Rao, thank God, the CPI extended its support to me, I was elected for the sixth term with about 18000 voters majority over the congress candidate. TDP headed by Sri N.Chandra Babu Naidu lost its power to congress party led by late Sri Y.S.Raja Sekhara Reddy. Sri Naidu took the reins as the leader of opposition and started his innings with equal ability and efficiency. I was elected as the vice president of the TDP legislature party and had rendered my services in the Assembly as an elderly and senior most member, winning the appreciation from all quarters.

iv) Reasons behind the unexpected loss of power of TDP in 2004: TDP had won twice in the year 1994 and 1999 and Mr.Naidu's performance as CM had won laurels for him as a reformer with a sense of innovation and action. It could be easier to predict the electoral results when anti incumbency or pro charismatic leader waves sweep. This time it was normal, TDP and INC both had experienced

the retention of power in the very recent past. Political parties or political leaders gifted with the capacity to study the voters' psychology and the election management arrive at more or less correct evaluation and conclusion. Guess work is slippery, and the result may appear most unexpected thanks to a very marginal shifting of votes from one party to another. The same had happened in 2004 and INC under the leadership of late Y.S.R. could unseat TDP from power by winning over marginal votes. With the given level of political consciousness of the electorate and the given electoral system, fool proof guess work is impossible. Serious and seasoned political analysts would do well to study the political policies and their grass root level application and draw appropriate conclusions. Instead of trying to apportion the causes for success or defeat with their peripheral, power centred study of electoral management, manipulations and maneuvers. Gaining or retaining political power should never be the be all and end all for any political party. Political power must be used to execute the short term and long term policies and programmes based on an integrated road map charted out by the visionaries. My intention here is not to undermine or question the capacities of the persons at the helm of affairs, including the learned economist Prime Minister. Economic theories of development are undergoing changes very fast thanks to globalization and the very conceptual changes in socio-economic and human development, political changes in the correlation of forces and the stories of successes or defeats are impacting very much the developing world. Hence creativity, objectivity and not conservativity or dogmatism are the needs of the hour. Our country today badly needs such planners and planning for the speedy and inclusive growth and not power mongers to waste our national wealth. Going back to broadly identify the reasons behind the defeat of the TDP in 2004, let me review the following.

- 1) According to 73rd and 74th amendments to Article 243(G) and schedule 11 of the constitution of India, made during the Prime Ministership of the late Sri Rajeev Gandhi 29 important powers were devolved to the Panchayat Raj institutions. In the year 1999 the TDP Government headed by Sri N.Chandrababu Naidu transferred 19 powers, not very important, to the local bodies with a budgetary allocations of Rs. 1200 crores, by virtue of G.O.No.105, This G.O. was not seriously implemented. The elected bodies remained almost idle. Had it been implemented and the rest of 10 powers with funds been devolved, the real purpose of the amendments would have been achieved. Despite the repeated representations and the agitations by the elected leaders of all the local bodies, the state government refused to act. Late Sri Y.S.R, who, before election, had promised to affix his first signature as CM on this file, withdrew 54 out of the 64 petty powers transferred by Mr.Naidu's government. Such was the fate of the solemn promises made by both the CMs. Power to the people is an alien concept for the exploiting class and its leaders. That is the secret behind the present failure of the Panchayat Raj system.

- 2) The prestigious document 'vision 2020' much published by Sri Naidu, which was prepared by the team of experts of 'Mackancy' a well known foreign institution to prepare project reports or plans still remains on paper. Planning for a speedy development, embracing the modern concept of 'human development' must essentially start from a micro level study of the infrastructural needs of the people. Construction of modern airports, shipyards, four lane roads, flyovers and top class hotels etc., a macro level infrastructure, of course needed very much, but deserves the least priority in a developing country where 70 percent of its population leads a life of hand to mouth with a meagre income of Rs. 20 per head per day and where the micro level infrastructure, covering school education, health care, minor irrigation, rural roads and above all food needs suffer very badly for want of funds and reforms in their out dated systems. TDP government which did well its first half, suffered from the operation of the law of diminishing returns in its second half.
- 3) Increase in the annual rate of growth in the gross domestic production(GDP) though welcome, does not necessarily reflect the growth in the standard of life of teaming millions languishing under deplorable socio-economic conditions of rural and urban life. Empowerment of people does not merely mean to enable them to participate in elections and to elect their leaders believing in their false promises. It means, in terms of modern socio-economic science, providing them with every opportunity to participate in the process of production as rightful owners of means of production, agricultural land, cottage industry or as partner in a manufacturing industry and then alone as an industrial worker. Self reliance, self employment with self help are the crying needs of working people. Social scientists including the political leaders do well to understand and appreciate this road map of development.
- 4) The political democracy of over half a century connoting winning of votes, has left behind a very bad culture of subsidies. It means the state to bear the difference of the price of goods in the open market with the lower level price the goods are supplied to the actually deserving poor population. The power crazy rich in collusion with the corrupt bureaucracy is busy in boosting up the number of beneficiaries, disproportionately increasing the burden of subsidy payable by any state or central government; so much so that this item now occupies the second biggest budgeted expenditure only after the payment of debts and interests thereon. The rising inflation created by the same rich, through artificial short supply of essential commodities and hoarding them is adding fuel to the fire, ultimately creating a situation of paucity of funds to execute the promised welfare schemes and reforms. This phenomenon was the high light of the second half period of Mr.Naidu's government. I do not think it was a small lapse or accidental. An outmoded

concept of “development,” misadventure with populism are mainly responsible for missing the bus in 2004.

- 5) Administrative reforms pending for decades together, were not touched during this period. Reiterating or refreshing the absolute teachings in training classes hardened the attitudes of officialdom. The hated anti people behavior of the police towards the common man, let alone reformed for the better, got worsened and became counter productive.
- 6) Reforms in the system of education, from primary to higher level, still remains in cold storage. Our system of education is proving counter productive adding to the army of unemployed. More than illiterate unemployment, unemployability of educated has become a hard nut to crack. Our dynamic C.M with all his school committees and mothers’ committees could not bring about any visible change in it.
- 7) The consecutive droughts for three years in the second half of the TDP rule of nine years had shaken the confidence for a secure life when procurement of drinking water had become a herculean task and the irrigation sources got dried up, apart from the power supply to agriculture becoming a big political problem. Under such critical conditions the “food for work” schemes had generated bad blood when the selfish social and political workers made hay while the sun shines. This was exploited most by the congress adversaries who were waiting in wings for seizing political power by hook or crook. These were “the bad days” when power tilted with marginal votes.
- 8) In spite of the above drawbacks intended or unintended, the overall public opinion about the TDP, its charismatic founder leader NTR and its skilled and able manager Nara Chandra Babu Naidu stood at a higher rate. But for the late YSR’s competitive upper hand in snatching every opportunity to cash in politically on each and every lapse, the congress victory would have been an impossibility. Backward classes, more than the scheduled castes refused to believe in the good conduct certificate produced by Sri Y.S.R. and his congress. YSR’s ‘Pada yatra’, his promise of free current and promise of full powers to Panchayat Raj institutions worked as the proverbial last straw on the camel’s back and enthroned him.
- 9) It is most unfortunate that Sri Chandra Babu Naidu who appeared on the political stage with a lot of newness in governance, in ideology and in public support could not be in power for more than nine years. His successor, his own old and good friend in his youth congress days, had totally changed the very meaning of a political leader and proved to be a big liability to the congress party itself. It would be politically unethical on my part to dilate at length about a friend who is no more now.

Sri Nara Chandra Babu Naidu: a modern political craftsman: I relish my memory when Sri Naidu hand in hand with his friend late Sri YSR, both

grafted in to the proverbial 60 member Jumbo cabinet of late Sri T.Anjaiah in 1978 had called on me and late P.Sundaraiah and Gautu Lachanna as their courtesy call. Both of them, Ministers for the first time appeared to be quite promising and I wished them every success. I have been watching Mr.Naidu closely and from distance for the last over thirty years. He had a rare opportunity to build his political personality by being the closest adviser to late NTR, the most popular Chief Minister, the state ever had. For the first time NTR had placed the Telugu language and culture on the political map of India erasing the unhappy position of being “Madrasis”, thus elevating the self respect of telugu speaking people. He had entered politics with an immense popularity as a cine idol only to fill the political vacuum created by the misrule of the congress party, and provide a sustainable alternative to it. Mr.Naidu, as the closest adviser to NTR had mastered the craft of building the party organization giving it flesh and blood attracting towards it the inexhaustible fund of support of the backward classes and down trodden people. But for his tireless work, the TDP would not have taken its roots, so deep.

Politics, in democracy is the management of power, reflecting the good or bad socio-economic processes emanating from the life conditions of the people concerned. Mr.Naidu who succeeded NTR under not so happy circumstances, did skilfully use the ready made legacy of social capital left by his late father-in-law. But as already noted there arise stages of rise and fall depending upon the good or bad socio economic processes. The first half of nine years of his Chief Ministership went off very well thanks to the grounding of the promised reforms affecting the life of the people. The second half commencing from 2004 was a testing time for the execution of all the promises made. I vividly recollect the instances when the common voters themselves who openly talked about the extension of power to him for an another term. His promises and his efforts at their execution paid him good dividends. The real life experiences in the process of their real execution proved negative one after the other. ‘Janmabhoomi,’ education committee, mothers committees, water committees, forest protection committees and what not proved to be counter productive . Most of his time was wasted in pulling up the errant bureaucracy which itself added fuel to fire by its negative role.

Mr.Naidu a modest and simple man, was also honest and hardworking. I can recollect with a sense of satisfaction, an incident of gross injustice done to the Telangana engineers in the irrigation department where over a dozen of them rightly claiming their seniority were intentionally sidelined and were refused their legitimate promotions. He took my representation about such an injustice very seriously and got it thoroughly enquired into. Realising the mistakes committed by the persons incharge, he had the courage enough to set it right by undoing what should not have been done. This correction of the mistakes while restoring confidence in his impartiality, had given rise to immense good will among the Telangana services. Promotion of computer technology, creation

of thousands of employment opportunities to the educated by making good use of outsourcing policies of the developed countries, especially the USA had won him very good name as a modern political engineer. The leader of the opposition late Sri Y.S.R had picked up every lapse on the part of the TDP governance and had magnified it beyond proportion ultimately tilting the scales in favour of his party rule in the year 2004. Tilting of marginal votes is easier than sustaining power facing the odds. I was elected for the sixth and last term when Mr.Naidu lost his power. We had a very good time to play our roles as the leaders in opposition. His performance as the leader of the opposition since 2004 which continued upto the year 2009 is really appreciable. But for his miscalculations on the question of separate Telangana state, despite the positive resolution of TDP on separate Telangana which he bungled, his track record of innovative service before self would have won for him a unique place in Indian politics. A shrewd Politician, Mr. Naidu, in power, proved positive as an agent of social change which is laudable, but out of power he is proving negative as a power seeking manipulator. I wish he acquires the statesmanship.



On the occasion of the 17th September, the liberation day of the erstwhile state of Hyderabad (17-9-2011)

(left to right) Smt. Mallu Swarajyam, freedom fighter; Sri Konda Laxman Bapuji, freedom fighter; Ch. Rajeshwara Rao, freedom fighter & President of TMM Trust; Sri Omkar Prasad, a founder leader of AHSU and freedom fighter; B. Venkata Ramarao, freedom fighter and Chairman HSSC