

# ASIEN

DEUTSCHE ZEITSCHRIFT FÜR POLITIK, WIRTSCHAFT UND KULTUR

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## INDIA'S 7TH GENERAL ELECTIONS: THE FORGIVING ELECTORATE

Dagmar Bernstorff

Democracy and authoritarianism are but two aspects of Indian political culture. Both have their roots in Indian society and history, and many Indians probably would like to have a government which combines both. The majority of the Indian electorate voted Mrs. Gandhi out of power in 1977, because her authoritarian leadership lacked respect for democratic values. The same electorate voted her back to power, because the government of the Janata Party had restored democracy, but showed weak leadership.

Once again in January 1980 the Indian electorate astounded politicians, political observers and even the winners, as they did in 1971 and in 1977. The results of the 1971[1] General Elections reflected hope, the outcome of the 1977 Elections expressed courage, the results of the 1980 Elections showed fear of the unknown: coalition government at the centre. This fear is but a symptom of a deep-seated crisis in the Indian political system, an ongoing crisis since the early 1970's. It is mainly a crisis of the Congress Party, whose failure to evolve an ideology and party discipline prevented the development of an alternative to personal power politics. The domination of the party by one family has denied politicians of Nehru's and Indira Gandhi's generation the chance to become Prime Minister and excluded younger politicians from gaining experience as leaders. As the Janata Party consisted to a large extent of former Congressmen, these rivalries and frustrations were carried over into the new party.

### The Dissolution of Parliament

The immediate crisis, which led to the dissolution of Parliament on August 22nd, 1979, followed the break-up of the Janata Party, which, though it had been formed out of four opposition parties[2] during the Emergency (1975-1977), miraculously won a landslide victory in 1977. When Mr. Charan Singh, the leader of the erstwhile Bharatiya Lok Dal, a party of small and medium farmers in Uttar Pradesh, threatened to leave the Janata Party on 15th July, 1975, thus forcing the resignation of Morarji Desai just a day before a vote of no-confidence, he blamed the "communalism" of the former Jan Sanghis for the Janata Party's lack of cohesion. However, ideology only served as an excuse, the real conflict was between three aged men, eager to fulfill their life-long ambition to be Prime Minister: Morarji Desai, Charan Singh and Jagjivan Ram, the Harijan politician. Morarji Desai, Prime Minister since 1977, had failed to get his priorities right. Instead of working for the integration of his party, developing consensus on ideology and leadership, he concentrated his energies on minor problems like prohibition of liquor, and he proved to be too stubborn to resign in time, even though it was obvious that he had lost hold over the Janata Parliamentary Party. Even Charan Singh with the help of Raj Narain had not hesitated to conspire with Mrs. Gandhi against Morarji Desai, only to be grossly disappointed by her: After Morarji Desai's resignation the President asked Mr. Charan Singh to form the government. But on

the day he tried to test his strength in Parliament, Mrs. Gandhi withdrew her promised support[3]. On the advice of Mr. Charan Singh, then leading a caretaker government, the President dissolved the Lok Sabha on August 22nd, 1980, and called for new elections. This decision caused an intensive debate among constitutional experts. Meanwhile Jagjivan Ram, freshly elected as leader of the Janata Party in Parliament, claimed that he had the necessary majority to form a government. Was the advice of a caretaker Prime Minister binding on the President? The Indian Constitution is unusually brief on the appointment of Prime Ministers[4]. Most observers thought that the President was not inclined to invite a Harijan to head the government.

Mr. Charan Singh not only forgot the simple truth that one needs a majority to form a government, he also grossly underestimated Mrs. Gandhi's resilience, an astonishing mistake for a politician of his experience and standing. By allowing the Janata Party to break up, Mr. Charan Singh and his friends undid what opposition leaders had been trying to build up for the last 15 years: a viable alternative to the Congress Party.

The split in the Janata Party was only possible because the Congress had gone through another division. Mrs. Gandhi had succeeded in splitting her party in January 1978 in order to get herself elected as Congress President with the help of Mr. Devraj Urs, then Chief Minister of Karnataka, and Dr. M. Chenna Reddy of Andhra Pradesh, who had their own reasons for supporting Mrs. Gandhi[5]. The two South Indian states were to have elections to the Legislative Assembly, and Mrs. Gandhi's charisma was still intact there, as the policies of the Emergency had not been so drastically implemented in the South. The Congress led by Mrs. Gandhi did win the Assembly elections in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka in the spring of 1978. However, relations between Mrs. Gandhi and Mr. Devraj Urs deteriorated when the latter refused to accept her interference in state politics and criticized the continuing influence of her son Sanjay[6]. Mr. Urs was expelled from the Congress-I, but retained his hold over the Legislature Party of Karnataka. Subsequently he joined the official Congress Party and was elected Congress President (hence the party was called Congress-U)[7]. However, more and more Congressmen sensed the changing mood of the electorate and switched over to Mrs. Gandhi, eager to contest as Congress-I candidates.

#### Pre-Electoral Crisis

In the months following the dissolution of Parliament Indian politics were seen at its worst: defections, buying of support and the forging of unholy alliances - triumphs of wholly unprincipled politics and a complete erosion of political morale. Politicians proved to have only one aim: to preserve their own personal power. Corruption had reached its pinnacle. An atmosphere of gloom beset the country and even devout democrats were questioning the validity of their values.

With the desintegration of the parties in the middle of the political spectrum, Congress and Janata Party, only the forces at the extreme right and at the extreme left, that is, the Jan Sangh element in the Janata Party and the Communist Parties respectively, had their organizations intact.

At this juncture a realignment of forces would have been necessary, with new and more meaningful parties emerging, based on genuine social and economic interests. But such a process was not to be expected in the heat of an election campaign[8].

This political and moral crisis coincided with an economic crisis following the failure of the monsoon in several parts of India. Prices for basic food-stuffs like oil, sugar and onions shot up - inflation stood at 20%. As food grains had to be carried to drought-hit areas, transport capacity proved insufficient, coal did not reach the power stations, diesel-oil did not get to the water pumps, kerosene for cooking and lighting was lacking. At the same time the law and order situation deteriorated, the crime rate rose. In such conditions, the cry for a strong leader comes easily.

#### The Campaign

Meanwhile the parties - or what was left of them - got ready to fight the General Elections. Ad hoc alliances were formed:

1. The revived Lok Dal Party of Charan Singh entered into an alliance with the Congress-U and with the two Communist Parties, which for the first time since the CPI split did not contest against each other. This alliance was not consistently implemented, Congress-U and Lok Dal candidates clashed in 88 constituencies[9] and at the local level cadres of both Communist parties did not always support the common candidate.
2. The Janata Party agreed on seat adjustment with the ruling All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) in Tamilnadu.
3. The Congress-I allied with the opposition Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), one of Mrs. Gandhi's most astonishing reconciliations, as the DMK leader, Mr. Karunanidhi, had been deposed by her as Chief Minister of Tamilnadu in January 1976 on charges of corruption.

Mr. Karunanidhi was not the only opponent Mrs. Gandhi succeeded in drawing into her camp: not only did she make her peace with H. Bahuguna, the former Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, who has a considerable following in his home state, particularly among Muslims. She also won over Syed Abdullah Bukhari, the Imam Shahi of the Jamma Masjid in Delhi, one of the most influential leaders among Muslims, who had been one of her strongest critics during the Emergency. At election meetings he was seen waving a piece of paper, which he claimed contained written promises by Mrs. Gandhi to the Muslim Community in return for electoral support[10].

The election campaign was the least animated this author has observed. The general gloom and disgust with politics translated itself into apathy on the part of voters. Mass-meetings were rare, processions and street-corner-meetings thinly attended. There were few visible signs of an election campaign. The scribblings on the walls - the cheapest and most popular form of publicity - looked faded and left-over from previous polls. There were few posters and fewer flags. Only one party flooded the whole of India with posters: the Congress-I. They carried the same slogans in different languages, but the pictures of Mrs. Gandhi were

adapted to regional ideals of beauty[11]: The slogans read: "Indira lao, desh bachao" (bring back Indira and save the country) - "Vote for those who can govern" and "Vote for performance".

During the campaign the chance was lost to debate alternative development strategies. A careful look at the manifestos reveals that the Janata, Lok Dal and the two Congress Parties did propose different approaches to economic and social problems. The Congress-I and to a lesser degree also the Congress-U[12] reiterated their faith in planning and in the application of science and technology to agricultural development. To some extent the Congress-I has taken a few cues from the Janata Party, i.e. now also the Congress-I manifesto talked of the maximum utilization of manpower, of the modernization of bullock-carts and of the improvement in the design of both motorized and non-motorized rikshaws! The Janata Party manifesto[13] stressed once again the primacy of agriculture and "antayodaya", the uplift of the poorest of the poor. It promised "Democracy at all levels in total opposition to authoritarianism, dynastic rule and the cult in personality ..." [14], secularism and decentralisation. The Lok Dal manifesto is even more explicit on a Gandhian approach to economics, highlighting self-employment, austerity and simplicity. Until the basic necessities will be available to everybody, the Lok Dal Party proposed to ban the manufacture of non-essential items such as refrigerators and TV sets for personal consumption, of costly passenger cars and the construction of skyscrapers ... [15].

But the actual campaign was not about the primacy of agriculture over industries, about austerity versus modernity, nor about applied technology. The campaign was mainly about persons, their deeds and misdeeds. The non-Congress Parties tried to make the Emergency an issue, but did not really succeed. The Janata Party, the Lok Dal and the Communist Parties warned against the dangers to freedom and democracy, should Mrs. Gandhi come to power again. Congress-I speakers dramatized the chaos that would follow, unless they were voted back to power. They promised firm government, performance and stability. Thus the issue which eventually emerged was

#### "Stability versus Anti-authoritarianism".

But what did the Congress-I really mean by "stability"? If one gives this party the benefit of the doubt that they did not mean the "stability" of the Emergency, how stable was Indira Gandhi's government before 1975? In spite of the massive mandate the Congress Party received at the national elections in 1971 and at the state elections in 1972, a crisis set in soon afterwards. True, there was inflation following the Bangladesh War. The oil-crisis and three successive droughts weakened the Indian economy. The promise of "garibi hatao" (abolish poverty, the election slogan of 1971) could not be fulfilled. But these economic difficulties were not the only reasons for the crisis of the early 1970ies. Political decay started from the top, and political processes at the base were stifled. Local political bodies were suspended, and in the Congress Party innerparty election rarely happened and were replaced by cooptions. Only politicians handpicked by Mrs. Gandhi were given responsible positions. Corruption grew, not only because political control was weakened, but as Indian politicians increasingly fell for the temptations of modern living. Jayaprakash Narayan's movement for "total peaceful revolution" was an effort

to stem decay, a movement for the purification of the political system - but an effort that failed. In July 1975 Mrs. Gandhi saw no other way out than to impose the state Emergency! Nevertheless, she built her election campaign of 1980 on the theme of "stability".

#### The Voters' Councils Movement

Let it go on record that at the heights of general disgust and disillusionment with politics there were men and women, who tried not to give in the gloom, nor to be overwhelmed with despair. If the representatives elected in 1977 "... Instead of restoring principles in public life ... resorted to an unprincipled scramble for power"[16] it is not adequate just to complain, they argued, but necessary to educate the voters, in order to get better parliaments. A "Coordination Committee for Strengthening Democracy" was formed on 30 August 1979, consisting of five organizations concerned with civic rights and moral standards in politics: the "Citizens for Democracy", the "Sarva Seva Sangh", the "National People's Committee", the "Lok Sevak Sangh", and the "Gandhi Peace Foundation"[17]. They issued an appeal to form "Voters' Councils" at constituency level, councils consisting of "persons of democratic convictions, who do not belong (to) or owe any allegiance to any political party and will not run for office". The Voters' Councils should urge voters[18]

1. to shed their apathy and use their right of vote;
2. cast their vote in such a way that persons of moral integrity, who would place public interest above private advantage, get elected;
3. to defeat defectors;
4. not to vote for parties or candidates, which "represent authoritarian forces" and are "unrepentant about the Emergency";
5. reject candidates known for their communal and caste attitudes;
6. and to beware of corruption in whatever disguise.

Members of the Voters' Councils should explain to the voters the essentials of democracy, such as government through participation and consent, right of dissent, freedom of religion, of speech, of association - equality, social justice and the minimum decencies of life. Particularly, they should fight the "pernicious view that Indian polity and Indian nation cannot survive without a strong and authoritarian leader and that our basic problems of poverty, social justice and lack of discipline cannot be solved without breeding a vast and all pervasive fear"[19].

Several concepts propagated by the Voters' Councils Movement were taken from Jayaprakash Narayan, e.g. the "right of recall" (of elected representatives by the voters) and the "people's candidates". In the earlier stages of the election campaign - in October 1979 - the aim was to set up "people's candidates" in about 100 constituencies, candidates, proposed by the citizens themselves, not sponsored by a party. These should be persons of high reputation, expected to be genuinely concerned about their constituents. This plan did not materialize, nor could the target to form Voters' Councils in all the 542 Lok Sabha constituencies be reached. As however Voters' Councils and similar organizations sprang up in all parts of India, also independent of the Coordination Committee's efforts, it is difficult to ascertain the exact number. Probably there were between 30 and 50. Several such Voter's Councils were based on centres of the Sar-

vodaya Movement, on branches of the Radical Humanist Association and in projects of the Gandhi Peace Foundation. Hence the activities were most lively in Rajasthan (where they were organized through adult education centres) and in Madhya Pradesh, in Delhi and in Bombay. In the South there were activities in Bangalore, in Hyderabad, and in Madras (sponsored by the Council on Public Affairs, an organization founded in 1952). For the Atheist Centre at Vijayawada the idea was not new: Its founder, Gora, had started voters' education already many years ago, and today it is an integral part of the Atheist Centre's projects and programmes.

In Bihar the Gandhi Peace Foundation commissioned a study of violence during elections. The results of this study, it was thought, will be more instructive even than the Voters' Councils!

The Voters' Councils tried to spread their message by various methods: distribution of leaflets with a Voters' Charter, spelling out what the councils stood for and what they opposed, chainletters, door-to-door canvassing. They used an emblem, which anybody could easily draw: a sun with seven rays representing the seven principles listed in the Indian Constitution: democracy, secularism, socialism, justice, liberty, equality and fraternity. In some constituencies, notably in Delhi and Hyderabad, panel discussions with all candidates were arranged. A very systematic effort was made in Bombay, where regular plans of action, talking points and a list of slogans were made available to volunteers. Among the slogans were: "The trains may run on time, but will you live to catch them?" Or: "Do you want law and order or order without law?" [20] Students, boys and girls, could be seen engaged in heated debates with commuting labourers at Bombay's suburban railway-stations. These activities must have had some impact, as the Congress-I candidate for the Bombay South Constituency claimed to be backed by the Voters' Councils Movement. Needless to say, he wasn't!

The councils worked on the principle to urge voters to choose democratic candidates, they did not suggest names. But the Coordination Committee for Strengthening Democracy published a black-list of candidates, who had at any time been indicted by a Court or a Commission of Inquiry [21]. Among them were Indra Gandhi, her son, Sanjay, Messrs. Bansilal, V.C. Shukla, and Zail Singh (all were elected, nevertheless). The list also contained names of Janata Party and Lok Dal candidates, such as Biju Patnaik. Volunteers were hoping for a "white list" of recommended candidates, but it was not forthcoming. However, in the heat of an election campaign, neutrality is difficult to maintain. In practice the Voters' Councils support went mostly to candidates of the Janata Party.

The "National Panel to guide Voters", consisting of seven well-known citizens, among them Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit and General Cariappa, did publish a list of 40 candidates, whom they recommended. The list contained names of candidates of all parties, including the CPI-M, but excluding the two Congress Parties [22].

In two constituencies of Andhra Pradesh there were Voters' Councils' candidates: In Hyderabad and in Secunderabad. Mr. V.M. Ramamurthi, a retired advocate and A.P. Secretary General of the "Citizens for Democracy", convened a meeting in October 1979. Different opinions were voiced whether, as a form of protest, to boycott the elections or invalidate the

votes, or to form Voters' Councils. Apparently there was not enough response for constituency-wide Voters' Councils. But Mr. Ramamurthi and his friends decided that a campaign for the boycott of elections would take as much time as to work for a candidate. Hence they formed a "Committee for Voters' Councils Movement" and set up two candidates: Mrs. Malladi Venkata Subbama (Mr. Ramamurthi's wife), a journalist and social worker and managing editor of "Vikasam", a Telugu monthly, contested the Hyderabad constituency.

The public-spirited couple ran an imaginative and economical campaign. They recorded their own speeches and hired an electrician, who went around in an autorikshaw, played back the tapes at street-corners, while volunteers distributed leaflets. They mobilized well-known Hyderabad intellectuals for panel discussions and expected to spend only Rs. 14,000,-, raised through donations. Mrs. Subbama received 6,129 votes [23], a fair result in this constituency which comprises the old town of Hyderabad and the neighbouring rural area. The contest was particularly bitter and even sparked off communal riots, as the main contenders for this seat were the candidates of the Congress-I, the Majlis-Ittehad-ul-Muslimin (a local Muslim party) and the Janata Party (whose nominee was considered pro-RSS). Polling participation was high: 70.8%.

Mr. Chundi Jagannatham, the Voters' Council candidate for Secunderabad, is a Sarvodaya worker, who as a student took part in the Satyagraha of 1932 and had been actively involved in the Bhoodan Movement. He considered himself a close associate of Jayaprakash Narayan. Both candidates used the same leaflets, propagating the "right of recall", decentralization and anticorruption. Mr. Chundi Jagannatham received 1,226 votes.

The Secunderabad constituency was contested by 17 candidates, but the contest was much less keen, owing to the absence of communal polarisation. Curiously the three main rivals in this constituency - the candidates of the Janata Party, the Congress-I and the Lok Dal - were all considered to be men of good personal reputation, thus sympathizers of the Voters' Council Movement were in two minds whom to give their vote to.

The promoters of the Voters' Council Movement saw their efforts during the campaign of 1980 as a modest beginning, realizing that voters' education has to take place between elections to be effective. Their credibility may have suffered, as they claimed to be above party politics, but backed mostly Janata Party candidates. By and large the Voters' Councils remained confined to cities and middle-class voters, without reaching the rural voters, who are politically conscious, but who don't necessarily perceive democracy in terms of Western-type liberalism.

#### Polling Arrangements

It is pertinent to ask: Were the elections conducted in a correct and fair manner? The Election Commission made intensive efforts to reduce violence and guarantee protection to the voters. By and large they succeeded. Previously Indian elections were conducted during several days. Now voting took place only on two days (January 3rd and 6th, 1980). This was meant to prevent "goondas" (hired gangsters) from travelling round and shifting their activities from one area to another! On January 6th, a Sunday, private motor-vehicles were not allowed on the roads, again to re-

strict the movements of miscreants. Many more polling stations were set up so that voters had shorter distances to walk. Whereas the number of voters had increased by 10.26% since 1977, the number of polling stations was increased by 17.17% on average (in Tamilnadu by 9%, in Rajasthan by 13% and in Bihar by 33%!) [24]. Hence the number of voters per polling station was reduced to about 800 (formerly about 900-1,000). Particularly in Harijan or minority areas more polling stations were made available (in some cases one station for 250 voters) to ensure that they were not prevented from voting by members of higher castes. But a one day poll also meant that more polling staff had to be trained and that fewer police were available.

As in Bihar there were not enough policemen to guard all polling stations, the trouble-prone places were identified and given police protection while less dangerous localities were looked after by home-guards. Central Reserve Police was kept on duty, and even the Army was alerted.

As I could observe while accompanying the Returning Officer of the Patna and Barh constituencies (in Patna District), the ban on private motor-vehicles was very strictly enforced [25]. A hierarchy of patrolling parties inspected the polling booths, with the District Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police themselves doing surprise checks.

We arrived in a village, just as two rival groups of men - each several hundred strong - were about to engage in a battle. The District Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police swiftly got out of their cars - armed only with sticks - walked resolutely towards the battle-line. Within minutes the crowd dispersed, before even six policemen, travelling in the DM's convoy, had alighted from their jeeps. They assisted in closing two polling stations, where ballot boxes had been snatched by supporters of the Congress-I. Half-an-hour later two busses with Bihar Military-Police, armed with rifles, arrived - all that was left to do was to guard a third polling station 200 yards away, where voting continued. "Rioters know their limits here", remarked one of the IAS officers coolly.

According to the Chief Secretary, polling was much more peaceful in Bihar than in 1977, when 13 people died and 181 were injured. Violence erupted on polling day for several reasons, which are not peculiar to Bihar, the pattern seems to be similar all over India:

1. The most common form of violence is: Supporters of one candidate try to scare away the voters of others [26].
2. One party tries to capture one or two polling stations in order to stamp the ballot papers for their candidate only:  
"Five bombs were exploded and six gunshots were fired in a bid to grab the booths" [27].
3. "Goondas" snatch ballot boxes or ballot papers and destroy them - thus making voting impossible for their opponents:  
"In Viramparasa village a mob attacked the polling station, snatched away the ballot papers and threw them into a river ..." [28].
4. Clashes between workers of different candidates:  
"A woman was shot dead and two boys were injured in a clash between two rival groups at village Saidapur in Fatwah block" [29].

#### 5. Clashes between party workers and police or polling staff:

"The Election Commission's Observer ... and five other officials ... were injured, when an armed gang attacked their vehicle near village Barahi ... of the Sitamarhi Lok Sabha constituency ... the attackers were identified as the supporters of former Lok Sabha Speaker, Mr. Baliram Bhagat, who is a Congress (U) candidate here" [30].

Some people killed themselves in action:

"At Biharsharif three persons were killed and five others injured, when bombs carried by them accidentally exploded" [31].

Evidently the arms used in these clashes range from iron rods and sticks to guns, hand-made bombs and even light machine guns! In Bihar 50 out of 54,507 polling stations had to be closed. Repolling takes place only, if the results in the whole constituency are narrow.

The Election Commission was heavily criticized for faulty electoral registers. It seems thousands of voters could not cast their vote as their names were not listed, although the rolls had been brought up-to-date immediately before the elections [32]. One assumes that this was inefficiency not planned sabotage.

The most widespread method of electoral fraud in India is so-called "bogus-voting" or "impersonation", i.e. hired "workers" pretend to be the voter x or z, cast a vote as told, and if the genuine voters turn up, they find that their right of vote has already been exercised by somebody else. This is possible, because in a large country like India, where 70% of the population is illiterate, voters normally don't possess identity cards. The Election Commission does not send out notices, informing the voters of their polling station and their number on the electoral roll. Therefore the candidates supply voters with so-called poll-chits, on which these particulars are mentioned. This puts a considerable strain on the campaign organizers, as 5-800,000 such slips have to be filled per Lok Sabha constituency, usually by paid helpers. It also opens up a possibility of influencing polling participation, as clever candidates don't send poll-chits to the areas where they have no or little support. But without these slips polling officers would take even longer to trace voters on the register. Actually the polling officers are supposed to ask voters for their names. But I could observe that voters just showed their (or somebody else's?) poll-chit, the polling officers read out the names, ticked them off on the register and handed them their ballot paper without further checks [33].

There is a mechanism to prevent impersonation: putting an inkmark on the index-finger of everyone who voted, but this is ineffective, because the ink can easily be wiped off with the requisite chemicals.

There is consensus among observers that all parties engage in some violence and in the organization of "bogus-voting". Hence the election results probably don't get grossly distorted. Still, thinking goes on in the Election Commission, how to provide voters with identity cards.

One measure reintroduced by the Election Commission is a step backwards from the point of view of secrecy of the vote. Up to 1967 the ballot papers were counted boothwise and the results were made available to candidates. This was discontinued in 1971, but readopted in 1980, at the

request of the major political parties. The parties naturally have an interest to know precisely, where their support is. But now the possibility of harassment of voters after the poll has been reestablished.

### The Election Results

The results of the elections came as a surprise even to the winners: Mrs. Gandhi's Congress Party won 352 out of the 527 seats contested with 42.68% of the votes. The opposition parties were reduced to fragments - the Janata Party retained 31 of the 202 seats it held at the time of the dissolution of Parliament, the Lok Dal did only slightly better, winning 41 seats. The only other party which made any gains, was the Communist Party Marxist (CPI-M), which succeeded in increasing its representation in the Lok Sabha from 22 to 36 seats, mainly in West Bengal, where the trend towards the Congress-I was stopped in favour of a trend towards the CPI-M-led Left front.

Thus as in 1971 and in 1977, the Indian voters produced a landslide victory, this time again for Mrs. Gandhi. It has to be kept in mind that the electoral system - simple majority vote - greatly helped to produce these results.

It is hazardous to compare elections in India, as the parties - behaving according to the electoral system - enter different alliances and do not contest the same number of constituencies, not even the same constituencies, each time, particularly the smaller parties, which have no all-India base. At the constituency level the number of candidates differs from one election to the other. The number of voters increased rapidly (see Table I), e.g. by 81.4 millions from 1971 to 1980 and by 34.4 millions between 1977 and 1980. The generation born in the late nineteenfifties now reaches voting-age and a continuous rejuvenation of the voting population is certain. Still, superficially the results of the elections of 1971 and 1980 show striking similarities.

The Congress won in 1980 the same number of seats (352) as the united Congress won in 1971 (352 out of 520), with 42.68% of the votes (43.06% in 1971 (see Table II)). In 1977 there was a swing away from the Congress of 8.71% to 34.35%, but a swing away from the Congress of 8.71% to 34.35%, but a swing back to Congress-I in 1980 of 8.3% to 42.68%. In 1971 the predecessor parties of the Janata Party polled 24.46% of the vote and gained 53 seats. In 1977 there was a swing away from it - or rather the two successor parties - of 14.54% in 1980 to 28.42%. The number of seats of the Lok Dal and the Janata Party combined is slightly higher than in 1971: 72 seats. In countries with proportional representation swings of around 8% do not lead to landslides. But in the Indian system it is sufficient to produce entirely different majorities in the Lok Sabha.

Both the Congress-I in 1980 and the Janata Party in 1977 won their comfortable majorities with percentages of the votes below 50% - these are the rules of the game in the system of simple majority vote[34]. This electoral system, adopted from the British model, operates however under entirely different conditions in India. Whereas in Great Britain there are three national parties with minor regional ones, in India there is a fragmented multiparty system, now again with one large party and many small ones. The parties are not only fragmented in numbers, but also unevenly

spread regionally. Another difference is the large number of candidates, which has risen steadily from 1952 till 1977, but doubled between the last two elections. In 1952 there were on average 4.2 candidates per contested seat, in 1980 the number of contestants had increased to 8.8 per seat: 4,620 candidates contested for 527 constituencies (see Table I)! There has been an increase of regional parties, particularly in the states of the Northeast, but the main factor is an increase of independent candidates. The reasons for this development will be discussed below.

The results must also be seen in relation to polling participation. This time it was comparatively low: 57.01%. This means a drop of 3.53% from 60.54% in 1977, when the elections were fought much more intensely. It was slightly higher than in 1971 (55.29%), yet lower than in 1967 (61.33%). But a comparison with 1967 is not valid, as until 1967 elections to the Lok Sabha and to the Legislative Assemblies of the states were held simultaneously. Voters were then mobilized by the candidates for the smaller Assembly constituencies. In 1971 Mrs. Gandhi "delinked" the two elections to be able to focus the Parliamentary elections on "national issues".

Polling participation differed widely from state to state (see Table IV).

Even though the electorate had increased by 34.4 millions since 1977, the number of valid votes only increased by 3.2 millions, as polling participation was much lower. Low polling participation points to apathy and frustration of the voters, but works in favour of the party with most resources to be able to bring their vote out. This party was undoubtedly Congress-I.

The Congress-I won its two thirds majority in the Lok Sabha - large enough to change the constitution - with 42.68% of the votes. Considering the polling participation of 57.01% the Congress vote represents only 23.7% of the total electorate (84.2 out of 355 millions). In fact it won 28.7 million votes more than in 1977. Seen in this perspective, the mandate is not as "massive" as it seems at first sight.

### The Congress Vote

Voting behaviour differed widely from one region to another, both in regard to participation and party support. Nevertheless, a number of factors, which influenced voters in favour of Congress-I, can be discerned:

1. The vote was a protest-vote against non-performance of the previous government, against high prices and non-availability of essential commodities, against a deterioration of law and order.
2. Possibly the traditional view that drought follows bad government played a rôle.
3. Voters could not distinguish between the Janata Government and the caretaker Government of the Lok-Dal/Congress-U during which the economic situation got further out of hand.
4. Jagjivan Ram, as the Janata Party candidate for the Prime-Ministership, seems to have alienated high caste voters, without mobilizing sufficient Harijan voters for his party, particularly in the South.

5. Congress-I voters seem to have preferred a "stable government" as promised by Mrs. Gandhi to the alternative: a turbulent phase of coalition governments at the centre. A sizable part of the electorate chose an authoritarian government rather than non-government. But votes for the Congress-I should not be interpreted as a vote to reintroduce the Emergency.
6. The attitude towards Mrs. Gandhi had considerably mellowed since 1977. Perhaps a typically Indian sympathy with the loser made itself felt. A view often heard was: "We have punished her enough in 1977, now she has learnt from her mistakes."
7. Voters were more aware of Mrs. Gandhi than of any other politician, due to her vigorous campaign. She was fighting with her back to the wall, as the findings of inquiry commissions and the setting-up of special courts to try her abuses of power during the Emergency would have been embarrassing for her and members of her family and might have resulted in a very undignified end of the Nehru family. Mrs. Gandhi's only emotional identification is politics, and she was fighting for high stakes. She herself travelled night and day for 62 days, visiting most constituencies (except, curiously, one of her own - Medak in Andhra Pradesh)[35]. Obviously she had no financial constraints, using helicopters, private aeroplanes and several fleets of cars.
8. While Mrs. Gandhi succeeded in presenting herself as the only all-India leader, the opposition parties lacked a convincing alternative personality with more than regional appeal.

#### The Opposition Vote

The Opposition was too fragmented to compete successfully with the Congress-I. They lacked a leader and an issue like the Emergency in 1977, which could have both united them and aroused the voters in their favour. Still, 57.32% of the voters were obviously less concerned with "stability" and strong government. They voted for one of four groups of parties or candidates:

1. **Liberal and / or Gandhian Democrats**: Janata Party, Lok Dal, Congress-U. They together polled 33.64% of the votes, but won only 16.1% of the seats (85). Only the Janata Party contested in a large number of constituencies (Janata Party 431, Lok Dal 293, Congress-U 212), hence these percentage figures have limited relevance. The ideological foundations and the social bases of these three parties are similar: urban and rural middle class and upper lower class. But the leaders, engaged in personal conflicts, failed to assess their chances correctly and allowed their parties to contest against each other. It is not encouraging that those Congressmen - now in the Congress-U - who dissociated themselves from Mrs. Gandhi's style of leadership - albeit only after the electoral defeat of 1977 - and stood for collective leadership, innerparty democracy and the preservation of fundamental rights, could not convince many voters.
2. **The Communist Parties**: The two Communist Parties combined - who, for the first time since 1964, did not contest against

each other - did improve their positions in the Lok Sabha (CPI-M 36, CPI 11) compared to 1977 (CPI-M 22, CPI 7), but could not regain the strength they had in 1971 (25/24 - see Tables II, III). They contested 63 and 48 seats respectively and got together 8.75% of the vote. The CPI-M emerged as the stronger of the two parties but it won its 36 seats from only three states, the majority from West Bengal: 28, from Kerala: 6, from Tripura: 2. The CPI-M lost its three seats in Maharashtra and one each in Punjab and Orissa. Unlike the Congress-I, the CPI has not recovered from its disastrous defeat in 1977, which was a result of the collaboration with the Congress Party and the support of the Emergency. It won its 11 seats from five states, retaining four seats in its regional base in Eastern Bihar. Neither of the two Communist Parties could win a single seat in their erstwhile stronghold Andhra Pradesh.

3. **The regional parties**: These are parties confined mostly to one or two states. Their strength seatwise is negligible (11 excluding DMK and AIADMK), but their role should not be underestimated. Their support in the House can be crucial to one of the larger parties, and they do articulate problems, which the more centralized parties tend to ignore.

4. **Independent candidates**. As mentioned earlier, the number of independent candidates rose dramatically since 1977 to 2,865. Yet, their strength in the Lok Sabha has declined since 1971. Who are these independent candidates? Only a minority are genuine independents, motivated by ideas such as "partyless democracy". Some are politicians with a strong personal following, who did not get their party's nomination and decided to stand on their own. The majority contest for practical reasons: to prove how many votes they can mobilize in preparation for some later - mostly local - election, or to retire in favour of another candidate. Apart from political gains, there are also economic gains in contesting: Special permits for petrol and paper, and "black" money (i.e. that has not been accounted for) can be declared as electric expenses. The Election Commission is examining how to limit the large number of independent candidates, as they are a considerable burden on the election procedure. They increase the cost of paper and printing, voters get confused by the large ballot-papers, counting of votes takes longer.

#### Regional Variations

So far we have analysed the results of the General Elections on an all-India basis. It is however necessary to look at them in a regional perspective. There are three groups of states: 1. States from where Congress-I candidates were elected almost exclusively. 2. States, where the Opposition parties could retain some support. 3. The peripheral states in the South and the North-East, where the voting pattern differed.

1. States from where Congress-I candidates were elected almost exclusively: They form a belt covering the West, Central India, and parts of the South and East: The states of Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka. They have a low to average voting participation under 60% (see Table IV) and a percentage of Congress-I votes of more than 50% in common

(with one exception: Madhya Pradesh, 46.52%)[36]. The reasons for the Congress-I victories differ from state to state, and it is beyond the scope of this article to go into all the details. Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka are in a category by themselves. In these two states Congress was not defeated in 1977, because the repressive policies of the Emergency were implemented softly, and the two state governments under Vengal Rao and Devraj Urs did carry out some of the reforms under the 20-Point Programme. Thus a ray of hope was lit amongst the rural poor. In these two states Mrs. Gandhi seems to enjoy the image of a kind of Mother Goddess, which has not been shaken yet. (Backward classes leaders do see that during 30 years of Congress rule very little has been done to remove rural poverty. But they support Mrs. Gandhi because she successfully mobilizes voters.) Most observers expected Devraj Urs to retain some of his following in Karnataka. But having attributed the successes of his own government to Mrs. Gandhi for years, he could not all of a sudden take the credit himself[37]. In Andhra Pradesh and in Karnataka the Congress-I repeated the performance of the united Congress in 1977 almost identically[38]. These two states provided the Congress-I with a solid base of 68 seats, about one sixth of the Congress-I strength in the new Lok Sabha[39]. The Congress-I victory in Punjab can be clearly attributed to the conflicts in the then ruling Akali Dal Party. Gujarat and Maharashtra did not experience the "Janata Wave" of 1977 as strongly as the Northern states. Here, too, the Emergency was implemented less harshly (in fact Gujarat had an opposition government until 1976). As the strong men of the Emergency period were mostly Hindi speaking politicians, their impact was less felt in these two states. Thus Congress could retain 10 seats in Gujarat and 20 in Maharashtra in 1977. In 1980 the swing towards Congress was slightly lower than the national average (7.92 and 6.92 respectively). Still, a Congress-I victory in 25 out of 26 constituencies in Gujarat with 54.84% of the vote while the Janata Party was reduced to one single seat (36.89%), is surprising in Morarji Desai's home state. Apparently it was his turn now to be "taught a lesson". In Maharashtra the voting pattern differed according to regions within the state and consistently so in 1977 and in 1978. Mrs. Gandhi enjoys support in the regions of Vidharba and in Maradwada, the Janata Party in the Western districts and in Bombay.

2. States where the Opposition parties could retain some support: These are the Northern states of Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Rajasthan. In these four Hindi-speaking states the Congress-I won 114 out of 184 seats, the Opposition parties 70. Obviously leaders like Charan Singh in Uttar Pradesh and Jagjivan Ram in Bihar did not lose their following entirely, the organization of their parties was still functioning. This is particularly true of the Lok Dal, which won 29 of their 41 seats in Uttar Pradesh and four in Haryana. In Bihar the Janata Party, which won 8 seats, is based on the former Socialist Party. In this state - one of the poorest in India - a sharp polarization between the "forward castes" and the "backward castes" has taken place. The CPI and the Lok Dal are identified as "backward castes" parties, the Congress-I and the Janata Party are considered to be "forward castes" parties. In the three states of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Haryana, where 29.7% of the voters live (104.6 millions), the votes for the Ja-

nata Party and the Lok Dal combined outnumber those for the Congress-I, in Haryana and Uttar Pradesh the two parties together polled more than 50% (Haryana 61.66%, Uttar Pradesh 51.59%, Bihar 40.17%). It does not follow that the Janata Party and the Lok Dal would have won the same number of votes, had they not fought against each other (as each candidate mobilizes his or her own following), but surely they would have done considerably better.

3. The peripheral states: These are Tamilnadu and Kerala, West Bengal and Kashmir, the home of 73 million voters, and the three states and two Union Territories in the North-East with 1.7 million voters (without Assam). Here either regional parties or parties of the Left offer genuine alternatives to the Congress. In Jammu and Kashmir the National Conference could improve from 2 to 3 seats and increase its percentage of the votes from 23.51% to 37.10%. In Tamilnadu the alliance between the Congress-I and the DMK proved very successful, the Congress winning 20 seats and the DMK 16 (every seat they contested!). This result, too, can be seen as a protest vote against the ruling party in the state: the All India Anna DMK, which won only 2 seats, but received more votes than the DMK - another victim of the electoral system! In the neighbouring state of Kerala two electoral fronts fought each other, thus the splitting of anti-authoritarian votes was avoided. The Left Democratic Front, led by the CPI-M, comprising the CPI, the Congress-U and regional parties, won 12 out of 20 seats and 51.6% of the votes. The Congress-I-led United Democratic Front won 8 seats and 48.4% of the votes. The two Communist Parties together won 8 seats and 25.65% of the votes, the CPI-M clearly proved stronger than the CPI.

All over India voting can be interpreted as registering protest, not only against the Government at the Centre, but also at the state-level. There is one exception: West Bengal. Here the trend can even be interpreted as a vote of confidence for the ruling party - the CPI-M. It won 28 seats out of 42. The major contest was between the CPI-M-led Left Front (with the CPI, the RSP and the Forward Bloc) against the Congress-I. The Janata Party and the Congress-U/Lok Dal also contested, but did not win a single seat. The Left Front won 38 seats and 53.97% of the votes, whereas the Congress-I won 4 seats and 36.51% of the votes (contesting 41 seats). The success of the CPI-M is a result of the implementation of reform legislation, of decentralization and increased powers to the Panchayats, of registration of unemployed, payment of unemployment relief and other policies in favour of the poor. The rural power structure underwent a definite change.

What do these results reveal about elections as an instrument of democratic political change in India? Clearly, there is a colossal growth of the cost of elections, both for the state machinery and for parties and candidates. Also irregularities are on the increase. Nevertheless the Indian electorate produces massive swings and radically different compositions of the national parliament. There is a trend towards personalization of elections, yet regional variations have to be taken into account. The peripheral states did produce alternatives to both the Congress and the Liberal and/or Gandhian parties. In spite of the social and economic strains on the Indian political system, elections did prove, once again, to be a meaningful instrument of peaceful change of government at the centre.

## Notes

- 1 For the results of the 1977 elections see: E. Kulke: Die Abwahl einer Diktatur - Hintergründe und Auswirkungen der indischen Parlamentswahlen 1977. (Aktuelle Informationspapiere zur Entwicklung und Politik, No.4), Freiburg i.Br., Arnold-Bergsträsser-Institut, 1977; E. Kulke: "Die anti-Indira Wahlen in Indien", in: Internationales Asienforum, Vol.8 No.3/4 (1977), pp. 205-233; D. Bernstorff and S.P. Malla (eds.): Freiheit und/oder Brot. Der Ausnahmezustand in Indien 1975-1977 und seine Überwindung. Chapter X, in press; M. Weiner: India at the polls. The Parliamentary Elections in 1977, Washington, D.C., 1978.
- 2 The Congress-O, the Jan Sangh Party, the Socialist Party and the Bharatiya Lok Dal. For a detailed account see D. Bernstorff and S.P. Malla: Freiheit und/oder Brot, op.cit., Chapter VII.
- 3 Charan Singh claimed that Mrs. Gandhi made the withdrawal of the Special Courts to try the excesses of the Emergency a condition for her support. He was not prepared to concede this.
- 4 Article 75(1): "The Prime Minister shall be appointed by the President, and the other Ministers shall be appointed by the President on the advice of the Prime Minister."
- 5 Times of India, January 2 and 3, 1978; Indian Express, January 2, 3, 4, 1978; The Hindu, January 3, 1978.
- 6 The Statesman Weekly, June 23 and 30, 1979.
- 7 Mr. Devraj Urs resigned as Chiefminister of Karnataka immediately after the General Elections following the defeat of the Congress-U in the State of Karnataka.
- 8 For a debate on this problem see Seminar No. 242 "Our fractured political system".
- 9 Deccan Chronicle, December 28, 1979,
- 10 Times of India, December 23, 1979.
- 11 In Andhra Pradesh posters showed her looking like a Telugu film-star!
- 12 Indian National Congress (I) Election Manifesto 1980. New Delhi 1979; Congress Election Manifesto. New Delhi 1979.
- 13 Janata Party Election Manifesto 1980. New Delhi 1979.
- 14 ibid., p. 30.
- 15 Lok Dal Election Manifesto 1979. New Delhi 1979, p. 7.
- 16 Coordination Committee for Strengthening Democracy: Voters Councils: Purpose and Programme. Mimeogr. New Delhi, August 30, 1979. Printed in: Gandhi Marg, Vol.1, No.7 (1979), pp.479-481.
- 17 Organizations which joined later were: Hindustani Andolan, Bharatki Pukar, Peoples Union for Civil Liberties, Action India and Vidyarthi Parishad.

- 18 Based on: Guidelines for Voters' Councils" "Appeal to Voters", "Voters Charter" all published by the Coordination Committee for Strengthening Democracy. New Delhi 1979. "Resolution" passed at a meeting of the citizens of Bombay on October 2nd, 1979.
- 19 "Resolution", op.cit., p.1.
- 20 "Slogans in English" mimeogr., "Citizen Action for Strengthening Democracy and People's Power, Plan of Action", mimeogr., Programme proposed to be taken up by Citizens for Democracy for the 1979 Elections and after. Mimeogr. Pune 1979.
- 21 Voters' Council Movement, Central Cell: "Lok Sabha candidates indicted by Commissions of Inquiry". New Delhi December 14, 1979, mimeogr.
- 22 Press release by A.A. Deshpande, Citizens' Committee for Strengthening Democracy. Mimeogr. Bombay n.d.
- 23 Times of India, January 9, 1980.
- 24 G.G. Mirchandani: The People's Verdict. DCM Computer-based Study. New Delhi 1980, Appendix X, p. 199.
- 25 I am grateful to Mr. R.P. Sinha, Chief Electoral Officer, Bihar, and to Mr. S.P. Sinha, District Magistrate, Patna District, for their co-operation and for having given me the opportunity to accompany the District Magistrate's tour of Patna and Barh constituencies.
- 26 Times of India, January 7, 1980; Indian Express, January 7, 1980.
- 27 Searchlight (Patna), January 7, 1980.
- 28 ibid.
- 29 Indian National (Patna), January 7, 1980.
- 30 Searchlight, January 7, 1980.
- 31 ibid.
- 32 Times of India, January 4, 1980.
- 33 A voter said to the polling officer: "First let me vote for the others. I can vote for myself later." The Statesmen, January 4, 1980.
- 34 The candidate who receives the largest number of votes represents the constituency, all other votes get "lost". The members of the current Lok Sabha represent only about 50% of the votes cast.
- 35 Mrs. Gandhi contested from two constituencies: Rae Bareilly in Uttar Pradesh and Medak in Andhra Pradesh. When I visited Medak constituency on December 27, 1979, very little campaigning was visible. Yet Mrs. Gandhi received 68% of the votes.
- 36 General Elections to the House of the People - 1980 by Election Commission of India, mimeogr., June 1980.
- 37 See James Manor: "Pragmatic Progressives in Regional Politics. The Case of Devraj Urs." In: Economic and Political Weekly, Vol.XV, No. 5-7, 1980, pp. 201-213.

- 38 In Andhra Pradesh Congress won in 1977 and Congress-I in 1980 56.2% of the votes and 41 out of 42 seats. In Karnatak Congress won 56.81% and Congress-I 56.25% in 1977 and 1980 resp., Congress won 26 and Congress-I 27 out of 28 seats.
- 39 For a detailed discussion of the shift of support for Congress from the Hindi belt to the South see Lloyd I. Rudolph and Susanne Hoerber Rudolph: "Transformation of Congress Party. Why 1980 Was Not a Restoration", in: Economic and Political Weekly, Vol.XVI, No.18, 1981.

Table I: Seats, electors, votes polled and voting participation

Year	No. of Seats	No. of Electors	No. of valid Votes Polled	Voting Participation in %	No. of Contestants	No. of Elected
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1952	489	$\frac{CE-171,747,300}{TE-(173,213,635)}$	80,709,202	46.99	1,874	489
1957	494	$\frac{CE-190,918,329}{TE-(193,552,059)}$	91,329,866	47.84	1,519	494
1962	494	$\frac{CE-215,051,233}{TE-(215,372,215)}$	119,904,315	55.75	1,985	494
1967	520	$\frac{CE-249,003,334}{TE-(250,597,445)}$	152,724,611	61.33	2,369	520
1971	518	$\frac{CE-274,079,516}{TE-(274,094,493)}$	151,536,802	55.29	2,784	518
1977	542	$\frac{CE-320,928,417}{TE-(321,174,327)}$	194,263,915	60.54	2,439	542
1980	542(527)	$\frac{CE-355,047,579}{TE-(355,590,700)}$	197,483,629	57.01	4,620	527

Notes: (1) CE = Electors in the contested constituencies only. (2) TE = Total electors.

Source: G. G. Mirchandani: The People's Verdict. DCM Computer-Based Study. New Delhi 1980, App.XVI, figures for 1980 according to: General Elections to the House of the People - 1980 by Election Commission of India, mimeogr., June 1980



Table III (continued)

State	total seats	Con- gress I	Con- gress U	Con- gress 1977	Janata Dal	Lok Dal	CPI	CPM	Akali Dal	Anna DMK	DMK	Inde- pend.	others
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Orissa	21	20	-	(4)	-(15)	1	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)
Punjab	13	12	-	(-)	-(3)	-	-(1)	-(1)	1(9)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)
Rajasthan	25	18	1	(1)	4(24)	2	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)
Sikkim	1	-	-	(1)	-(1)	-	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	SPJ 1 (-)
Tamilnadu	39	20	-	(14)	-(3)	-	-(3)	-(1)	-(1)	2(18)	16(1)	-(1)	MUL 1 (-)
Tripura	2	-	-	(1)	-(1)	-	-(1)	2(-)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)
Uttar Pradesh	85	51	-	(-)	3(85)	29	1(-)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	1(-)	-(1)
West Bengal	42	4	-	(3)	-(15)	-	3(-)	28(17)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(5)	FB 3 (RSP2) NSP4
Union Territories An- daman&Nicobar Islands													
	1	1	-	(1)	-(1)	-	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)
Arunachal Pradesh	2	2	-	(1)	-(1)	-	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)
Chandigarh	1	1	-	(-)	-(1)	-	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	1	1	-	(-)	-(1)	-	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)
Delhi	7	6	-	(-)	1(7)	-	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)
Goa, Daman & Diu	2	-	1	(1)	-(1)	-	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	MGPI (MGPI)

Table III (continued)

State	total seats	Con- gress I	Con- gress U	Con- gress 1977	Janata Dal	Lok Dal	CFI	CPM	Akali Dal	Anna DMK	DMK	Inde- pend.	others
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Lakshadweep	1	-	1	(1)	-(1)	-	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)
Mizoram	1	-	-	(-)	-(1)	-	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	PPC 1 (-)
Pondicherry	1	1	-	(-)	-(1)	-	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)	-(1)
Total	530	353	13	(153)	31(298)	41	11(7)	36(22)	1(9)	2(19)	16(1)	8(17)	18(16)
(Total seats	* 542)												

\*

Voting could not be held in 12 constituencies of Assam due to disturbances, in one constituency each of Kashmir, Meghalaya and Himachal Pradesh voting took place in June/July 1980, due to weather conditions, the results are included.

FB = Forward Bloc, J = Jharkhand Party, KC = Kerala Congress, MUL = Muslim League, NC = National Conference, PPC = People's Party (Mizoram), PWP = Peasants' and Workers' Party, RSP = Revolutionary Socialist Party, SJP = Sikkim Jharkhand Party, UDF = United Democratic Front of Nagaland.

Source: for 1977 - S.L. Shukder (Ed.): The 6th General Elections to Lok Sabha, New Delhi 1977  
for 1980 - General Elections to the House of the People - 1980, op. cit.

Table IV: Voting Participation and Invalid Votes in the States and Union Territories

States	voting participation		invalid votes
	1980	1977	1980
Manipur	81.65	60.20	3.64
Tripura	79.97	70.07	1.79
West Bengal	70.66	59.51	2.33
Tamil Nadu	66.76	66.89	1.89
Haryana	64.76	73.26	2.13
Nagaland	63.90	52.83	2.66
Punjab	62.65	73.38	2.12
Kerala	62.16	79.21	0.95
Himachal Pradesh	59.68	61.47	1.91
Karnataka	57.71	63.06	3.09
Andhra Pradesh	56.93	62.40	2.63
Jammu and Kashmir	56.58	57.61	2.91
Maharashtra	56.80	60.38	2.78
Gujarat	55.42	59.24	3.14
Rajasthan	54.66	56.92	2.43
Bihar	51.87	60.92	1.71
Madhya Pradesh	51.85	54.88	3.47
Meghalaya	51.23	49.88	4.17
Uttar Pradesh	49.96	56.48	2.29
Orissa	46.31	44.32	4.03
Sikkim	44.74	-	2.63
<i>Union Territories</i>			
Lakshadweep	88.78	n.a.	0.49
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	84.45	76.34	2.77
Pondicherry	80.36	73.63	3.45
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	72.76	83.19	6.69
Arunachal Pradesh	68.60	56.27	5.10
Goa, Daman and Diu	69.48	62.80	2.81
Chandigarh	63.93	67.40	1.45
Delhi	64.89	71.38	1.38
Mizoram	56.12	49.92	0.94
<b>TOTAL INDIA</b>	<b>57.01</b>	<b>60.54</b>	<b>2.43</b>

Source: 1980 - General Elections to the House of the People - 1980, op. cit.

1977 - Mirchandani, People's Verdict, op. cit., p. 120