

Concessions to the vested interests went hand-in-hand with coercive sterilisation, demolition of dwelling houses of the poor, denial of the workers' longstanding right to bonus and impounding of their dearness allowance. Land reforms were shelved and the 20-point programme put in the background.

Authoritarian trends and practices in the conduct of the Government and also otherwise in the affairs of the State began to grow. There were increasing violations of accepted norms of democratic standards and procedures. Persistent efforts were made to encourage extra-constitutional methods and centres of personal power. The machinery and resources of the State were recklessly used to build up a personality who has no official status....

It stood in the forefront of the battle to restore the bonus right of the workers and against the compulsory deposit scheme and the attack on trade union rights. It opposed the heaping of tax burdens on the working peasantry. It opposed the demolition of the houses of the poor. It opposed the drive for compulsory sterilisation. It opposed the bureaucratic abuses.

III THE MANDATE WE SEEK

1. TO SAFEGUARD AND EXTEND DEMOCRACY — Lift the Emergency; Remove press censorship and stop misuse of Samachar, All India Radio and TV in favour of the ruling party; Repeal MISA, Publication of Objectionable Matters (Prevention) Act; restore the "Feroze Gandhi Act"; Repeal the anti-people clauses of the 42nd Constitution Amendment Act; Set up popular committees for implementation of land reform and other democratic measures.

2. FOR HOLDING THE PRICE LINE — Strengthen and expand the public distribution system. Supply essential commodities at reasonable prices; Take over wholesale trade in foodgrains and essential commodities like edible oils; adjust retail traders in the public distribution system; Ban on bank credit for speculative purposes.

3. FOR ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE AND REVITALISATION OF ECONOMY: Orient planning to development of home market, rapid industrialisation,

creation of employment and democratic structural changes; Resist pressures of the World Bank and neo-colonial offensive of imperialists, Prevent penetration of multi-national companies; Strengthen the public sector and extend it to essential consumer goods production; Democratise the public sector; ensure workers' effective participation in management at all levels in the public sector with real power to go into and check all aspects including balance sheets and pricing policies; Nationalise textile, sugar, jute and foreign drug industries and all banking business; Cancel all concessions given to big business in the last two years; Change taxation policies to reduce burdens on the people; Encourage small and medium units through adequate credit and provision of raw materials and marketing facilities; Promote industries with high employment potential in backward areas; More funds for scientific research; orient research programmes to self-reliance and development; adequate opportunities to scientific and technological intelligentsia for creative work; stop brain drain....

...5. FOR PEASANTS, AGRICULTURAL LABOUR AND TRIBAL PEOPLE — Renumerative prices for produce of peasants; Adequate credit, extended irrigation facilities and cheap inputs for agricultural operations; Graded land tax and water and electricity rates; reduction in tax burden on the working peasantry; Protect interests of tenants and sharecroppers; Abolition of bonded labour; Living wages to agricultural workers; implement the revised minimum wages; Complete land reforms expeditiously; distribute surplus and government wastelands among the landless; Restore alienated tribal lands to their rightful owners.

IV OUR APPEAL

Our country is at a crucial historic juncture. Poised as it is for big advances, it is also faced with terrible danger. The outcome of the fight between the forces of democracy, patriotism and progress on the one hand and that of reaction on the other will be the decisive factor for our country's future. A clear popular mandate for the progressive and democratic forces in the forthcoming Lok Sabha election will be of the utmost importance for the future of the country and its people....

Janata Party Manifesto

The following are excerpts from the Janata Party Manifesto.

The forthcoming Lok Sabha poll constitutes the most crucial election that the country has had since independence. The choice before the electorate is clear. It is a choice between freedom and slavery, between democracy and dictatorship, between abdicating the power of the people or asserting it, between the Gandhian path and the way that has led many nations down the precipice of dictatorship, instability, military adventure, and national ruin...

The emergency has succeeded only in generating an atmosphere of fear and insecurity. The question before the electorate is whether whatever might have been achieved during the past 19 months was achieved because of the emergency or whether the price in freedom, human rights and long-term economic and social destabilisation that the country has had to pay was necessary for, or commensurate with whatever has supposedly been achieved...

It is not a mere alliance of parties but a new national party to which the Congress (O) the Bharatiya Lok Dal,

and Jana Sangh, the Social Party independent Congressmen and many others stand firmly committed...

The Janata Party is dedicated to the values and ideas and ideals of Gandhiji. It is dedicated to the task of building up a democratic and socialist state in India, drawing inspiration from our rich heritage and the noble traditions of our struggle for independence and freedom.

A high degree of centralisation or the concentration of power is inconsistent with democracy. The party, therefore, believes in a policy that ensures decentralisation of economic and political power.

To generate fearlessness and to revive democracy, the Janata Party will:

- (1) lift the emergency;
- (2) restore the fundamental freedoms that have been suspended by presidential order;
- (3) repeal MISA. Release all political detenus, and review all other unjust laws;
- (4) enact laws to ensure that no political or social organisation is banned without independent judicial enquiry;
- (5) seek to rescind the 42nd amendment;
- (6) amend Article 352 of the Constitution to prevent its abuse in the interest of an individual or group;
- (7) move to amend Article 356 to ensure that the power to impose President's rule in the States is not misused to benefit the ruling party or any favoured faction within it;
- (8) introduce electoral reforms after a careful consideration of suggestions made by various committees, including the Tarkunde Committee and, in particular, consider proposals for recall of errant legislators and for reducing election costs as well as the voting age from 21 to 18;
- (9) repeal the amendment to the Representation of the People's Act which redefines corrupt practices and places electoral offences by certain individuals beyond the scrutiny of the courts;
- (10) re-establish the rule of law;
- (11) restore the authority of the judiciary and safeguard the independence and integrity of the bar;
- (12) ensure that all individuals, including those who hold high office, are equal before law;
- (13) assure the right to peaceful and non-violent project;
- (14) abolish censorship and end all harassment to newspapers, journals, publishers, and printing presses.
- (15) safeguard the freedom of the press by repealing the Prevention of Publication of Objectionable Matters Act, and restore the immunity that the press previously enjoyed in reporting legislative proceedings;
- (16) ensure that All-India Radio, Doordarshan, and the Films Division are converted into genuinely autonomous bodies that are politically objective and free from governmental interference;
- (17) ensure that news agencies are completely independent on the Government and are not given the right to monopoly;
- (18) delete property from the list of fundamental rights and, instead, affirm the right to work;
- (19) ensure that Government employees are not

victimised, are freed of political pressure, and are not compelled to execute illegal orders and unlawful actions. Their right to access to courts will be restored...

ECONOMIC PROGRAMME

The Janata Party's economic programme envisages:

1. Deletion of property as a fundamental right;
2. Affirmation of the right to work and full employment strategy;
3. Stress on Gandhian values of austerity, 'Antyodya' and a decentralised economy;
4. An end to destitution within ten years;
5. Appropriate technology for self-reliance;
6. New planning priorities — notably, the primacy of agriculture — agrarian reforms and more favourable terms of trade and higher allocations for the rural sector.
7. Narrowing down of rural-urban disparities and a new rural-urban nexus;
8. Emphasis on wage goods production for mass consumption;
9. Statutory reservation of spheres of production for small-scale and cottage industries;
10. Wages and prices policy— raising the minimum tax exemption limit Rs 10,000 and exemption of land revenue on all holdings below 2.5 hectares.
11. Redistributive taxation and excise in lieu of sales tax;
12. Formulation of a national water policy and a national energy policy;
13. Environmental care.

SOCIAL CHARTER

The Janata Party's social character comprises:

1. Education reform with middle schooling for all within 12 years;
2. Eradication of illiteracy;
3. Safe drinking water for all;
4. Stress on community and preventive health, and measures towards group health insurance;
5. A new village movement;
6. Low-cost building and mass public housing;
7. A policy regarding urbanisation;
8. A comprehensive scheme of social insurance;
9. Family planning as part of a larger population policy package, without coercion;
10. A new deal for the scheduled castes and tribes with special machinery to guarantee their rights and interests.,
11. A civil rights commission.,
12. Automatic machinery for combating corruption.,
13. Women's rights and youth welfare.,
14. Legal aid and inexpensive justice.,
15. Fostering people's initiatives and voluntary action.

The Janata Party's foreign policy will reflect the nation's enlightened interest and its aspirations and priorities at home.

It will oppose all forms of colonialism, neo-colonialism and racialism. It stands for friendship for all. It is committed to genuine non-alignment free from attachment to any power bloc...