

Abstract

In the last 20 years politics in the rural areas of north India has been transformed by the emergence of non-Congress parties with strong support among the prosperous strata of the peasantry. Studies of these developments have placed different emphases on the importance of class and caste factors, as well as drawing attention to the existence of blocs of potential support previously alienated from the Congress. In Uttar Pradesh (UP) the defection from the Congress of peasant leader Charan Singh and the formation of the Bharatiya Kranti Dal (BKD) in the late 1960s, has been seen as one of the most important examples of these changes in rural politics. The purpose of this article is to examine the formation and initial electoral fortunes of the BKD in one locality, and, at the same time, to assess the applicability, to a local setting, of general explanations of the emergence and success of the party.

PARTY POLITICS AND THE NORTH INDIAN PEASANTRY: THE RISE OF THE BHARATIYA KRANTI DAL IN UTTAR PRADESH

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1) Introduction

The north Indian party political system was fundamentally changed after 1967 by the formation of the Bharatiya Kranti Dal (BKD). This party, known today, after various incarnations, as the Lok Dal had its origins, in the state of Uttar Pradesh (UP), with the defection of a small group of Congress Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) shortly after the elections of 1967. This group joined forces with other non-Congress legislators to form a coalition ministry which held power until February 1968. There followed a period of President's rule until a mid-term election in February 1969 returned the state to Congress rule. (1)

The results of the 1969 election, in which the BKD polled 21.3 per cent of the vote and became the major opposition party in the UP legislature, demonstrated that the party had been able, in a short period of time, to build up a base of support and an organization which spread across most of UP. The party proved to be particularly strong in the western districts of the state, where it polled over one-third of the votes and over half of its successful candidates came from this region.

Many observers thought that the BKD was likely to be a short-lived phenomenon and the results of the 1971 general election seemed to confirm that the party was indeed an ephemeral product of the unusual conditions prevailing in UP in the late 1960s. The party returned only one member from the state and its share of the votes declined to 12.7 per cent, but it should be noted that in terms of the total vote in UP it was still in second place to Congress.

However, since then, the party has performed consistently well in state and national elections in UP, and it has always succeeded in gaining more than one-fifth of the overall vote. In 1974 alliance with the Samyukta Socialist Party, with which it later merged to form the Bharatiya Lok Dal (BLD), gave the party more geographically widespread support and a foothold in the eastern districts of the state. In the elections of that year the BKD retained its general level of popularity, despite an unusually vigorous Congress campaign and forceful intervention by the Congress leadership in Delhi.

The BLD went on to form a major component of the Janata alliance which swept the in 1977, it survived the rupture of that alliance and in the elections of the 1990s it has secured its position as the major opposition party as well as establishing a strong presence in other states, most importantly in the neighbouring state of Haryana. Paul Brass remarked after the 1984 parliamentary elections that "the only electorally significant struggle in UP as a whole has become that between the Congress and the Lok Dal". (2) and the results of the state elections which followed in March 1985 confirmed his view. Once again the Lok Dal became the biggest opposition grouping. More recently the results of the state election in Haryana in June 1987 confirm the persistence of the appeal of the Lok Dal for a large section of the north Indian population. In spite of the intense factional conflict which has affected the party in recent times and a major split in the leadership, the Lok Dal scored a stunning victory and almost obliterated Congress representation this politically important state.

From an early stage in its existence the BKD attracted attention as an unusual and interesting case. First the party possessed a distinctive ideology and programme which stressed the primacy of agriculture and the interests of peasants. It was seen by many observers as a distinctly opinionated party operating in a political environment more often characterized by the absence of such appeals, or at least by the absence of such clearly articulated exclusive and sectional appeals. The BKD wasted no time in producing a clear and unambiguous message that it was in business to protect and promote the interests of the more established and prosperous strata of the peasantry. second related concern was the extent to which the growth of, and support for, the party was connected to changes in the interests of the sections of the peasantry affected by the introduction and spread of the New Agricultural Strategy (NAS) or Green Revolution. As we shall later see, there were a number of different views about the nature of the relationship between the NAS and the rise of the BKD, but few doubted that some connection existed.

Third, the BKD was seen by some as employing innovative tactics in its methods of recruiting support. It was claimed that the party had evolved a new and different style of campaigning which relied much less on traditional relationships of patronage, influence and deference, and instead stressed appeals to individual and sectional interests. In general the pattern of mobilization employed by the party was seen as more horizontal than vertical, and particular emphasis has been placed on the explicit way in which the BKD sought to attract the support of middle strata of the peasantry.

Fourth, a great deal of attention was paid to the ability of the BKD to attract disproportionately large amounts of its support from the so called backward or middle castes. In this respect the relationship of the BKD to the Jats & of western UP was seen as particularly important in the early years of its existence.

Fifth, and flowing from all the above concerns, was the question of how the BKD had managed to establish such a strong

electoral presence in the short period before the election of 1969, and to sustain it in later elections. Had the party simply amalgamated some previously existing blocs of electoral support? Was the party attracting support from other political parties or had it succeeded in appealing to sections of the population previously alienated from organized party politics? What sort of political networks and patterns of mobilization had guaranteed its rapid success?

Many of these questions have been explored in the literature concerned with the BKD. (3) This article focuses on three aspects of the process by which the BKD was able to establish itself so quickly. First is the question of whether the party was able to transform pre-existing blocs of support and networks of influence into votes for the party in 1969. An important question here is the consideration of the independent vote before 1969 and whether this was transferred to the BKD. Second there is the question of whether the BKD attracted disproportionately large amounts of votes from particular castes and especially from the Jats in the western areas of the state. Third is the question of the relationship between the spread of the NAS and support for the BKD.

2) Independents and the BKD

A common theme in many of the explanations of the unexpected success of the BKD in 1969 has been the view that, in large part, it was able to consolidate support previously going to independent candidates, and that this shift of support, rather than a transfer of votes from the Congress or other major parties, was a significant factor in the election outcome.(4) Some observers have also drawn attention to the importance of careful candidate selection in the BKD campaign. Baxter points out that over one-third of the total number of BKD candidates had contested before in the same, or nearly the same, constituency, and that 18 of them had been candidates in all four previous elections. (5) Kornmesser found that 24 of the 98 successful BKD candidates had contested the 1967 elections in the same constituencies as independents". (6) Brass also argues that the pattern of shifts in electoral support "shows clearly that the BKD support bases in 1969 in the state as a whole and in western UP were quite similar to those of independents in 1967".(7) Whilst not wanting to deny the importance of some prominent rural political activists and experienced campaigners, who had previously contested elections as independent candidates, in some of the BKD victories in 1969, the evidence does not seem strong enough to suggest that this factor was more than one of a whole number contributing to the success of the BKD. In the important regions of the Upper Doab and Rohilkhand, where the BKD contested 103 seats and won 51, the Party vote does positively, and significantly (at the .05 level), correlate with the votes cast for independent candidates in the 1967 election ($r = .171, n = 107$), with a much stronger correlation in Rohilkhand ($r = .266, n = 35$) than in the Upper Doab ($r = .143, n = 68$). However it should be noted that in neither of the two regions, when considered separately, does a significant correlation emerge.

In these regions, at least, the BKD seems to have drawn upon more than the previous support base of independent candidates. Sixteen of the total of 72 successful BKD candidates in the Upper Doab polled a substantially greater share more than 10 per cent) of the total vote than that cast for all independent candidates in the same constituency in 1967. In Rohilkhand 11 of the 19 successful BKD candidates out-poll, by the same margin, the total independent vote in 1967.

It does appear then that the BKD, whilst undoubtedly attracting some of the vote previously going to the independents, was also drawing upon a wider audience of support. But, more importantly, we need to investigate much more closely the extent to which particular individual independent candidates were able to sustain consistent bases and networks of electoral support during the 1960s and then transfer them to support for the BKD in the election of 1969. As we shall see later, in some cases this did prove possible, and was a significant contributory factor in BKD victories. However the pattern was far from uniform and subject to a whole variety of local circumstances.

3) Caste and the BKD

Another element in explanations of the level of BKD support has been the importance attached to the close identification of the party with the interests of the Jats of western UP and, more generally, with the other so-called "backward castes" such as Ahirs, Kurmis and Gujars.

From an early stage in the 1949 election campaign the BKD and its leader, Charan Singh, himself a Jat, were accused of inflaming caste tension and promoting Jat ascendancy. The General Secretary of the UP Congress claimed that the BKD was "whipping up the monster of casteism"(8) and the senior Congress official in charge of the campaign in western districts said he doubted if people in Jat dominated villages would be able to vote freely.(9) After the election another senior UP Congress member claimed that Charan Singh had used the Jats "as his storm troopers to win the election" (10)

Brass also claims that some of the success of the BKD was explained by its ability to capitalize on the discontent, felt by some lower placed caste groups, at the continued dominance of politics and patronage in the countryside by elite Rajput and Brahman caste groups. (11)

An additional theme in the discussions about the role of caste in the 1969 election concerned the relationship between the Jats and the Scheduled Castes. One report claimed that the Chief Election Commissioner had attributed the low poll in some areas to the intimidation of the Scheduled Castes by aggressive Jats. (12) Accusations that the BKD represented sections of landowners who were amongst the worst oppressors of the Scheduled Caste population had become commonplace. As one letter to the National Herald complained, the BKD was "a caucus of some landowning so-called backward castes like Jats and Ahirs, the traditional exploiters of landless Harijans in Uttar Pradesh". (13)

Another purpose of this article is to examine, within the confines of the data on caste that are available, the extent to which the election of 1969 was attended by a polarization of caste groups on party political grounds and the degree to which the BKD was dependent upon disproportionate support among the Jat caste group.

4) The BKD and The New Agricultural Strategy

A third strand in the analysis of the electoral fortunes of the BKD has been the question of the association between the success of the party and the adoption of the NAS. However rather different interpretations have been advanced to explain the relationship between these processes. The first emphasizes the role played by the beneficiaries of the NAS in supporting the BKD. Frankel,

for example, in her early work on the emergence of the BKD demonstrated that the performance of the party correlated very strongly with indicators of agricultural modernization. (14)

She also pointed out that amongst the groups gaining most from the application of the NAS were the backward castes. The NAS opened up "unprecedented opportunities for substantial economic gains" to peasants from the intermediate castes.(15) As a result they added to the advantage they had always enjoyed in weight of numbers and also obtained "the material resources necessary to challenge the dominance of the upper-caste landed elites". (16)

A rather different emphasis is offered by Brass who places more stress on what he sees as discontent developing in the 1950s, and more significantly in the 1960s, on the part of the middle peasantry, with government policies on agricultural prices and foodgrain procurement.(17) He also identifies local elite and Congress control of the distribution of agricultural inputs as a further source of middle peasant discontent.(18) In this view it seems to be suggested that the BKD was deriving support from those who were excluded from, or not fully participating in, the advantages of the NAS.

Whilst it is clear that discontent did develop and that it was a factor in the success of the BKD in 1969, the exact basis of discontent needs to be examined closely. The peasantry of UP, including the middle strata, as elsewhere in India, had enjoyed an extremely comfortable accommodation with the ruling party; serious attempts at land reform had been shelved, agricultural taxation was non-existent, highly remunerative produce prices were being paid and agricultural inputs enjoyed subsidies.(19) In these circumstances we need to ask why discontent should have emerged. A part of the answer can perhaps be found in the character of the Congress with, as it were, one foot in the countryside and agriculture and the other in the cities and industry. Congress always had to balance the interests of town and country, industry and agriculture, very carefully.(20) However in the rapidly changing economic environment of the 1960s, Congress electoral support in the countryside became increasingly vulnerable to threats from parties which would-adopt a more robust and unambiguous commitment to the rural sector and its inhabitants.(21)

In addition some sections of the peasantry began to become uneasy that their favoured position in the consideration of policy might begin to change as agriculture became more carefully scrutinized as a possible source of resource mobilization, particularly in the context of so much of the development effort being directed into the rural sector. This feeling of uneasiness was increased in the middle years of the 1960s as indications grew that the central government was beginning to be more willing to intervene in such areas as taxation of the rural sector, agricultural produce pricing and marketing policy. Perhaps more importantly, it was also developing an ability to do so, not only through the conventional channels of centre-state relations and such bodies as the National Development Council, but also by the creation of specialized administrative bureaucracies of intervention, such as the Agricultural Prices Commission and the Food Corporation of India.(22)

It should be stressed that the threats posed by these developments were more potential than real, but nonetheless they contributed to the discontent surfacing in the 1960s. Thus we see that those sections of the rural population articulating discontent were not so much those who had been locked out of the substantial gains accruing to some sections of the peasantry in the 1960s but were, perhaps, more those who had begun to benefit and wished to continue to do so. Congress had served them well, but they were concerned that it might not continue to do so in the future.

The BKD was in a very strong position to take advantage of this discontent and unease, most of all because the party leader, Charan Singh, had been, for the previous three decades, the most articulate and effective champion of the more prosperous strata of the peasants in UP. Space does not permit an extensive account of the role played by Charan Singh in the UP Congress, or of his consistent defence of the interests of the more prosperous peasantry.(3) However it needs to be pointed out that since the late 1930s Charan Singh had been building up his credentials and legitimacy as a political leader of a large section of the prosperous peasantry of UP, and had ensured that if he should find it necessary to part company with the Congress, he would have a clearly defined and well-known set of policies to present and an audience eager to listen and follow. The political credit which Charan Singh had been accumulating for many years was realized with the creation and electoral success of the BKD in the late 1960s.

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With the above considerations in mind the rest of this article is concerned with the analysis of the performance of the EIKD in three Legislative Assembly constituencies in the Upper Doab region of western UP in the 1969 election. The analysis is particularly concerned with the examination of the adequacy of the various explanations of the success of the party in the context of a much more local framework than is usually the case. Indeed a great deal of use is made of village level social and economic data and election results, and no great claims are made for the more general applicability of the findings. Rather our concern is to explore the usefulness of the application of more general approaches to the local environment, and to investigate the congruence between more general aggregate data and analysis and those more disaggregated data available at the local level.

5) Methodology

The study area consisted of some 600 hamlets, villages and small towns with a population of approximately 600,000 and an electorate of around 770,000 in 1969. It is situated in Aligarh district in western UP and comprises three Legislative Assembly constituencies, all of which returned BKD members in 1969. The research was designed to enable longitudinal comparisons to be made at the lowest possible level of aggregation of data.

The first exercise completed was the comparison of the pattern of support for the BKD candidates in 1969 with the patterns of support for them if they had stood in the earlier elections of 1962 and 1967, either as independents or as candidates of other parties. In one case this was not possible as the BKD candidate had not stood previously in the constituency. However as this candidate's campaign was organized by, and closely identified with, a previous independent candidate who had stood in both 1962 and 1967, the pattern of support for him was taken as the base to compare the performance of the BKD in 1969. In another case, major constituency boundary changes, between the elections of 1962 and 1967 had to be taken into account.

The pattern of support was mapped by individual polling booth area, according to whether the candidate had achieved a majority, a plurality or neither a majority nor plurality of the votes cast in the area. This exercise was designed to investigate whether local patterns of support could be discovered in the 1960s and in particular to see if the pattern of support for the BKD was related to the performance of individual candidates in earlier elections.

The second stage of the analysis consists of a more detailed comparison of the results of the 1967 and 1969 elections. This comparison was carried out wherever possible between individual villages or small groups of villages. The area was served by 315 polling booths in 1967 and by 351 in 1969; when these were combined to produce identical areal clusters for the two elections a total of 142 sets of data was obtained. (4) With clusters created in this way it then becomes possible to compare exactly the change in support for any particular candidate, or party, between the two elections (this value is designated, for example in the case of a Congress candidate, Con.'67/'69).

In each constituency study an "expected" BKD vote has also been derived. The details of how this has been arrived at will be discussed in each section, for the moment it will only be pointed out that this figure has been calculated on the basis of what the BKD could have reasonably expected to achieve, in terms of share of vote, on the basis of the 1967 election. In some cases the figure has been arrived at simply by taking the support for the BKD candidate in the earlier election, in other cases the procedure is more complicated. The purpose of this exercise is to see if the increase, or decrease, in the BKD vote in 1969 in comparison with what could be expected on the basis of the 1967 election, produces any interesting insights into new sources of support for the BKD. (The "expected" BKD vote in 1967 is designated exp. BKD, and the difference with the BKD vote in 1969 as exp. BKD '67/BKD '69).

Having established the area and population covered by the polling clusters it is then possible to proceed to calculate values for social and economic variables. At this level of very local ecological analysis we do not have the wealth of data that exists at the tahsil, district or state level, but it is still possible to work with some important indicators. The district census statistics are a valuable source of village level data on such variables as occupational categories and the proportion of Scheduled Caste population. As these data are available for both 1961 and 1971 it also becomes possible to calculate the changes which occurred in this decade. For example as well as being interested in the proportion of agricultural labourers in the work force in 1961 and 1971 taken separately, we might also be interested in the change in that proportion over the decade. It may well be more politically significant, and indicative of major social and economic change that in one village the proportion of agricultural labourers has increased from say 10 to 50 per cent, than another village where it has remained static at 50 per cent between the two census dates. Here we make use of both the proportion of agricultural labourers in the work force in 1971 and the change in that proportion between 1961 and 1971 (the latter variable being designated a.l.'61/'71). (25)

The major weakness of village level data is the absence of figures relating to distribution of landholding by size categories or agricultural cropping patterns, data which have proved to be so illuminating and useful in higher level aggregate ecological analysis. However the 1971 census did produce village level irrigation statistics and here we have used the proportion of cultivated area served by tubewells as an indicator of agricultural modernization. (26) To summarize then, three indicators of agricultural change have been used: the proportion of the workforce employed as agricultural labourers in 1971, the change in that proportion since 1961, and the proportion of cultivated land under tubewell irrigation.

Modern data on the numbers of individual caste group members at the village level do not exist. The last census to produce such figures is now almost one hundred years out of date, and even that only gave details of the most numerous caste in a village or the castes which each constituted more than 25 per cent of the population. (27) In the absence of any more modern data, and in the light of checks which revealed that the data was remarkably reliable, it was decided that it could be used. No precise I percentage figures have been employed, but the preponderant caste group has been calculated for each polling cluster. Modern village level data on the numbers of the Scheduled Caste population do exist, and these figures have been used to calculate the proportion in each cluster.

The distinctive approach employed here has two major advantages. First it enables ecological analysis at a very low level of aggregation. A large number of units of analysis are being examined within a small area, thus eliminating some of the problems of context and comparison which occur at higher levels of aggregation. Comparing neighbouring village groups within a relatively homogeneous local context is perhaps more legitimate than the comparison of districts or constituencies often many hundreds of miles apart. (28) This approach also enables us to take far more account of the peculiarities of local social, economic and political processes than is normally the case with ecological analysis. (29 Ahmad)

Second, the method adopted here particularly concerned with data relating to change. We have, for example, made the analysis of change between the elections of 1967 and 1969 a central concern and similarly we have tried to use other data, such as that relating to the proportion of agricultural labourers in the work force, in a diachronic fashion.

4. The BKD in Aligarh District

Soon after the defection of Charan Singh and his followers in the Legislative Assembly, preparations began to form a unit of the breakaway party in Aligarh. (30) At this stage, in April 1967, the new party, in common with other similar groupings which had sprung up elsewhere in India after the 1967 elections, was known as the Jan Congress. (31) The Aligarh branch of the Jan Congress, later converted into the district unit of the BKD, was founded at a meeting in May at the house of Sheodan Singh, a well known ex-Congress activist from Iglas in the west of the district. Sheodan Singh's political career had started as early as 1922 when he came a member of the District Board, he had been a member of the Legislative Assembly for many years and had also served as president of the district Congress organization. He was also one of the leading Jat political figures in the district. Another important recruit to the party was Ram Prasad Deshmukh, the MLA from Sasni constituency in the south of Aligarh district, who had been one of the original group of defectors supporting Charan Singh. Deshmukh became deputy minister of Irrigation and Power in Charan Singh's coalition ministry and as such he was well placed to support the new organization in his home district. Deshmukh was described as the most important influence in setting up the BKD district unit and a valuable link between it and the state capital. He also provided a valuable personal connection between the district and Charan Singh. (32)

In addition to ministerial influence, contacts with the state capital and personal links with Charan Singh, Deshmukh brought a further advantage to the Aligarh BKD; he was a scheduled caste political leader, now a member of a party that was, even at this early stage of its existence, conscious of its close identification with the Jats. Through Deshmukh the BKD was also able to attract some other scheduled caste leaders in the district. (33) Another indication of the concern of the BKD not to appear as an exclusively Jat party, and to avoid allegations of casteism, was the decision taken by Sheodan Singh, shortly after the founding meeting, to stand down as the party's district president in order to make way for a non-Jat successor. (34)

Apart from Deshmukh and Sheodan Singh, the Aligarh BKD also succeeded, at an early stage, in recruiting a number of other well-known and experienced political activists from the rural areas of Aligarh. The two most important of these were Mahendra Singh and Mahavir Singh from the northwestern part of the district.⁽³⁵⁾ These four came together in mid-1967 at a meeting chaired by Jai Ram Verma MLA ⁽³⁶⁾ to launch the Aligarh unit of the new party. Later on the party was strengthened by the recruitment by other, more urban based support. In August 1968 Srichand Singhal, a veteran Congress worker in the district and a member of the first Lok Sabha, joined the party together with two hundred ex-Congress activists, ⁽³⁷⁾ and a number of other prominent Congress dissidents became officers of the BKD organization. Ram Chandra Jaiswal, the owner of a lock factory in Aligarh city, became secretary of the city unit of the party, and Deokinandan Chanchal, an advocate, later served as president.

The founding members of the party all expressed their fundamental beliefs in terms of a commitment to the rural population, a wish to return to the teachings of Gandhi, a conviction that Congress had become a party dominated by urban interests and all of this was cemented by a strong personal loyalty to Charan Singh. As the president of the Aligarh City unit of the party put it:

The people were convinced that Congress had forgotten that the heart of India was in the villages. Gandhi taught us that, but now Congress has diverted from the moorings of Gandhianism. ⁽³⁸⁾

The district party leaders formed themselves into a committee, did some preparatory work by organizing the distribution of literature and visiting villages, but their prime concern was to select candidates and to begin to campaign for the next election. All of those involved in the early activities of the BKD in Aligarh denied that the party had made any sort of special effort to gain support from either the Jats or the more prosperous, or the larger landowners, among the peasantry: instead, they claimed, they had stressed the general interests of the countryside and of all sections of the peasantry. However closer examination revealed that the issues which the BKD concentrated upon, and around which it built its election campaign, were those of concern to more prosperous peasants who were beginning to benefit from the spread of the NAS, rather than to the peasantry as a whole. Certainly the content of the BKD manifesto left no doubt that the party was primarily directing its appeal to the richer strata of peasants. ⁽³⁹⁾ In the local campaign agricultural produce pricing and marketing procedures, issues of concern to surplus producing peasants, were high on the agenda. A Congress advertisement in the local newspaper accused BKD workers in the villages of giving promises that the purchase price of wheat in the market would be doubled if the BKD won the election. ⁽⁴⁰⁾ There is also plenty of evidence to show that participation in the NAS was increasing in the district and that significant variations in the agricultural practices of different strata of the peasantry were emerging. The area under wheat had increased from 101,000 hectares in 1961 to 187,000 hectares in 1970. ⁽⁴¹⁾ Other changes were equally striking; the area irrigated by tubewells doubled between 1961 and 1969, total fertiliser consumption, between 1961 and 1968, had increased from 2,000 tonnes to 37,000 tonnes resulting in the average application rate rising from 1.5 kg. per acre to 26 kg. per acre and overall foodgrain production in the district increased by 77 per cent between 1960 and 1968.

However the distribution of the gains of the new technology were far from evenly spread. In 1964 only 8 per cent of cultivators with holdings of less than one hectare were using artificial fertiliser, whilst 42 per cent of cultivators of holdings of more than four hectares used them. Figures for fertiliser use by landholding size are not available for later years but the pattern of credit distribution gives some idea of the process of differentiation over the 1960s. In 1963 cultivators of less than two hectares took an average loan of Rs. 19 per hectare whilst cultivators of holdings of more than four hectares took an average loan of Rs. 15 per hectare. By 1968 the pattern had changed completely, with the smaller landholders taking average loans of Rs. 20 per hectare whilst the larger ones were now taking an average loan of Rs. 31 per hectare. It is also important to note that larger farmers were proving more able to secure credit from cheaper institutional sources. In 1963 landholders of less than two hectares were taking 15 per cent of their total credit from government or co-operative agencies and this had only risen to 16 per cent by 1968. On the other hand farmers with more than four hectares took 29 per cent of their credit from these sources in 1967: and this proportion had risen to a little over 50 per cent by 1968. Aligarh district had not, by the late 1960s, seen such spectacular advances in agricultural techniques as those reported from districts further north in the UP Doab, or from some areas of Haryana and Punjab, but modernization and the consequent differentiation of peasant interests was well under way.

The results of the 1969 election in Aligarh were a triumph for the BKD. It won in five out of the ten Assembly constituencies and came second in two others. It won all the three seats which Congress had held after the 1967 election and in two constituencies polled an absolute majority of the vote. The party did particularly well in western areas where the NAS had been adopted more widely, the average landholding size was larger and the Jats formed a higher proportion of both landholders and of the population in general. In areas of smaller landholdings, slower advance of the NAS and a smaller proportion of Jats, the party's performance was markedly worse. ⁽⁴²⁾ At first sight, then, it appears that the BKD success was closely associated with these variables, and a constituency level correlation analysis in Aligarh produces very strong indications of such associations. However the purpose here is to investigate the extent to which such relationships can also be found at the more local level, and in order to do this individual constituencies will now be analysed.

A. Iglas constituency

The social and economic characteristics and the political history of Iglas suggested that the BKD would find it fertile ground. It is an almost totally rural area with well over half the workforce engaged directly in agriculture. The average size of individual landholdings in the constituency is well above the average for the district and surrounding areas and there is a majority of holdings in the middle range of between 5 and 30 acres. ⁽⁴³⁾ The population of the constituency is dominated by members of the Jat and Brahman caste groups; Jats form about one-third of the population and own about half of the land, whilst Brahmans constitute about one-fifth of the population and own about a quarter of the land. There are few members of the Rajput caste groups which are common in other parts of the district.

The constituency had always proved to be tricky territory for the Congress which had won the seat on only two previous occasions, in 1952 and 1967. The winning candidate in 1952 had been Sheodan Singh who, as we have already seen, was later to become one of the founder members of the BKD in the district. Sheodan Singh lost the seat in 1957 to another Jat, an ex-zamindar who was a major landlord in the area, and after a prolonged dispute with the Congress leadership in the district, he resigned from the party and successfully fought the 1962 election as an independent candidate. ⁽⁴⁴⁾ In 1967 he again stood as an independent but this time he was easily defeated by the Congress. Sheodan Singh attributed his defeat in this election to the

intervention of another well-known Jat candidate, standing for the Jan Sangh, who split the Jat vote and thus allowed the Congress, standing a Brahman candidate, to win. (45)

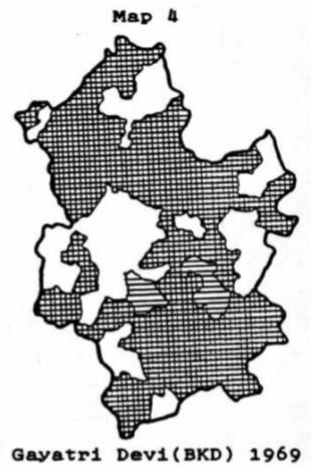
The likelihood of Iglas being a crucial battleground between the BKD and the Congress was made a certainty when the BKD decided to nominate Gayatri Devi, the wife of Charan Singh, as the candidate and placed Sheodan Singh in charge of the campaign. (46) In 1967 Sheodan Singh had lost to the Congress by a wide margin; he polled only 24.7 per cent of the vote compared to 42.8 per cent for the Congress. In 1969, contesting against the incumbent Congress MLA, the BKD polled 57.8 per cent of the vote and Congress trailed with 40.7 per cent.

a) Patterns of support

When Sheodan Singh stood in 1962 his strongest support was in the central southeastern part of the constituency with another pocket of strong support in the northwest (see Map 1). By 1967 his disproportionate strength of support in the southeastern half of the constituency is even more pronounced (see Map 2). In both of these elections the area around his home village and a neighbouring small market town provided his strongest support.(47) In 1967 both Sheodan Singh and the Congress had performed worse than average in the southwestern corner of the constituency where the Jat candidate of the Jan Sangh had his strongest support (Map 3).

In 1969 the BKD gained a much more even distribution of support (Map 4), but it is still noticeable that the party failed to gain plurality of the vote in many areas where Sheodan Singh had failed in previous elections. However one exception to this pattern was the southwestern corner of the constituency where the BKD did do well. As we have already seen this area was a major stronghold of the Jan Sangh in 1967 and it seems that the BKD was able to win over a large section of this support in 1969.

Distribution of support for various candidates,
by polling booth, Iglas Legislative Assembly
constituency 1962, 1967, 1969



Areas where a candidate won a majority of votes 

Areas where a candidate won a plurality of votes 

If we look more closely at the results of 1967 and 1969, the evidence suggests that many of the votes cast for the Jan Sangh in 1967 did go to the BKD in 1969. Whilst the positive correlation of the BKD vote with the vote of Sheodan Singh is strong, but not significant (at the .05 level; $r = .23$, $n = 48$), the correlation with the Jan Sangh vote is much stronger and significant ($r = .39$). Thus if we take the combined votes of these two candidates in 1967, and compare them to the BKD vote in 1969, we find a very high correlation ($r = .63$). For further analysis the combined vote of Sheodan Singh and the Jan Sangh candidate in 1967 has been used as the "expected" vote of the BKD.

Support for the Congress between the two elections shows a similar consistency ($r = .69$), and one of the most striking features of the 1969 election in Iglas was the way in which the electorate became polarized between the Congress and the BKD; in 1967 the two major contenders had taken 67.5 per cent of the vote, in 1969 they polled almost 94 per cent.

c) Caste

The polarization which was apparent in Iglas in 1969 becomes even more noticeable when the pattern of voting is considered against the background of the composition and distribution of caste groups. Electoral contests in Iglas had, to a certain extent, always been influenced by competition and conflict between Jat and Brahman groups. In earlier elections, as we have seen in the case of 1957 and 1967, divisions among the Jat group were another - important determinant of the outcome, but in 1969 these divisions seem to have been overcome and the local organization of the BKD was able to secure a very high proportion of the total Jat vote.

In 1967 the two major Jat candidates, each won five of the polling clusters with a preponderance of Jats, whilst Congress won six of them.(48) In 1969, by contrast, the BKD won all 16 Jat clusters and took an absolute majority of the vote in them. Furthermore, it should be noted that whilst the BKD improved on the combined performance of the two Jat candidates of 1967, its advance was particularly marked in Jat areas, whilst its performance was worse than average in Brahman areas (see Table 1). Conversely the Congress candidate's overall performance was slightly worse than in 1967, but was markedly better in Brahman areas and worse than average in Jat areas.

Table 1 Percentage share of votes for Sheodan Singh (Ind) and the Jan Sangh (combined), and the BKD, and for the Congress by polling areas with a preponderance of a particular caste in Iglas constituency 1967/69

/vote		Sh.Singh		+Jan Sangh		n 1967	
=====							
16	Jat	49.1					
9	Brahman	33.1					
1	Chamar	56.1					
22	Mixed	44.4					
48	All	44.1					
	% vote	Diff	% vote	% vote	Diff		
	G.Devi	Change from	Con.	Con.	Change from		
	BKD	1967/ ay.	1967	1969	1967/ ay.		
	1969	1QL,9	(+/-)	1969	(+/-)		
		63.5	+14.4	+5.3	37.6	30.7	-6.9 -4.8
		34.9	+1.8	-7.3	52.6	57.7	+5.1 +7.2
		72.5	+16.4	+7.3	30.6	22.7	-7.9 -5.8
		52 .2	+7.8	-1.3	42.9	41.7	-1.2 +0.9
		57.2	+9.1	0	42.8	40.7	-2.1 0

The results were also examined in terms of the association between parties winning or losing in clusters with a preponderance of particular castes. Again the results are striking, with polling clusters won by the BKD showing a very strong association with Jat, as opposed to non-Jat areas (chi-square = 17.3, $df = 1$, probability of such a result occurring by chance less than 0.17., Yates's correction applied), whilst no such association exists in 1967 for areas won or lost by the two major Jat candidates or even for their combined vote (chi-square Sheodan Singh 1967 = 0.78, Jan Sangh = 0.78, combined vote = 0.84, the probability of all these occurring by chance is greater than 50%). Similarly the chi-square value for the association between the Congress vote and Brahman areas rises from 5.94 in 1967 to 8.87 in 1969 (probability of these results occurring by chance moving from less than 2% to less than 1%.)

It seems then that the 1969 election in Iglas was the occasion for a major polarization of caste groups along party political lines to an extent not witnessed before. The BKD seems to have mobilized large sections of the Jat group, including those who had not voted for either of the main Jat candidates in 1967, whilst the Congress appears to have become even more heavily dependent on the votes of Brahmans.

Although press reports and local comment at the time of the 1969 election suggested that the campaign also increased tension between the scheduled castes and the Jats (51), the data presented here does not indicate major shifts in scheduled caste voting patterns against the BKD, indeed the opposite appears, at first sight, to be the case. The one polling cluster with a preponderance of scheduled caste voters registered the largest increase in the BKD vote in 1969 over the vote for the two Jat candidates in 1967, as well as the steepest decline for the Congress vote. This pattern seems to be confirmed by a detailed comparison of the 1967 and 1969 votes. (see Table 2). Whilst both Sheodan Singh's vote and that of the Jan Sangh candidate show a weak negative correlation with the scheduled caste population in 1967, and their combined vote shows a modest negative correlation, the BKD vote in 1969 shows no correlation at all. On the other hand a modest positive correlation of the Congress vote with scheduled

caste population in 1967 has disappeared by 1969. If the change in support between the two elections, for the two Jat candidates and the BKD on the one hand, and for the Congress in the two years on the other is then derived, we find a modest positive correlation for the increase in the BKD vote and a modest negative correlation for the Congress vote.

Table 2 Correlation coefficients of party performance with proportion of scheduled caste population, Iglas 1967/69 (n = 48)

Sheodan Singh (Ind.) 1967 -.07
 Jan Sangh 1967 -.07
 Combined vote of Sheodan
 Singh and Jan Sangh 1967(a) -.14 Con.1967 .14
 BKD 1969 .00 Con.1969 .01
 Exp.BKD'67/BKD'69 .17 Con.67/Con.'69
 (a) This represents the "expected" BKD vote.

- (b) It should be pointed out that these findings are entirely consistent with the views reported above about the possibility of the scheduled caste population having been intimidated from voting during this campaign, and it is unlikely that they are evidence of support for the BKD on the part of the scheduled castes.

c) Agricultural change

It was pointed out above that Iglas in the 1960s was an area of above average size landholdings and a large proportion of these holdings in the larger categories. There is also some evidence of an early adoption of the new HYV seeds, particularly wheat, but the spread of these appears to have slowed down after 1968. There also seem to have been other constraints on the advance of the new technology as both electricity and water for irrigation were not always in good supply. A detailed correlation analysis of the electoral strength of all the candidates under consideration here, as well as the changes in the strength of support between 1967 and 1969, reveals little of significance (see Table 3). Although support for Sheodan Singh had a high, and significant, correlation with the proportion of cultivated area served by tubewells in 1967, no such correlation is apparent in the BKD vote in 1969. Nor does the proportion of agricultural labourers in the workforce in 1971, or the change in that proportion over the previous decade, correlate significantly with any political variables.

Table 3. Correlation coefficients of indicators of agricultural change with party political support, Iglas 1967/69

tubewell a.1.1971 a.1.1961/71
 Con.'67 -.04
 Con.'69 .01
 Con.'67/69 .06
 Sh.Singh'67 .30
 Jan Sangh'67 -.22
 exp.BKD'67 .05
 BKD'69 -.04
 exp.BKD'67/
 BKD'69 -.10
 -.07 .07
 -.10 .13
 -.04 .07
 .00 .07
 .09 -.14
 .10 -.07
 .10 -.14
 -.02 -.06

d) Summary

The most important factor in the success of the BKD in Iglas in 1969 appears to have been the ability of the party to unite large sections of the Jat population. There is no evidence that the party was drawing disproportionately on the support of those participating in the NAS, even though it appears that Sheodan Singh's earlier support in 1967 may have been associated with tubewell irrigation. The performance of the BKD in this constituency seems to have been a function of the caste dynamics of the area and few other factors appear to have made their influence felt.

B. Khair constituency

Like Iglas, Khair constituency looked a promising prospect for the BKD in 1969. The landholding structure was characterized by a preponderance of larger holdings and the number of households cultivating less than 5 acres was well below the average of surrounding areas. Jats were the major landholding group, followed by Brahmans and Rajputs.

Before 1962 the area which was later to form the bulk of the Khair constituency was safe Congress territory. However in the elections of that year an independent candidate, Mahendra Singh, who had recently resigned from the Congress won the seat. Mahendra Singh had been a senior figure in the district Congress and had served on the UP Congress ruling body. (52) When he resigned his name was linked in the local press to a number of other dissident Congress members, including Sheodan Singh in Iglas, who claimed that Congress had lost touch with its rural roots and, in particular, that it had lost its "Gandhianism". (53)

In 1967, in the now redrawn constituency of Khair, Mahendra Singh stood again but narrowly lost to Congress by a margin of less than 3 per cent of the total vote. After 1967 Mahendra Singh quickly joined the group forming the BKD in the district and was selected to stand in Khair as the party candidate. In 1969 he easily won the seat with over 50 per cent of the vote, whilst Congress, standing the incumbent candidate, came second with 29 per cent of the vote.

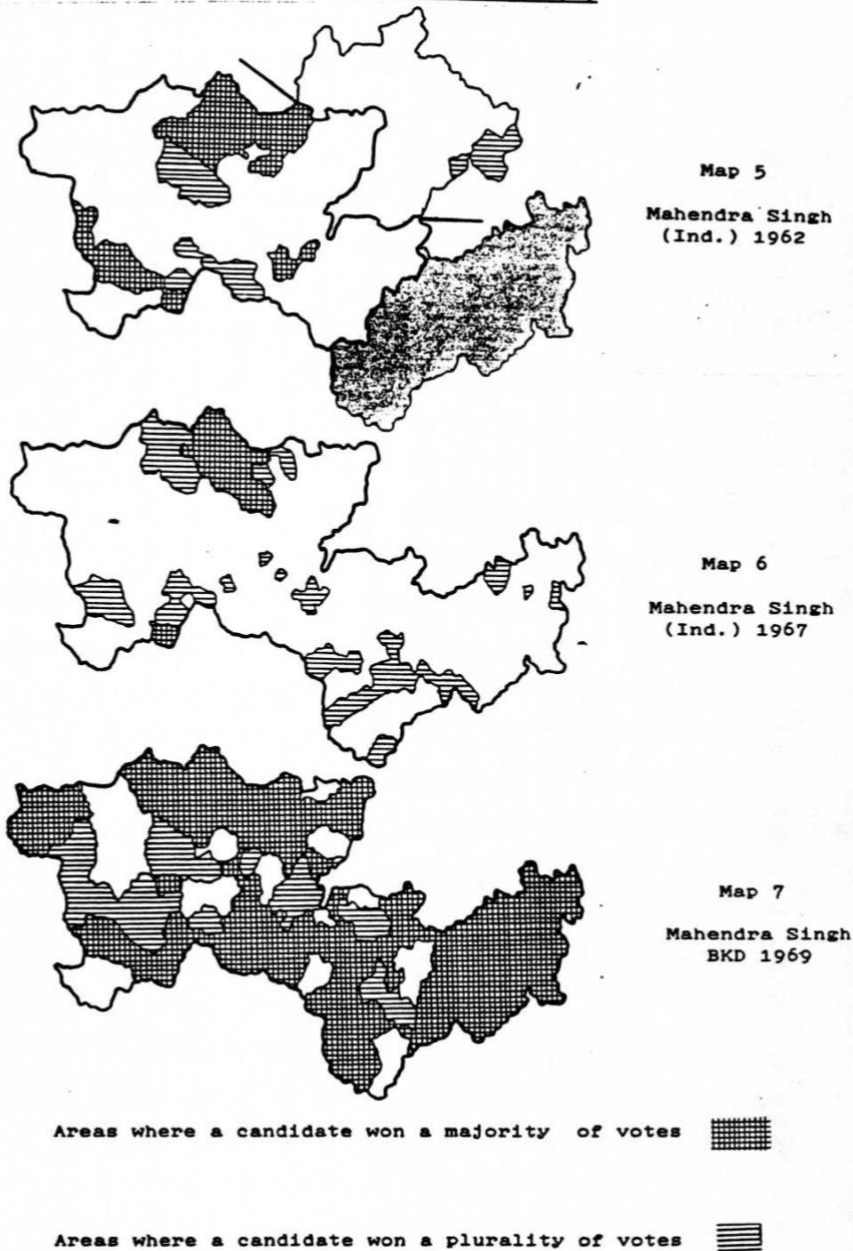
a) Patterns of Support

Mahendra Singh was a Jat, almost universally described as a "kulak" who came from a village in the north of the constituency. As can be seen from map 5, in 1962 he had a very clearly defined core of strong support around his home village in the north of the constituency and another bloc of support in the southwest. Both of these areas had a high proportion of Jat population and of Jat landowners.

The areas of strong support for Mahendra Singh were retained in the redrawn constituency in 1967 (map 6) and the villages lost to the constituency were those where he had enjoyed relatively little support in 1962. (54) In the election of 1967 a similar pattern of core support is noticeable with the addition of some villages in the newly attached southeastern part of the constituency. With his resounding victory in 1969 strong support for Mahendra Singh becomes much more widespread (see map 7), his original core support areas remain but some areas, in which he had performed relatively poorly in earlier elections, continue to be parts of the constituency with below average support for him.

If the results of 1967 and 1969 are examined in more detail in the 45 village clusters in this constituency we find a very strong connection between the pattern of support for the BKD in 1969 and that for Mahendra Singh in 1967, the correlation between the votes in the two elections being .49 (significant at the .05 level, $n = 45$). A similar correlation is also apparent in the vote for the Congress in the two years ($r = .55$, significant at the .05 level). It seems then that Mahendra Singh, having built a strong base as an independent candidate in earlier elections, then went on to expand this to secure victory for the BKD in 1969, but there is some evidence to suggest that the expansion did not take the form of consolidation of support of a single caste such as that which made a major contribution to the success of the BKD in Iglas.

Distribution of support for Mahendra Singh,
by polling booth, Khair Legislative Assembly
constituency 1962, 1967, 1969



b) Caste

If the performance of the BKD and Congress is examined in the village clusters with a preponderance of particular caste groups, it seems that the pattern of expansion of support is very different from that seen in Iglas. Whilst Mahendra Singh was receiving noticeably better support in Jat areas in 1967 (see Table 4) when he stood as the BKD candidate in 1969 he made substantial advances in areas with a preponderance of other caste groups. In 1969 the BKD polled more votes than Congress in every category of polling cluster and the discrepancy that existed in 1967, with Mahendra Singh doing better in Jat than other areas, had narrowed considerably. It should also be noted that the overall Congress vote went up between 1967 and 1969, but this advance was mostly confined to Brahman and Rajput areas and not apparent in Jat areas. But even in Brahman and Rajput areas the increase in the Congress vote was not as large as that for Mahendra Singh.

The scheduled castes do not form such a large proportion of the population in this constituency as in some of the surrounding areas, nor has this part of the district seen the sort of political activity by scheduled caste members that has been apparent elsewhere. It is, therefore, perhaps not surprising to find little evidence of any major influence on the outcome on the part of scheduled castes members. There is some indication of a hardening of scheduled caste voters against the BKD compared with the support gained by Mahendra Singh in 1967 ($r = -.03$ moving to $r = -.12$) and some increased support for Congress ($r = -.12$ moving to $r = .01$). However there does not seem to be any substantial evidence to suggest that the political preferences of the scheduled castes played a major role in the outcome of the election in Khair.

Table 4 Percentage share of votes for Mahendra Singh (Ind), Mahendra Singh (BKD) and for the Congress by polling areas with a preponderance of a particular caste in Khair constituency 1967/69

	% vote Ind. 1967	% vote BKD 1969	Diff 1967/69 (+/-)	% vote Con. 1967	% vote Con. 1969	Diff 1967/69 (+/-)
18 Jat	32.7	61.5	+28.8	-3.4	25.5	24.8
11 Brahman	11.9	51.0	+39.1	+6.9	23.2	32.7
4 Rajput	10.3	56.5	+46.2	+14.0	19.8	37.5
2 Chamar	16.7	47.4	+30.7	-1.5	32.1	28.9
1 Lodha	8.0	63.9	+55.9	+23.7	39.5	33.1
9 Mixed	20.4	50.9	+30.5	-1.7	28.7	32.9
45 All	27.2	55.6	+28.4	26.0	29.2	2.0

- 2 i -

The association between areas of Jat preponderance and the vote for Mahendra Singh in the two elections was further analysed by the method employed in the case of Iglas. Whilst the association between Jat and non-Jat areas which Mahendra Singh won or lost in 1967 is strong (chi-square = 6.90, significant at .01 level, $df = 1$, Yates's correction applied), by 1969 the association between the areas in which Mahendra Singh won and Jat preponderance had disappeared (chi-square = 1.18, significant at .70 level).

It seems then that the process of building support for the BKD in Khair was quite different from that which was occurring in Iglas. In Iglas we have seen that the success of the BKD was, in large part, the result of the fusion of large sections of the Jat caste group into a bloc of support for the party. In Khair, by contrast, it seems that Mahendra Singh had largely achieved this before 1969, and in the election of that year he further expanded the base of support for himself and the BKD. In Khair the transition between 1967 and 1969 was from a disproportionately single caste electoral base to more generalized support. However it should be noted that in both the cases studied so far the success of the BKD depended upon the widening and expansion of previously existing blocs of support, albeit in different ways.

c) Agricultural change

The area comprising Khair constituency was undergoing major changes in agriculture at the end of the 1960s. Although the impact of the NAS was not remarkably different from the rest of the district there can be no doubt that this area was in the vanguard of the adoption of the new technology. The landholding structure in the area (55) was particularly suited to the widespread application of the NAS as no less than 61 per cent of holdings were in the 5-30 acre range compared to only 46 per cent in the district as a whole. Conversely only 37 per cent of holdings were less than 5 acres compared to 52 per cent in the district. By the harvest season of 1969, 48 per cent of the cultivated area was under high yielding varieties of wheat. (56)

The correlations of party political performance with indicators of agricultural change in Khair are shown in Table 5. The most noticeable feature of these results is the series of positive correlations of the change in Mahendra Singh's vote in 1969, compared with what he obtained in 1967, with the indicators of agricultural change. Whilst the BKD vote in 1969, when taken by itself, does not show any such strong relationships it does appear that Mahendra Singh's new sources of support related to changes in agricultural practices.

Table 5 Correlation Coefficients of indicators of agricultural change with party political support, Khair 1967/69 (n = 45)

	% a.1.1971	% a.1.1961/71
Mah.Singh(Ind) 1967	-.32	-.08
BKD 1969	-.06	.07
Mah.Singh'67/8KD'69	.27	.14
Con.1967 -)	.10	-.19
Ccen.1969	.04	.10

d) Summary

From the evidence presented here it would appear that Mahendra Singh had established a strong base of local and caste support prior to his joining the WD. The election of 1969 enabled him to expand this base and there are indications that he did this by drawing upon the support of those participating in the NAS. Caste was an important factor in the election outcome, but it played a quite different role from that which was observed in Iglas.

A. Sasni constituency

At first sight Sasni did not appear to be a very likely constituency to produce a strong showing by the BKD in 1969. It did not have a high proportion of operational holdings of larger size, indeed the eastern part of the constituency is characterized by a particularly high number of holdings well below the average size for the district. In the latter years of the 1960s there was certainly a spread of the new technology in agriculture in the area, but it was not on the scale of its adoption in the two constituencies examined previously. In addition there are not the numbers of members of the Jat caste group which are present in either Iglas or Khair.

Sasni is situated in the south of Aligarh district in an area which has a high proportion of the population belonging to the Scheduled Castes. In fact the seat is a constituency reserved for candidates drawn from the Scheduled Castes and the area has been a centre of Scheduled Caste political activity for some time. In the 1960s the Republican Party of India (RPI), the organization which claimed to be the political representative of the Scheduled Castes, was particularly active in this constituency and in 1962 its candidate was second to Congress. In 1967 factionalism within the RPI and disputes about who was to receive the party nomination resulted in two candidates standing in the name of the party, but one of these was widely regarded as the "official" nominee of the RPI. For the purposes of further analysis the vote for this candidate has been taken as the equivalent of the RPI vote in 1967. The Jan Sangh was another strong presence in the constituency and polled over 20 per cent of the vote in both 1962 and 1967.

Despite these strong challenges from opposition parties the constituency had been a safe Congress area; in 1962 it won with 41 per cent of the vote and in 1967 it retained the seat with little short of half the vote. In both of these contests the Congress candidate had been Ram Prasad Deshmukh who, as we have already seen, joined Charan Singh and defected from the Congress shortly after the 1967 election.

The advantages which Deshmukh brought to the party as a state level and district leader were not so useful in his own constituency. He had not articulated the sort of grievances voiced by people like Sheodan Singh and Mahendra Singh before 1967 and he had not been involved in constructing an independent base of support as they had. The political networks through which he operated were mainly those of the Scheduled Castes, and more particularly the Jatavs, his own caste group, and, of course, those of the Congress. His influence among the Scheduled Castes was not likely to count for much once he had joined the BKD and so, in the absence of any other likely support base, it appeared that he would find it difficult to retain his seat. In an area with a lower proportion of larger landowners, little evidence of a significant breakthrough of the NAS, a high proportion of members of the Scheduled Castes, and an absence of major tracts dominated by members of the Jat audience, which seems to have been a crucial factor in the success of the party elsewhere in the district, the BKD would appear to have been hard-pressed to find a strategy to win the election. In fact the constituency was easily won by the BKD and Congress vote slumped. In 1967 the Congress won with 49.6 per cent of the vote and the Jan Sangh was second with 21.6 per cent, in 1969 the BKD easily won with 77.2 per cent of the vote and Congress won only 26.7 per cent.

Distribution of support for Ram Prasad Deshmukh,
by polling booth, Sasni Legislative Assembly
constituency 1962, 1967, 1969



Map 8

Ram Prasad Deshmukh
Congress 1962



Map 9

Ram Prasad Deshmukh
Congress 1967



Map 10

Ram Prasad Deshmukh
BKD 1969

Areas where a candidate won a majority of votes 

Areas where a candidate won a plurality of votes 

a) Patterns of support.

The pattern of support for Ram Prasad Deshmukh in the three elections of the 1960s does not show any of the distinctive contours of local strength we saw in Iglas and Khair. The only discernible feature is a shift to the east, of areas of strong support when Deshmukh stood for the BKD in 1969 (see Maps 8-10). This shift is from areas of the constituency with a preponderance of Brahmans and Chamars to the part where Kirar Rajputs are the most numerous caste group. The absence of distinctive local areas of core support for Deshmukh could, to some degree, be explained by two relevant factors. First he was not a locally based politician operating through the sort of personal networks which seem to have been important in Iglas and Khair; he had been a MLA in the state capital of Lucknow uninterruptedly since 1952, and to the extent that he had any home base it was in the district town of Aligarh and not in the rural areas of Sasni.⁽⁵⁷⁾ Second his core of support, prior to 1969, was amongst his own caste, the Jatavs, or Chamars, who rarely form the majority of the population of villages, or even the most numerous group, and

characteristically are to be found very evenly spread and usually as the second most numerous members of villages. (58)

The fact that Deshmukh defected from the Congress after the 1967 election also means that it is not possible to identify an expected level of support for the BKD in the manner of the two previous case studies. The share and distribution of the vote for Deshmukh in 1967 has to serve as the "expected" basis of the vote for both Congress and the BKD in 1969. Any comparison of the results of 1967 and 1969 in Sasni is also made difficult by the fact that the turn-out of voters increased enormously between the two elections. Of course the number of votes cast increased in Iglas and Khair, but this was largely as a result of the growth in numbers of those eligible to vote. The increase in Iglas was 17 per cent, and in Khair 12 per cent, but in Sasni the increase in the numbers voting was a remarkable 69 per cent. As a consequence the turn-out of those eligible to vote increased from 7.2.8 per cent in 1967 to 52.9 per cent in 1969. One preliminary observation is in order here: generally, participation in elections in Scheduled Caste constituencies is much lower than in non-reserved ones and the usual explanation given is that non-Scheduled Caste voters are less inclined to participate in what they see as elections which are the concern only of the Scheduled Castes. In this constituency in 1969 the arrival of the BKD combined with the candidature of a prominent figure in the party appears to have politicized the area quite dramatically and vastly increased the numbers voting.

Given these circumstances it is not surprising to find that the 1969 vote of the BKD, and of Congress, is not significantly correlated with that of the Congress in 1967. However there is a high, and significant, consistency in the strength of the vote of the RPI and of the Jan Sangh (see Table 5 below).

Table 5 Correlation coefficients of share of vote by party, Sasni 1967/69, (n = 49)

Con.'67/Con.'69 .10
Con.'67/BKD '69 .12
Rep.'67/RPI '69 .47
Jan Sangh'67/'69 .42

It therefore appears that the BKD, with Ram Prasad Deshmukh as its candidate, retained only a small proportion of the support he had enjoyed as the Congress candidate in 1967, but it also seems that the Congress did not retain much of this support either. If the variation in turn-out is now considered, we can see from Table 6 that the increase in turn-out appears to have benefited the BKD rather than other parties, and suggests that the party was drawing upon newly mobilized support. It should also be noted that the RFI appears to have suffered particularly badly as a consequence of the increase in turn-out, and this would be consistent with the view that earlier elections had mobilized the Scheduled Caste voters, who the RFI claimed to represent, to a greater extent than non-Scheduled Caste voters.

Table 6 Correlation of change in turn-out with party performance, Sasni 1967/69, (n = 49)

BKD '69 .11 Con.'67/BKD'69 .27
Con.'69 -.10 Con.'67/Con.'69 .14
RPI '69 -.04 RPI '67/RPI '69 -.26

Clearly, a series of complicated processes are at work here. The support previously enjoyed by Congress seems to have split, with some going to the BKD, and rather less to the Congress, whilst the BKD also appears to have been able to benefit much more than other parties from the increase in turn-out, indicating that the party was mobilizing new sources of support in this constituency. In order to make more sense of these processes it is necessary to turn to the pattern of shifts in areas of preponderance of particular caste groups.

b) Caste

In Sasni there was not the sort of evidence of major shifts in the political preferences of non-Scheduled Caste groups that has been observed in the other constituencies under study. In 1969 both Congress and the BKD did much worse than Congress in 1967 in areas of Chamar and Rajput preponderance. On the other hand both Congress and the BKD did much better in Kirar Rajput areas. (59) The only significant shift in support is in Brahman areas where Deshmukh declined compared with his performance as Congress candidate in 1967, whereas the Congress candidate in 1969 did rather better than average. However it is when the pattern of voting is considered in the context of the proportion of the population belonging to the Scheduled Castes that significant patterns do begin to emerge.

Table 7 Correlation coefficients of party performance with proportion of Scheduled Caste population, Sasni 1967/69

Con.'67 .15 RPI'67 .46
Con.'69 -.21 BKD'69 -.12 RPI'69 .70
Con.'67/69 -.26 Con'67/BKD'69 -.20 RPI'67/69 .45

It can be seen from Table 7 that support for Congress among the Scheduled Castes seems to have declined substantially between 1967 and 1969, most probably as a consequence of the defection of Deshmukh, but Scheduled Caste voters do not seem to have followed Deshmukh and supported the BKD. It seems that with the end of factionalism in the RPI and with an officially recognized candidate, the RPI became much more firmly rooted in the Scheduled Caste population of the constituency. In these circumstances it becomes even more apparent that the BKD and, to a lesser extent, the Congress, were dependent upon newly mobilized sections of support in the election of 1969.

c) Agricultural change

The area which makes up Sasni constituency did not show the sort of evidence apparent in Iglas and Khair for the adoption of the NAS. (60) In addition the distribution of landownership in this constituency is much more skewed towards smaller holdings. In particular the number of holdings in the 7.5 to 70 acre range is substantially lower than in Iglas and Khair and below the average for the district. (61)

Table 8 summarizes the correlations between indicators of agricultural change and the support for political parties in the elections of 1967 and 1969.

Table 8 Correlation coefficients of indicators of agricultural change with party political support, Sasni 1967/69

% tube well %a.1.1971	%a.1.1961/71
Con.'67	.29 -.21 -.29
Con.'69	-.42 -.15 -.26
Con.'67/'69	-.51 .09 .09
BKD'69	.05 .03 -.08
Con.'67/BKD'69	-.21 .20 .19
RPI'67	.12 -.06 -.05
RPI'69	.40 .32 .39
RPI'67/ .69	.36 .40 .48

These figures show that in 1967 the Congress vote is positively, and significantly, correlated with tube-well irrigation, but significantly negatively correlated with the growth of the agricultural labouring population. By 1969 the Congress vote is very strongly negatively correlated with tube-well irrigation and remains negatively correlated with growth in agricultural labourers. The vote for the BKD shows no significant correlation with any of the indicators of agricultural change. The most noticeable element of these figures is the strong positive and significant series of correlations between the vote of the RPI in 1969, and the change in its vote between 1967 and 1969, and the indicators of agricultural change. These findings suggest that, whilst neither Congress nor the BKD were finding a solid basis of support among the beneficiaries of agricultural change, the RPI was probably proving more successful in mobilizing agricultural labourers, of whom about a half are drawn from the Scheduled Castes, and others who were not beneficiaries of the NAS.

d) Summary

An examination of Sasni constituency has given the opportunity to explore the establishment and growth of the BKD in a very different environment and set of circumstances from those encountered in the two other constituencies. The party candidate was a recent defector from the Congress and did not seem to have the benefit of a personal and local basis of support which could act as a core to build a successful electoral campaign. His bloc of caste support was unlikely to follow him and support the BKD, nor did there seem to be any other readily available bloc likely to provide numbers sufficient to win the election.

The crucial variable in the success of the BKD in Sasni was the substantial increase in turnout. The increase in numbers voting did not work to the advantage of Congress to anything like the same extent, and was a major disadvantage for the RPI. As was pointed out earlier, non-Scheduled Caste participation increased in the context of an election which was now seen by caste Hindus as concerned with more than what they considered to be the parochial issues of the Scheduled Castes. In this constituency we find no startling evidence of association between changing agricultural practices and the pattern of political division and preference. For a whole variety of reasons it represented a very different set of circumstances from those examined earlier and the political processes at work showed the ability of the SKID to operate successfully in a more hostile environment.

5) Conclusion

The first thing to be noted about the electoral performance of the BKD in the three constituencies studied is the variety of circumstances and settings that were associated with its success. Although we have been looking at three contiguous constituencies within one district, they possessed different social, economic and political characteristics. Furthermore the three BKD candidates came from quite different political backgrounds. In Iglas the candidate was new to the area, even though she was well known and recruited the support of a veteran local politician and his followers. In Khair the candidate had left the Congress some years earlier and had the experience of contesting two elections as an independent. In Sasni the candidate was the incumbent who had left Congress to join Charan Singh. In this respect there is little in terms of the candidatures to suggest a common pattern of BKD success.

Second, a high degree of consistency of the pattern of support for candidates, both of the BKD and other parties, has been found. Even in the case of Sasni some correlation existed between the BKD candidate's pattern of support and his earlier performance as a Congress candidate. In the two other cases, the BKD was certainly able to draw upon already existing core groups of potential supporters, but it was also able to mobilize other blocs of support as well as draw in newly mobilized sections of the rural population. This study has not found any evidence to support the view that the BKD success in 1969 was solely or primarily the result of the consolidation of electoral support previously going to independent candidates.

Third, it seems that local networks of influence and inter-village blocs of support for particular candidates played an important role in the establishment and consolidation of the BKD in Iglas and Khair, but were not so important in Sasni. The strong support for Sheodan Singh and Mahendra Singh around their home villages in elections before 1969 gave them a secure base from which to launch the BKD campaign. However it must be emphasized that these highly localized networks and bases of core support were expanded enormously with the creation of the BKD and transformed into more impersonal lines of communication which were institutionalized in the local organization and campaigning activities of the party. Local networks and personal influence were certainly a prerequisite of some of the successes of the candidates of the BKD in 1969, but it was their transformation and institutionalization that guaranteed the breakthrough for the party in the election of that year.

The degree to which caste networks mediated in the processes described above cannot be over-emphasized. The evidence, from this area at least, shows the BKD, in its initial stages, to have been heavily dependent upon the support of large sections of the Jat caste group. In addition it seems that the arrival of the BKD crystallized the political allegiances of other castes as well. It was not just Jats who were affected; Brahmans, Rajputs, and members of Scheduled Caste groups all responded in different ways to the arrival of the BKD. To say that caste was a dominant influence in the performance of the BKD in 1969 is riot to say that it was the determinant factor or even that caste interacted with the political process everywhere in the same way. In Iglas the election of 1969 was the occasion for the fusion of large sections of the previously politically divided Jat caste group and this process was accompanied by a high degree and incidence of conflict and antagonism between both Jats and Brahmans and between Jats and members of the Scheduled Castes. In Khair, by contrast, the process of amalgamating large sections of the Jat group into a political bloc seems to have occurred before the formation of the BKD and the election campaign of 1969, in which the party moved on to attract wider and more diverse support than that existing for Mahendra Singh in 1962 or 1967. In Sasni Jats do not form a significant proportion of the population but here major shifts in the allegiances of the Scheduled Castes seem

to have been important factors in the election result.

So does all of this suggest that the BKD was simply the expression of the political aspirations of the Jats in this area. Obviously the evidence from Sasni would caution against such a view. Here Jats were not present in sufficient numbers to guarantee electoral victory solely on the basis of caste solidarity. But the other two constituency studies do seem to provide evidence that the BKD was very much a caste based party. If it is accepted, for the moment, that the Jats played a central part in the emergence of the BKD then it also needs to be asked why this should have happened at this particular time. Why hadn't the Jats formed themselves into a separate political party earlier? What specific factors were influential in attracting the Jats to the BKD at the end of the 1960s?

To investigate these questions it is important first to recognize the distinctive position occupied by the Jats in the rural areas of western UP. Their reputation as industrious and efficient peasant cultivators is too well known to need repetition here. It also needs to be remembered that before the abolition of landlordism in UP they had tended to be found amongst the smaller and middle ranks of landlords and the more secure and prosperous sections of tenants. Those that were landlords also showed a high propensity to self-cultivation of their holdings. Apart from the few large landlords among their number, the Jats were not much, if at all, affected by the great land reform legislation which swept away the landlords of UP. The members of the caste had prospered as a consequence of the pattern of landholding adopted in UP after independence, they had been in a strong position to take advantage of the rural development initiatives in the post—colonial period and by the latter years of the 1960s they were beginning to experience the benefits of the changes in agricultural technology. They were the quintessential representatives of the more prosperous sections of the peasantry in western UP.

Given the distinctive position occupied by the Jats it is not surprising that they should have been in the vanguard of those responding to the threats perceived by the peasantry in the 1960s, which gave rise to the discontent we have already discussed above. Nor does the proposition that Jat solidarity was an essential element in the success of the BKD in 1969 mean that this did not change later on. Indeed this study has discussed one case where the Jats did not appear to be as major factor in the successful election of a BKD candidate, and in later elections the BKD, and its successor parties, enjoyed substantial electoral success in areas with negligible Jat populations. Rather it is suggested here that the initial success of the BKD, its ability to establish and consolidate a presence in the electoral politics of rural area of UP was dependent upon the mobilization of large sections of the Jat caste. The later success of the party depended upon its skills in projecting Jat grievances and discontent as being typical of those of similar strata of the peasantry. The Jats did not, and do not today, constitute a section of a class or even a part of a specific stratum of the peasantry, but the more that the leadership and organizers of the BKD could project it as such, the more they could blur the distinction between Jats as a caste and Jats as typical representatives of the more prosperous peasantry as a whole, the greater was the potential support for the party. (62)

Studies conducted at a more general level than this one suggest a very close connection between agricultural modernization and the success of the BKD. In the light of its stated programme, general ideology and the long history of Charan Singh's struggles on behalf of the prosperous peasantry, it would be foolish to dismiss an association between the rise of the BKD, the spread of modern techniques in agriculture and those more prosperous strata of the peasantry which are able to participate in the NAS.

In this study clear evidence of an association between changed agricultural practices and support for the BKD has not been found. However at the village level there do not exist specific data relating to agricultural change or participation in the NAS. Nor are there village level figures relating to the distribution of landholdings. The variables used in this study are perhaps rather imprecise indicators of changed agricultural practices, even so they could be expected to provide an approximate guide to agricultural modernization. If the BKD was drawing support from those participating in the NAS, why hasn't this association emerged clearly from this study? First it has to be said that some evidence does exist in the case of Khair to show that the improvement in the candidate's support compared with that in the previous election, was related to agricultural modernization. In the other two cases no such association can be found and it appears that whatever connection may have been present has been obscured by the overwhelming influence of caste on the political process. It may well be the case that the clear association between agricultural modernization and the rise of the BKD which is apparent in studies conducted over a wider geographical area is not to be found at the more local level.

If the BKD was recruiting electoral support from those participating in the NAS, it must also be remembered that other parties, and in particular Congress, were as well. In the case of the BKD, supporters, perhaps, had to meet a number of criteria. As well as being participants in the NAS, they were likely to members of the middle or "backward" castes, and in this area more particularly Jats, as well as being drawn from the middle landowning strata identified by Brass as being such an important component of BKD support. With these considerations in mind it is perhaps not surprising that clear evidence of the connection between the BKB and the NAS has not emerged at this level of analysis.

The case studies presented here show the importance of analyzing the rise of the BKD within the context of the local political environment. It has not been the intention of this study to refute or question the more general theories based on aggregate ecological data analysis which have informed so much of the study of the rise of the BKD. But as we probe more deeply at the local level it does seem that the processes at work were more complicated than some of these suggested by the findings presented at the more general level. Above all the data and analysis presented here do suggest that a crucial factor in the early success of the BKD was the ability of the party to adapt to the particularities of local environments notwithstanding its very specific and exclusive appeal articulated through its leadership, ideology and party programme. One of the most distinctive features of the BKD was its unambiguous appeal to clearly defined strata of the peasantry, but the party also demonstrated a remarkable ability to temper this by an adaptation to and accommodation with the local realities of social, economic and political processes.

Notes

- 1) For details of this period see, M.H. Johnson, *The Relation Between Land Settlement and Party Politics in Uttar Pradesh, India, 1950-69*, D. Phil, Sussex University, 1975, Ch. 5.
- 2) Paul R. Brass, "The 1984 Parliamentary Elections in Uttar Pradesh", *Asian Survey*, Vol. XXVI, No. 6, June 1986, p. 665
- 3) This literature is now extensive, for the best general accounts see: Paul R. Brass, "The Politicization of the Peasantry in a North Indian State", Part-, I and II, *Journal of Peasant Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 4, July 1980 and Vol. 8, No.1, October 1980; Paul R. Brass, "Congress, the Lok Dal, and the Middle-Peasant Castes: An Analysis of the 1977 and 1980 Parliamentary Elections in Uttar Pradesh", *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 54, No. 1, Spring 1981; Craig Baxter, "The Rise and Fall of the Bharatiya Kranti Dal in Uttar Pradesh", in Myron Weiner and John Osgood Field (eds.), *Electoral Politics in the Indian States*, Vol. IV, *Party Systems and Cleavages*, Delhi, 1975; Francine Frankel, "Problems of Correlating Electoral and Economic Variables: An Analysis of Voting Behaviour and Agrarian Modernization in Uttar Pradesh" in *ibid.*, Vol. III, *The Impact of Modernization*, Delhi, 1975; Ian Duncan, *Levels, The Communication of Programmes, and Sectional Strategies in Indian Politics*, D.Phil., Sussex University, 1979; M.H. Johnson, *The Relation Between Land Settlement and Party Politics*.
- 4) see Baxter "Rise and Fall", p. 115.
- 5) *Ibid.*, p. 127.
- 6) cited in Brass "Politicization", Part II, p. 19.
- 7) *Ibid.*, p. 20.
- 8) *National Herald* (Lucknow), 15 January 1969.
- 9) *Ibid.*, 31 January 1969.
- 10) *Link*, 23 February 1969.
- 11) Brass "Congress, the Lok Dal", p. 9.
- 12) Dilip Mukerjee, "The Indian Mid-Term Elections", *The World Today*, Vol. XXIV, May 1969, p. 216.
- 17) *National Herald*, 8 February 1969.
- 14) Frankel "Problems of Correlating", esp. p. 174ff.
- 15) *Ibid.*, p. 152.
- 16) *Ibid.*, p. 157; see also, Frankel, *India's Political Economy, 147-77: The Gradual Revolution*, Princeton, 1978, pp. 7,85-797
- 17) Brass "Politicization", *passim*.
- 18) Brass "Politicization", Part II, p 31
- 19) See for example H. Rao on tax, Thamarajakskshi on prices, Mody, Byres, etc.; for counter view see Lipton
- 20) For accounts of the management of the competing demands on, and conflicts within, the Indian state see, A. Mitra, Byres, Bardhan, Jha etc.
- 21) T. Byres, "The New Technology, Class Formation and Class Action in the Indian Countryside", *Journal of Peasant Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 4, 1981, p. 446-7
- 22) for an account of the impact of the willingness of the Centre to intervene in Charan Singh's coalition government in UP in 1967, see Duncan "The Politics of Foodgrain Procurement", *Peasant Seminar*, University of London, No. ?
- 27) For an excellent account of Charan Singh's role in the UP Congress and his later importance, see Brass "Division in the Congress and the Rise of Agrarian Interests and Issues in Uttar Pradesh Politics, 1952 to 1977", in John R. Wood (ed.), *State Politics in Contemporary India: Crisis or Continuity*, Boulder Colorado, 1984; See also Duncan, *Levels, The Communication of Programmes*, esp. Ch. 3; P. Reeves, "Abolition of Zamindari ...", *South Asia* (New Series).
- 24) Account of polling booth methodology- reduce this somehow!
- 25) For importance of rate of agricultural proletarianization see Harry W. Blair, "Structural Change, the Agricultural Sector, and Politics in Bihar", in John R. Wood (ed.), *State Politics in Contemporary India*, p. 58; The changes in definitions, and methods of enumeration, of agricultural labourers are discussed in *Government of India, Census of India, 1971, Paper 1 of 1971*. Village level data on the number of agricultural labourers in 1961 is contained in: *Government of Uttar Pradesh, Census 1961, District Census Handbook, Aligarh District, Allahabad, 1965*. Figures relating to 1971 are to be found in: *Government of Uttar Pradesh, Census 1971, District Census Handbook, District Aligarh, Part X-B, Primary Census Abstract, Lucknow, 1976*.
- 26) Tubewell data is available in: *Government of Uttar Pradesh, Census 1971, District Census Handbook, District Aligarh, Part X-A, Town and Village Directory, Lucknow, 1972*. For importance of tubewell irrigation in adoption of new technology see: Byres "The New Technology", p. 411.

- 27) Government of India, Census of India, 1891, District Census Statistics, North-Western Provinces and Oudh, Aligarh District, Allahabad, 1896.
- 28) See Brass "Indian Election Studies", South Asia (New Series), Vol.1, No.2, 1978, on desiderata of method
- 29) Imtiaz Ahmad, "Election Studies in India", Economic and Political Weekly, 24 September 1977, discusses the problems of integrating an understanding of the local political environment in studies of electoral data.
- 30) For general background to politics in Aligarh district see: Zoya Hassan, "The Congress in a District, 1936-46; Problems of Political Mobilization", The Indian Economic and Social History Review, Vol.23, No.1, 1986, on the colonial period; Paul R. Brass, Factional Politics in an Indian State: The Congress Party in Uttar Pradesh, Berkeley, 1965, on the period up to the elections of 1962; Ian Duncan, Levels, The Communication of Programmes, esp. Chs. 2, 5 and 8 for the 1960s
- 31) for details of Jan Congress see Johnson, The Relationship, Ch. 6
- 32) Interview Shyam Vir Singh, President of Aligarh City BKD
- 33) See Duncan D.Phil., pp. 157-8 for further details
- 34) Interview Sheodan Singh
- 35) Mahendra Singh was...., Mahavir Singh was
- 36) Jai Ram Verma: MLA from Faizabad, joined Charan Singh in SVD, made minister of Agriculture
- 37) National Herald 28 August 1968.
- 38) Interview with Shyam Vir Singh
- 39) BKD Manifesto. For a commentary on the manifesto see Duncan, Levels, pp. 144-6; Johnson, The Relationship, pp.265-286;
- 40) Denik Prakash 26 January 1969
- 41) These figures and the data in the following discussion are derived from the publications of the Intensive Agricultural District Programme relating to Aligarh: Government of India, Ministry of Food, Agriculture, Community Development and Co-operation, Expert Committee on Assessment and Evaluation, Intensive Agricultural District Programme, Second Report (1960-65), New Delhi, 1966; Government of India, Ministry of Food, Agriculture, Community Development and Co-operation, Expert Committee on Assessment and Evaluation, Report on the Intensive Agricultural District Programme (1960-68), Vol. 1, New Delhi, 1969; see also the various reports of Government of Uttar Pradesh, Department of Agriculture, including, Review of Work, Aligarh district, 1960-64, Aligarh, n. d.; Report on I.A.D.P.(Aligarh) 1961-68, Aligarh, n. d.; Progress of Various Development Programmes, 1961-69, Aligarh, n. d..
- 42) It should be pointed out that at the constituency level these factors are all inter-correlate making it difficult to isolate any one single factor.
- 43) Government of India, Census of India 1961, Vol. XV, Uttar Pradesh, Part III-A, Household Economic Tables, Delhi, 1966, Table B-XI
- 44) see Brass, Factional Politics, for further details
- 45) Sheodan Singh claims that he made an offer to Kamalapati Tripathi, the UP Congress leader to stand down in this election if Congress selected a candidate other than Mohan Lal Gautam, an old Brahman rival of Sheodan Singh. His offer was refused. Sheodan Singh also claims that the Jat Jan Sangh candidate was encouraged to stand by the Congress. Interview Sheodan Singh.
- 46) Sheodan Singh says he approached Gayatri Devi to stand in this election in order to defeat Mohan Lal Gautam. He also promised to organize her campaign. "...without my efforts she could not have been elected because she was unknown to the villagers". Interview Sheodan Singh. The BKD in Iglas vigorously promoted the wife of Charan Singh as its candidate and prompted complaints from the Congress that the area was in a "state of panic" caused by BKD activists campaigning with the slogan "The Chaudhuri's wife must win". See Denik Prakash, 29 January 1969; Link, 2 February 1969.
- 47) Home addresses of candidates have all been obtained from the data contained in the UP Election Project 1952-71 (B.D. Graham, University of Sussex)
- 48) Won is used here in the sense of winning a plurality of votes.
- 49) Figures presented here differ slightly from those in Ian Duncan, levels as further research has resulted in the reclassification of a small number of villages.
- 50) i.e. we recognize that relationships of dependency still exist and that etc.
- 51) For example the press reported (Denik Prakash 4.2.69 and 5.2.69) that BKD workers had broken up ten Congress meetings. In village Jaitholi in the north of Iglas it was reported that no Congress workers were allowed in. The population of this village is about half Jat and one-quarter Scheduled Caste. It voted overwhelmingly (more than 80 per cent) for BKD. In the neighbouring

village of Baroth many S.C. people were reported injured by BKD workers.

52) Government of Uttar Pradesh, Legislative Assembly Secretariat, Who's Who in the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly, Lucknow, 1963, p. 172.

53) Denik Prakash 21 January 1962

54) In Map 5 the shaded area was added to the constituency before the 1967 election. The area to the northeast (top right hand) of the bold line was lost to the constituency after 1962. It is interesting to note that the area lost to the constituency, is strongly Jat but did not (stuff about Jat clans not really needed)

55) Census 1961

56) Revenue Dept. UP

57) He lived in Aligarh town and had only started to represent this area in 1962. Before then he had been the MLA for constituencies in the north of the district.

58) See Schwartzberg, J. E., "The Distribution of Selected Castes. in the North Indian Plain", Geographical Review, Vol. 55, No 4, 1965.

59) Kirar Rajputs are.

60) Revenue Dept. figures

61) Census 1961

62) For a discussion of the unfolding of this process in later elections see: Brass, "The 1984 Parliamentary Election in Uttar Pradesh"; Harold A. Gould, "A Sociological Perspective on the Eighth General Election in India", Asian Survey, Vol. XXVI, No. 6, June 1986, esp. pp. 638-645; Chandan Mitra, "Return of the Peasant: Charan Singh as a Class Factor", The Statesman Weekly, April 6, 1985; Harold A. Gould, "The Second Coming: The 1980 Elections in India's Hindi Belt", Asian Survey, Vol. XX, No. 6, June 1980, esp. pp.608; Susanne Hoeber Rudolph and Lloyd I. Rudolph, "The Centrist Future of Indian Politics", *ibid*, esp. pp.585-592; Myron Weiner, *India at the Polls 1980: A Study of the Parliamentary Elections*, Washington and London, 1983, esp. pp. 80-84.