WHAT'S HAPPENING TO INDIA?

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POLITICS, WOMEN AND WELL-BEING: HOW KERALA BECAME ‘A
MODEL’

WHAT'S HAPPENING TO INDIA?

*Punjab, Ethnic Conflict, and the Test for
Federalism*

Second Edition

Robin Jeffrey

M
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To L. J.
without whom . . .

MAP 1.1 *India, political divisions, 1985*

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Abbreviations

AISSF	All-India Sikh Students' Federation
BJP	Bharatiya Janarta Party
BSF	Border Security Force
CM	Chief Minister
CPI(M)	Communist Party of India (Marxist)
CRP	Central Reserve Police
IPS	India Police Service
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
MLA	Member of the Legislative Assembly
MP	Member of Parliament, the national legislature
OBC	Other Backward Castes
PEPSU	Patiala and East Punjab States' Union, the state, which existed from 1948 to 1956, made up of territories ruled by Indian princes during British times
RSS	Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (Hindu revivalist organisation)
SGPC	Shiromani Gurdwara, Parbandhak Committee, the election committee established in 1925, which oversees Sikh temples.
UP	Uttar Pradesh (northern province); under the British, the United Provinces (same territory in both cases)

Preface to the Second Edition

I am grateful to Ian Dawes for his help in assembling materials to allow me to write the new introduction for this edition and to the School of Social Sciences at La Trobe University for a grant to pay for such research assistance. Dipesh Chakrabarty, John Miller, Talis Polis and Peter Reeves generously read and commented on versions of the new manuscript.

Melbourne
December 1992

ROBIN JEFFERY

Preface to the First Edition

Intended for general readers, but sufficiently well-documented, I hope, to satisfy specialists, this book is an essay in the strict sense – an attempt to work out and explain a problem.

In November 1984, in the days after Mrs Gandhi's assassination, I heard the question, 'What's happening to India?', at least half a dozen times. Whenever I tried to answer it, I found myself beginning with an explanation of the past twenty years in Punjab. I heard myself dwelling on its amazing agricultural development and notable prosperity and telling anyone who would listen how Punjab was often invoked as the model that other regions of India must try to emulate. But if Punjab were a model, did it necessarily entail violence and secessionism? I found that I needed to explain the unique aspects of Punjab: its location on the frontier, its violent history and its place at the centre of the Sikh religion. I found myself then trying to explain how modernisation – vastly improved communications, government activity, commercial agriculture, etc. – reacted with Punjabi culture; and how greedy political decisions, aiming for short-term gains, ignited this volatile mixture to produce the explosions of the 1980s. Finally, as people shook their heads, I found myself parrying questions like 'What hope can there be for India?' by emphasising the enormous creative energies that have also been unleashed in the past twenty years. I tried to say that though such energies could lead to cruel ethnic violence, they have also generated powerful grass-roots organisations working for, and achieving, genuine, humanitarian change. The need to write the book grew out of attempts to tell this story, as I understood it.

Chandigarh, the common capital of Punjab and Haryana, was my first home in India. I taught English in a government high school there between 1967 and 1969. The fascination with Punjab particularly, and India generally, gripped me then and has never let go. Although academic research later led me to

Kerala in south India, I continued to write to old students and other friends in Chandigarh, Punjab and Haryana. I still enjoy the opportunity to visit Chandigarh when I go to India. As the torments of Punjab grew in 1983 and 1984, I felt more and more driven to try to explain to myself what was happening there and, by extension, throughout India.

An amiable librarian at the university where I work inadvertently prodded me forward. In April 1984, with news from Punjab becoming more bloody each day, he called me to his office and presented me with two brightly coloured booklets. 'Did you order these?'

'I don't think so', I said. Then I looked at the covers and the titles: *Supreme Sacrifice of Young Souls* and *The Immortal Story of Chamkaur Sahib*, tales of the martyrdoms of the sons of Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth and last preceptor of the Sikhs. 'I could have done,' I admitted, 'I ask you to order most things about the Sikhs'.

'I don't think comic books are worth cataloguing,' he said. 'You may as well take them.'

Later, as I perused the well-produced, colourful booklets (available in English, Hindi and Punjabi), their combination of old and new haunted me. (See the section entitled 'History-Making' in Chapter 4 of this book.) The stories were as old as the last Guru himself (he was assassinated in 1708) and are known to every Sikh. But the format owed much to Walt Disney. The first booklet was published in 1977, just right to come into the hands of children born after the mid-1960s, a time when many of their parents began to prosper from the 'green revolution'. Children were less needed in the fields and household, and parents saw an advantage in sending them to school to learn about the new agricultural technology. More Punjabi children than ever before acquired the opportunity to study and the leisure to read.¹ How did such innovations fit into the grisly puzzle that Punjab had become by the mid-1980s?

The sources on which this book is largely based are also in a sense part of the book's argument. The book relies heavily on Indian newspapers and periodicals. The flourishing of Indian journalism since the end of the 'emergency' in 1977 is one indication of the changes overtaking the country. The total circulation of all periodicals, which stood at 34 million in 1976,

was more than 50 million by 1982. The circulation of daily newspapers more than doubled from 6.6 million copies a day in 1968 to 14.5 million in 1980.² Though some Indians criticise what they see as 'an obedient press',³ subservient to the government, the fact remains that there are journals for every shade of opinion, and most versions of an event ultimately get aired. Indeed, to the Indian establishment the 'reports of wretched journalists' are a constant nuisance.⁴ To me, the vigour of recent Indian journalism represents one of the country's strengths. Few nations, for example, can have a publication so scholarly and hard-hitting as the *Economic and Political Weekly* of Bombay or a provincial daily so comprehensive as the *Tribune* of Chandigarh. The debts to other journals, journalists and scholars will be evident from a glance at the notes at the end of the book.

I am grateful to the School of Social Sciences, La Trobe University, Melbourne, for a grant to pay for research assistance, without which I would not have been able to write the book during a busy teaching year. I am also grateful to Jon Bader, Victoria Holmes and Sherinda Kaur for providing that assistance at various times and for their never-failing good humour and conscientiousness.

I am deeply indebted to Hew McLeod of the University of Otago and to Talis Polis, chairman of the Department of Politics, La Trobe University, for encouraging me at an early stage to push on with this project and for invaluable comment on each of the draft chapters.

I am similarly indebted to Jon Bader, Dipesh Chakrabarty and Peter Reeves for reading and commenting on the entire manuscript.

Basil Johnson has kindly given me permission to use four maps from his *India: Resources and Development*, 2nd edition (Heinemann, 1983). Gary Swinton, Department of Geography, Monash University, has drawn three new maps for this book.

I am also very grateful to Tim Colebatch, Leon Glezer, John Miller, Prem Mohindra, Avinash Mookhy, Joyce Pettigrew and J. M. Sharma for reading and commenting on portions of the manuscript. Mr Mohindra was also a great help in locating difficult-to-find references, as were Daya Singh Dhaliwal, Joginder Singh, Anil Mehta, Chris Tomlins and Tom Weber.

The National Library of Australia, by providing a steady

flow of the *Tribune* of Chandigarh on microfilm, and the splendid people and collection of the Borchardt Library at La Trobe University, made it possible to consult a wide and deep range of sources in the space of about six months.

Marilu Espacio, Louise Gigliotti, Maree Nemeth and Mary Zaccari typed the manuscript, carried out countless revisions and always seemed one jump ahead of me. I am grateful to them for the care and interest they have taken.

Finally, I must emphasise even more than is customary that none of the above people is responsible for the errors or interpretations in this book. Because it deals with burning issues, the book is unlikely to please all readers. Those who fault it should remember that the responsibility for all its defects lies entirely with me and not with those who have helped me.

Melbourne
April 1985

ROBIN JEFFREY

Glossary

Akali Dal	the army of the faithful (political party)
Congress (I)	Congress (Indira); the Congress party that Mrs Gandhi drew around her in 1978–9
<i>granthi</i>	the reader in charge of scriptures in a <i>gurdwara</i> ; often inaccurately described as ‘a priest’
<i>gurdwara</i>	a Sikh temple; literally the ‘door of the Guru’
Gurmukhi	the alphabet in which the <i>Guru Granth Sahib</i> is written and which is now commonly used to write the Punjabi language
guru	a preceptor, religious teacher (spelled with a capital G, one of the ‘ten Gurus’ – the founders of Sikhism)
Guru Granth Sahib	the Sikh scriptures
<i>kesh-dhari</i>	a Sikh who keeps his hair long and observes the other symbols of the <i>Khalsa</i> (the ‘five Ks’)
Khalsa	the Sikh order or brotherhood, begun by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699; ‘the company of the pure’
<i>mahant</i>	the chief of a religious institution
Mazhbis	Sikh Untouchables
<i>misl</i>	eighteenth-century Sikh military bands
<i>panth</i>	the usual word to describe the Sikh religious community

<i>panj piyare</i>	the beloved five; the first five Sikhs initiated into the Khalsa by Guru Gobind Singh
Punjabi Suba	a state (suba) in which speakers of the Punjabi language would be a majority
<i>sahaj-dhari</i>	a Sikh who believes in the teaching of the Gurus but does not wear the symbols of the Khalsa
sant	a title given to a holy man or religious leader
Sant Nirankari Mission	a sect, dating from the 1930s, which employs some Sikh symbols, but whose members clashed with orthodox Sikhs from the 1970s
Scheduled Castes	the official name applied to people formerly called 'Untouchables'

What Happened to India, 1985–92?

Introduction to the Second Edition

The first edition of this book, completed in 1985, described an India undergoing profound change, in which the state of Punjab was the vanguard. I argued that India generally, and Punjab especially, were experiencing a ‘modernising ferment that penetrates even remote corners’ (p. 205) and that India was ‘talking to itself as never before and forming a new “itself” in the process’ (p. 11). The outcomes were not predetermined: they could be ‘religious revival, ethnic conflict and secession’ or transformation of states to make them work for the benefit of even their poorest citizens (p. 205). In both India and elsewhere, the experience of 1985 to 1992 has been too often of the destructive kind.

By 1992, peoples of central and eastern Europe found themselves struggling with processes with which independent India has contended for more than forty years – free communication, competition and contestation with the state. Emerging from the deep-freeze of authoritarian rule into which they were plunged in 1919 or 1945–9, various European ‘peoples’ discover and seek to shape themselves – with manifestos, assemblies and constitutions and with guns, armies and concentration camps. The apparatus of the modern state both creates these dilemmas of identity and is called on to solve them. Though these processes and their attendant crises pervade India in the 1990s, its democratic federation has so far coped better than the regimes of the erstwhile Yugoslavia or Soviet Union. The crises nevertheless are undeniable, each one seemingly more threatening than the last to India’s post-independence polity.

Simultaneously, changes in the international environment since 1989 have forced policies on India that were almost unthinkable when Mrs Gandhi died in 1984. Then, old certainties remained: a Congress Party, led by a member of the Nehru

family, governed the country; economic policy was based on 'socialism'; the ideal of the Indian state was 'secularism'; and foreign policy was 'non-aligned', located between two great power blocs.

By 1992 none of these certainties survived. Rajiv Gandhi was dead, assassinated in May 1991 as a result of complex adventures in Indian foreign and domestic policy involving Tamils and Sri Lanka. The Congress (I) ('I' for 'Indira') Party, having lost an election in 1989 and then barely won one in 1991, struggled to rouse itself from the anaesthetic Mrs Gandhi and her family had administered for twenty years. 'Socialism' was being thrown out of the window, yet the apparatus of India's centralised, 'planned' economy, constructed over forty years, was so ponderous that it proved hard to find a window big enough. If it was necessary to knock out a wall, what would be the effect on the building? The Soviet Union had dissolved, and with it, a long-dependended-on source of weapons and diplomatic support. In a one-super-power world, with whom was a country to be non-aligned? Most strikingly, 'secularism' – the doctrine proclaimed since 1947 that the state must be neutral in sectarian or religious affairs – was relentlessly challenged.

Results of the three national elections between 1984 and 1991 dramatise this challenge. In the elections of December 1984, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), whose senior leaders for forty years have claimed to speak for 'the Hindus' (more than 80 per cent of India's population), won only two seats out of 229 it contested and 7.4 per cent of the total vote. In November 1989, their tally grew to 85 seats and 11.4 per cent. And in the elections of May–June 1991, the BJP felt bold enough to contest more seats than ever before (456), won 117 and took 20 per cent of the total vote.¹

The parliamentary results represented a formal, measurable outcome of processes which the earlier edition of this book postulated as fundamental to an understanding of the crisis in Punjab and suggested would become increasingly evident throughout India:

the innovations of the past twenty years . . . reacting with a proud, violent culture . . . [then] a series of unwise political decisions, aimed at short-term gains, set off the explosions . . . (below, p.205).

TABLE Lok Sabha election results, 1989 and 1991

	1989		1991	
	Seats	% of vote	Seats	% of vote
Congress	197	39.5	226	36.0
Janata Dal	143	17.8	56	11.3
BJP	85	11.4	117	20.0
CPM	33	6.5	35	6.2
CPI	12	2.6	13	2.4
State parties	24	5.7	24	–
Others	23	9.8	31	24.1
Independents	12	5.2	–	–
TOTAL	529	98.5	502	100.0

SOURCE Butler *et al.*, *India Decides*, 2nd edn, pp. 90–1. Walter K. Andersen, 'India's 1991 Elections', *Asian Survey*, Vol. 31, no. 10 (October 1991), p. 980.

Similar developments led to the unprecedented mob-destruction of the Babari Mosque at Ayodhya in Uttar Pradesh on 6 December 1992. Electronic communications flash messages and images into remote corners and carry those corners' reactions back across the country to other localities which simultaneously do the same (see below, pp. 12–13). People can be informed, aroused and organised as never before. For anyone previously in doubt, the destruction of the mosque at Ayodhya made chillingly clear that a struggle has begun to control the body and capture the soul of the Indian state.

This new introduction discusses the way in which some of these themes unfolded in the seven years after 1985. It tries to explain the dissolution of cherished certainties of independent India – 'secularism', 'socialism' and 'non-alignment' – and to explore the territory into which the processes of change, seen so vividly earlier in Punjab, may lead.

SECULARISM: WHAT SORT OF STATE?

Among the statements made by shocked leaders after Hindu zealots tore down the Babari Masjid at Ayodhya on 6 December 1992, that of the Vice-President of India stood out. The attack on the mosque was, he said, the greatest political tragedy since the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi in 1948.² Though he was a

Congress politician and associate of Indira Gandhi, the destruction of the mosque appeared to him so grave a threat to the India of which he was a leader that he ignored the assassinations of Mrs Gandhi and her son Rajiv.

The Vice-President, K. R. Narayanan (b. 1921), embodied many characteristics of the national elite that shaped India from the time of Jawaharlal Nehru. An 'untouchable' by caste, a Keralan from the south in origin, Narayanan married a woman from Burma and became ambassador to China, vice-chancellor of the national university that bears Nehru's name, a Congress member of parliament and vice-president of the country in 1992. His biography symbolises the liberal, open, outward-looking India that many hoped was being established after independence.

'Secularism' continues to have loud defenders, and the word itself survives to shape debate. Even its opponents, for example, advocate not the creation of a religious or sectarian state but 'positive secularism', in which governments would do justice even-handedly to majorities (i.e. Hindus) and not pander to minorities.³ Formally, such a statement is forty years old: as old as the Jana Sangh's, and its descendant, the Bharatiya Janata Party's advocacy of the supreme rights of 'Hindus'. But for nearly thirty years such advocacy made little impact except among twice-born (higher-status) castes in urban north India. The BJP's two seats and 7.4 per cent of the vote in the 1984 national elections were slightly worse than the Jana Sangh's three seats and 3 per cent of the vote in the first general elections of 1951-2 (when the party had contested only half as many seats).⁴ By 1991, however, the BJP held close to 120 seats, was the second largest party in India and governed the country's largest state, Uttar Pradesh and three others.⁵

The BJP has succeeded in recent elections because it has found new support in north Indian society. The character of India's politically active groups is changing: the English-speaking, lawyer-led old elite that shaped the Indian state after 1947 is being overtaken and absorbed by a broader, consumer-oriented middle class intent on proclaiming both its religious convictions and material success. Such people, though often divided by language or caste, share certain aspirations and levels of prosperity. How – and whether – such people find expression within the present political system represents a problem which

politicians seek to solve. Since 1989, the BJP has shown increasing success in riding these waves, though the destruction of the mosque in Ayodhya suggests that the party also runs the risk of being capsized and drowned.

The story of Indian television exposes some of the processes at work. In the 1980s, television overwhelmed India for the first time. In 1981, there were only 18 transmitters and fewer than 2 million television sets; by 1990 there were more than 520 transmitters covering 80 per cent of the country and more than 30 million sets.⁶ A media annual wrote – doubtless in exaggeration – of ‘the 500 million people who watch TV every evening’.⁷ A more sober estimate put the number of regular viewers in the late 1980s at 200 million.⁸ As the medium gushes into distant corners, it is changing practices, attitudes and possibilities. For a growing consumer class, it sets standards of behaviour and aspiration. In a hut or a tea-shop, wistful consumers and the poor can experience dreams and escapes once possible only in the cinema.⁹

One of the paradoxes of the nation-state system since the collapse of the Eastern bloc is the way in which people are ostentatiously both very international and very parochial. In the former Yugoslavia, for example, men wearing American blue jeans, carrying Russian rifles and talking into Japanese portable phones fight for the future of Bosnia. In outward forms they are globalised; in themselves, they are prepared to die for identities as local as a Balkan valley was to its inhabitants in the nineteenth century.

India has proved similar. Television seduced it in the 1980s, but it was not foreign television. Indeed, the content of the medium responds to its audience at least as much as the audience is bewitched by the medium.¹⁰ Indian television generated programmes that captured Indian audiences,¹¹ and nowhere was this more dramatically seen than in the religious epic. From 1987 to 1990, much of the country stopped for 45 minutes on Sunday mornings for episodes first of the *Ramayana* (78 parts) and later the *Mahabharat*, the Hindu epics.¹² Video-cassettes of particular episodes became popular as gifts, and surveys reported an ‘extremely high . . . level of identification with various characters’. Indeed, it was suggested that ‘the average Indian has treated both epics as a mix of fact and fiction, *more of the former*’.¹³

In the past, local variations of these great tales were the accepted version. 'In my place', people in effect said, 'we tell the story this way'. Now, all of India is acquiring a common telling, based on the conventions of the popular religious films and complete with appropriate costumes and gilt headgear. Various groups protested at their version or their people being left out or treated disrespectfully, but the popularity of the series was unquestionable.¹⁴

This transformation of local variations into homogenised all-India tales or products opened up possibilities that no politician could overlook. Rajiv Gandhi, with his love of gadgetry and personal computers, had given notoriety to such possibilities during the election campaign of 1984. One estimate suggested that 5000 prints of a video-cassette about Mrs Gandhi were used all over India by Congress Party campaigners.¹⁵

Paradoxically, the 'modern' technology appears to have been of most use to those who see themselves as carrying an 'old' message – politicians of the Hindu right. In August 1990, the month after the last episode of the *Mahabharat* was shown on television, a sequence of events began that eventually brought down a government and catapulted the BJP into the position of India's second most important political party.

On 8 August V. P. Singh (b. 1931), Prime Minister of the Janta Dal-led minority government, announced that 27 per cent of all jobs in central-government undertakings would henceforth be set aside for people from the 'Other Backward Castes' or OBCs.¹⁶ This category is a creation of bureaucrats and census-takers, a lumping together of hundreds of castes (*jati*) who rank above 'Untouchables' or Scheduled Castes but below the so-called twice-born or 'forward' castes like Brahmins and Rajputs. Together, these *jati* probably constitute more than half the population of India. But accurate figures do not exist: caste has not been enumerated in Indian censuses since 1931.¹⁷

In making the announcement, Singh asserted that he was simply implementing the recommendations of a report commissioned by government in 1979 and presented by its chairman, B. P. Mandal (1918–82), an OBC politician from Bihar.¹⁸ Since roughly 22 per cent of posts in government institutions are already reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, the effect of Singh's announcement was to set aside half the jobs in the central government on the basis of caste or tribal

origin.

Judgements about voting strengths and new social identities were behind Singh's announcement. He was locked in a struggle within his own party against a wily rustic, Devi Lal (b. 1914), a Jat from Haryana. Jats, though not a 'twice-born' caste, have prospered as wealthy peasants and farmers in north India in the past thirty years and are not included among the Other Backward Castes. Indeed, there is little that is backward about Jats (see pp. 48–52 below). Devi Lal thus claimed to represent one of the most influential groups in the north Indian countryside – where more than a hundred seats in the central parliament are decided. Moreover, Devi Lal had played the kingmaker in December 1989 when his carefully-planned deceit had allowed Singh to become Prime Minister.¹⁹ By July 1990, Devi Lal was threatening Singh's leadership. To thwart him, Singh appears to have calculated that the so-called OBCs could be united into a reliable voting bloc by implementing the recommendations about job reservation contained in the Mandal Report. With close to half the population of north India wooed and won by this symbolic gesture, a Singh-led Janata Dal party could face Devi Lal, the Congress or the higher-caste Hindu chauvinists of the BJP.

Singh miscalculated, though this is not to say he will ultimately be proved wrong.²⁰ It is conceivable that OBCs of north India might be persuaded at a future election that they have sufficient in common to vote for a party claiming to represent them. In the state of Bihar, the government formed in 1990 has survived on something like this recipe.²¹ But the outcome of Singh's announcement was not what he could have hoped for. The 'forward' or 'twice-born' castes who predominate in the government services and places of influence in north India's towns and cities reacted in frenzy. They attacked Singh's proposal as an unjust betrayal of merit, upper-caste students took to the streets and before the fall of the government in November an estimated 100 adolescents²² had killed themselves, often setting themselves on fire, in symbolic protest.²³

Television and the video-cassette played a notable role in dignifying these protests. In perhaps the most notorious example, *Newstrack*, the monthly video-cassette news programme, produced by Living Media India, the owners of *India Today*, devoted virtually all of its October 1990 edition to a bitter attack on

the proposal to introduce reservation for OBCs. The print magazine *India Today* had been outraged at the proposal,²⁴ and the video-cassette attacked V. P. Singh for 'mouth[ing] infuriating inanities'; it compared the upper-caste student protests in New Delhi to the Tiananmen Square protest in Beijing in 1989.²⁵ A key sequence took the camera into a Delhi hospital where a 13-year-old boy, suffering severe burns after having tried to immolate himself, was encouraged to tell the Prime Minister that 'either he should resign or run this country sensibly'.²⁶ The video-cassette reported that the boy later died. The passion that 50 000 government jobs could evoke was time-honoured and understandable,²⁷ but the rapidity and intensity with which the passion spread were new.

In August 1990, it was by no means obvious that the stratagem of uniting Other Backward Castes as a voting bloc would fail. Indeed, that so shrewd a politician as the Prime Minister would try it suggested that it had a good chance of succeeding – that the next national election, which would obviously come long before the due date in 1994, could be won by a party proclaiming such a programme. For the Congress (I) Party of Rajiv Gandhi, then in opposition, the dilemma was almost insoluble. To support the Mandal recommendations would simply sustain the government and alienate the Congress's upper-caste supporters in north India. But to oppose the recommendations meant further alienation of the various groups that made up the OBC category. The Congress was held to have already lost ground dramatically among such people in the mammoth states of Uttar Pradesh (85 seats in the national parliament) and Bihar (54 seats). Rajiv Gandhi and the Congress could only equivocate and hold out the possibility of directing benefits towards poor people regardless of caste: 'socially and economically backward *classes* are not backward *castes*. We must broaden the definition to include the groups who are not defined by caste'.²⁸

The bold counterstroke of the Bharatiya Janata Party, however, has had far wider consequences. The ability of new media to popularise homogenised versions of the epics changed the boundaries for politicians striving to create 'the Hindus' as a single social entity.²⁹ The BJP attempted to exploit this potential. If V. P. Singh's electoral goal was to unite OBCs as a voting bloc, the BJP had long aimed to create a sense of a common

‘Hindu-ness’ that would lead to the election of BJP governments. Television – particularly the two epic serials – spread a message that it was previously almost impossible to take seriously: that there was a ‘Hindu community’ with shared ideals and a single, unvarying version of its great religious stories. After all, had the authorised version not been seen on TV? The division of Hindus into hundreds of *jati* with strong local customs and prohibitions seemed surmountable. The creation of a ‘Hindu community’ – or at least a single body of Hindu sentiment sufficient to win first-past-the-post elections – became a possibility for the first time.³⁰ The technology, which Rajiv Gandhi and others expected to ‘modernise’ and ‘secularise’ India, could just as well create broader identities based on religious residues. Such developments had shown up in Punjab ten years before (see below, pp. 73–97).

In the mid-1980s, the patience of older BJP politicians like L. K. Advani (b. 1927) and A. B. Vajpayee (b. 1926) had seemed ill-rewarded, especially after the crushing defeat in the 1984 general elections. They had been working for the cause since the early 1950s, yet the party had few strongholds beyond the original base among upper-caste Hindus in towns in northern India.³¹ Scholars have argued that the failures of the 1960s stemmed from a lack of openness, democracy and moderation in the old Jana Sangh, the forerunner of the BJP. It was too much influenced by its zealous patron, the Rastriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).³² Yet the recipe of the late 1980s added even more RSS militance. And this is the important point: the Bharatiya Janata Party and the RSS have not changed. What has changed are the perceptions of new generations of north Indian Hindus, aspiring to improve their circumstances, disenchanted with state-proclaimed ‘secularism’ and ready to believe that ‘Hindus’ have common interests that a political party can serve.

The events surrounding the destruction of the Babari Masjid in Ayodhya, 150 kilometres east of Lucknow, on 6 December 1992 emphasise the power that such appeals now exercise.³³ In Ayodhya a dispute festered over a mosque, said to stand on the site that many Hindus believe was the birthplace of Lord Ram of the *Ramayana* epic. Though the courts closed the premises to all worshippers in 1949 to prevent clashes, the demand to build a Hindu temple on the site gained new life in 1986 after a court ordered removal of the locks on the gates of the precinct. The

sudden decision of the court after 37 years of inaction appeared to result from covert efforts of Congress (I) politicians, meddling once again in local issues to try to further their own national goals (see below, pp. 19, 135–7, 189–90). Their aim, it appears, was to placate Hindus angry at legislation proposing to remove Muslims from the purview of the civil code in matters of divorce and alimony.³⁴ Once the order to remove the locks at the disputed site was issued, the BJP and its allies proclaimed their intention to build a splendid temple to Lord Ram on the very spot to restore 'national honour'.³⁵ The mosque, it was implied, would be torn down.

A comparison of the confrontations at Ayodhya in 1990 and December 1992 illustrates the growth in influence of the BJP, the social tendencies it represents and the challenge to the principles on which the Indian state was founded in 1947. In September 1990, Advani, the party president, announced that he would undertake a round-India *rath yatra* or 'chariot journey' to culminate at Ayodhya where construction of a Ram temple would begin. Here was a counter to V. P. Singh's 'Mandal stratagem' of trying to consolidate lower-caste people into a bloc. Instead, the BJP aimed to unite *all* Hindus to assert their dignity; caste did not matter; what mattered was the humiliation of a non-Hindu place of worship standing on the site of Ram's birth.³⁶ The *rath yatra* was to provide a means of 'obliterating the casteist animosities' that divided Hindus.³⁷ The *rath yatra* and the Ram temple would unite them all.

The outcome signalled an advantage to the BJP's struggle to unite all Hindus. Advani's *rath* or chariot left Somnath, a holy city in Gujarat on the west coast of India, on 25 September 1990.³⁸ The 'chariot' was a specially modified Toyota van, designed in florid colours and bits of tin to look like the chariots from the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharat* television series. Taking three weeks to weave its way towards Ayodhya through parts of north and central India carefully chosen for the sympathy of their populations, the procession entered the expectant state of Bihar, ruled by an anti-BJP government, on 20 October.³⁹ On 23 October, the Bihar government arrested Advani, but the march on the mosque in Ayodhya went ahead on 30 October. Dozens were killed when the police and paramilitary forces opened fire, but some demonstrators were able to enter the mosque and put flags on the dome. Outraged at the arrest of Advani and the cen-

tral and Uttar Pradesh governments' use of the police against the demonstrators, the BJP withdrew its support to V. P. Singh in the national parliament. Simultaneously he was deserted by a group from his own party, led by Chandra Shekhar (b. 1927), whom Singh had double-crossed to become Prime Minister less than a year before. Singh's government fell on 6 November when it lost a vote of confidence in the lower house. Rioting in various parts of India went on for a month; hundreds were killed.⁴⁰

The major contrast between the confrontations of 1990 and 1992 lies in the fact that by 1992 a BJP government had come to power in Uttar Pradesh. In 1990, the Janata Dal government of UP did what it could to prevent volunteers from reaching Ayodhya, and police opened fire to disperse crowds.⁴¹ In contrast, in 1992 the central government pleaded that the constitution prevented it from using its forces: law and order was a matter for the state government. The state government did nothing. When youths began to overrun the barricades, the police simply melted away, 'one terrified officer push[ing] through his platoon determined to be the first to get out'. By dusk on Sunday, 6 December, the mob had destroyed the mosque.⁴²

The lead-up to the confrontation in Ayodhya was much shorter in 1992 than 1990. The notoriety generated in the previous two years and the tacit approval of BJP state governments in Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh meant that huge crowds could confidently be expected. Advani, now leader of the opposition in parliament, and the BJP president, Murli Manohar Joshi (b. 1934), undertook six-day tours through selected areas of UP before reaching an Ayodhya bulging with volunteers whose travel had been aided rather than discouraged by the state government. Advani appears to have believed that peaceful ceremonies could be held to signal a symbolic beginning to the building of a Ram temple that would slowly grow up around the mosque. In fact, however, many leaders in Ayodhya on 6 December did not want to control the crowd. When it began to surge over the fences and enter the mosque, 'a holy woman' in the party of senior leaders 'took over the microphone and screamed encouragement to the frenzied Hindus. . . . According to one reporter who was with Advani and his colleagues throughout the day, he alone was downcast' at the turn of events.⁴³

The composition of the crowd that destroyed the mosque will tantalise analysts for years to come. We shall probably never know with any exactitude the sorts of people who were there; but in film clips and photographs it is notable that so many of the young men wear trousers and sports shoes. Even today, these are not clothes generally worn by village people, which suggests that the youths at Ayodhya were from towns and that they were aspirants, at least, for a place in India's much-discussed 'growing middle class'.⁴⁴ In addition, however, a journalist following Advani through the poorer districts of eastern UP asserted that 'the rural poor, including lower castes are, quite inexplicably, responding to the [BJ] party'.⁴⁵ Such a combination – the disenchanted, would-be middle class of the towns and the lower-caste rural poor – can provide muscle on the streets and victory at the polls. As the screaming denunciations of Muslims and the attacks in Ayodhya on journalists indicate, such people have little interest in retaining 'secularism' and liberalism as central tenets of their state.

The rapid turnover of unstable national governments since 1989 further undermines the legitimacy of the present state and what it stands for.⁴⁶ In November 1990, Chandra Shekhar, outfoxed prime-ministerial aspirant in December 1989, became Prime Minister of a farcical minority government, based on his following of 56 Janata Dal MPs whom he had led out of the party. His ministry survived on Congress support until 6 March 1991 when he resigned and new elections were called for May.

Rajiv Gandhi died in the course of that campaign, on the night of 21 May 1991, his killing related only indirectly either to the struggle in Punjab or the attempt to implant a new 'Hindu' ideal for the Indian state. Yet the fact that he was campaigning in Tamilnad when he was murdered stemmed from the Congress Party's concern to win seats in south India because they expected to do poorly in the north. And his apparent killers, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the major secessionist organisation of Sri Lankan Tamils, dated their anger against him from his use of the Indian army against them in 1987. Such a motive – anger at the use of the Indian army against armed secessionists – had much in common with that of Mrs Gandhi's killers in 1984.

The results of the 1991 elections emphasised the intensifying contest about the principles on which the Indian state should be

founded. Of the 225 seats in Hindi-speaking north India,⁴⁷ the BJP won 81 and the Congress only 58. In Bihar, neither party did well: the Janata Dal, championing Other Backward Castes, won 27 seats out of 54. Tele-versions of the Hindu epics and politicians dressed to look like tele-gods punctuated the BJP campaign. The spoken message was clear: the so-called secularism that Nehru foisted on India after 1947 was false, pernicious and humiliating.⁴⁸

In south India, Congress won 86 seats out of 129, including all 28 it contested in Tamilnad; the BJP won five seats, its best-ever performance.⁴⁹ The apparent success of the Congress was less an endorsement of 'secularism' than a reflection of a different social structure and fear that a BJP national government might try to impose the Hindi language. The BJP, and its forerunner, the Jana Sangh, have long championed Hindi, a north Indian language, as the sole national language of India. Moreover, in the north, the 'forward caste' constituency, made up of 'twice-born' wearers of the sacred thread, is the core of Hindu chauvinism; but in the south, such people represent a far smaller proportion of the population.⁵⁰ Battles against a tiny elite of Brahmins – similar to the recent struggles revolving around the 'OBC' category in the north – were won in the south by the 1960s.

There is an added difficulty for the BJP. To make the need for 'Hindu unity' convincing requires a significant 'non-Hindu' presence. But a credible adversary is missing in all the south Indian states except Kerala, where Muslims and Christians each comprise about 20 per cent of the population. It is conceivable that the persistent efforts of Hindu-chauvinist groups in Kerala will eventually pay off in election victories; but to date they represent a weak third force in the state – caught between strong alliances led by Congress and the Communist Party of India (Marxist).⁵¹

Such differences between north and south appear at first glance to emphasise yet another fault-line along which the Indian state could fracture. Yet the very fact that there seem to be so many lines suggests that the metaphor may be misguided: we are seeing, not cracks in porcelain, but filaments of a web. Single 'fragments' are not so large or discrete that they will easily break off. The national elite is genuinely national and intertwined: a south Indian Brahmin is Prime Minister; a north

Indian Brahmin, President; a south Indian 'untouchable', Vice-President; an Anglo-Indian, chief of the army. As well, a national economy is increasingly (as we shall see below) controlled by companies and capitalists who seek smooth-running nationwide markets. Powerful interests hold India together. By no means, however, do they guarantee that the 'secularism' proclaimed since 1947 is assured of survival. In 1992, the struggle for India's soul was just beginning.

PUNJAB: WHAT SORT OF FEDERALISM?

Where does Punjab fit into these contests about how the Indian state is to define itself in the future? Secessionist movements, like those in Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir,⁵² challenge India's state apparatus and practices in two ways. First, they pose an overt, obvious threat: an area wants to break away. If that should occur, the present state structure and the people who operate it would consider themselves diminished. Second, however, the fact that the challenge seems intractable allows advocates of 'positive secularism' and a 'genuine' – that is, Hindu – nationalism to point to the failings of the present system. 'Give us the chance', they say, 'and we will deal with these anti-Indian, anti-Hindu activities and restore the nation's greatness.'

Punjab proved to be the death of Mrs Gandhi; for her son, Rajiv, it marked his proving – and failing – ground. In July 1985, he reached perhaps his peak of popularity when he concluded the so-called Punjab Accord with Harchand Singh Longowal. Though Longowal was murdered within a month, the Punjab elections went ahead in September, and Rajiv expressed almost satisfaction when the Akali Dal, not the Congress, won (see pp. 206–10 below). With a popular Sikh-dominated government in power in Punjab, a durable settlement seemed possible. Rajiv's naiveté, the fight-to-the-death quality of Punjab politics and the influence of political forces external to Punjab destroyed such a prospect by January 1986. The destruction also revealed the limitations of Rajiv Gandhi.

When he became Chief Minister of the Akali Dal government in September 1985, Surjit Singh Barnala suffered from three drawbacks. First, the mass leader, Longowal, was dead. Second,

Barnala himself had no such wide following. His urbanity and national connections made it predictable (p. 208 below) that he would light few fires in the hearts of young Sikhs. Third, he was unable to entice into his government the hurt, jealous Parkash Singh Badal, whose dismissal from the Chief Ministership in 1980 provided the spark for much of the subsequent agony (pp. 190 and 198 below). Badal remained outside the government to snipe and wait. To survive, and to win the confidence of Sikhs, Barnala needed a symbolic triumph.

Since the 1950s, the most obvious symbol in Punjab has been the city of Chandigarh. A new city, designed by the French architect Le Corbusier to compensate for the loss of Lahore to Pakistan, Chandigarh symbolises a switched-on, sanitised India. When Punjab was divided into Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh in 1966, Chandigarh became a Union Territory of the central government and the joint capital of Punjab and Haryana. For politicians of both states, it glittered. Mrs Gandhi had promised its transfer to Punjab in 1970 – with territorial compensation for Haryana. That promise was never redeemed, but it was reiterated in the Rajiv–Longowal agreement in July 1985: Chandigarh was to become the capital of Punjab from 26 January 1986, India's Republic Day. A commission under a retired Supreme Court judge with a long record of loyalty to Indira Gandhi was appointed to work out the details.⁵³

But in December 1985 and January 1986, pressure grew in neighbouring Haryana, Congress-governed and due for an election within 18 months, to prevent the loss of Chandigarh. Haryana's influence in Indian politics is out of proportion to its size. The state contains less than 2 per cent of India's population and sends only 10 members of parliament to a lower house of 542 members in Delhi. Haryana, however, encircles the Union Territory of Delhi on the north, south and west; Haryana's lax labour laws have made it a haven for new industries; Haryana provides the crowds for Delhi demonstrations. Indeed, Haryana can perform as a tourniquet bandage to tighten pressure on the politicians and officials of the national capital, who tend to treat it as a litmus paper for the whole of north India.

On 26 January 1986, Chandigarh was not transferred to Punjab. The wily judge fudged his award. Called on to identify Hindi-speaking areas of Punjab to transfer to Haryana as compensation for the loss of Chandigarh, he refused and told the

central government to appoint a new commission to identify such areas.⁵⁴ Two further commissions were appointed to determine the territory to be transferred,⁵⁵ but by mid-1986 the transfer of Chandigarh was as dead as Longowal. By November 1986, the Punjab Accord was dismissed as 'virtually unimplementable'.⁵⁶

In January 1986, Rajiv Gandhi could have forced through a decision, but he chose to heed the pressures and advice coming from Haryana and its protagonists, even though the consequence undermined his brightest achievement – the Punjab agreement. This indecision foreshadowed the crumbling of his authority and government over the next two years.

The lack of decision on Chandigarh also marked the beginning of the end for Barnala. Always susceptible to portrayal as a creature of the central government, he desperately needed the symbolic victory of Chandigarh. Once this was denied, he quickly became what his foes had claimed he was all along: a tool of the central government. Secessionist devotees took control of the Golden Temple in January 1986 and demolished the just-reconstructed Akal Takht to rebuild it with the labour, not of Indian-government lackeys (as they saw them), but devout Sikhs.⁵⁷ As the initiative passed from governments in New Delhi and Punjab, killings increased. More people were murdered in March 1986 than in the first four months of Barnala's ministry.⁵⁸ Rajiv Gandhi's government reacted by trying to exert the authority of the centre: it sent a prominent police officer, Julio Ribeiro (b. 1929), to Punjab as Director-General of Police on 28 March and a new Governor, Siddhartha Shankar Ray (b. 1920), on 1 April.⁵⁹ The appointment of Ray carried grim implications: he had been Chief Minister of West Bengal in 1972 when the Naxalite movement of Maoist-inspired revolutionaries had been ruthlessly crushed.

In July, the Akali Dal formally split, the breakaway group electing Badal as its leader.⁶⁰ Barnala's government, now in a minority and surviving in the assembly with the support of the Congress and the BJP, staggered on until May 1987. Then, with elections in Haryana due in the following month, the central government imposed President's Rule in Punjab. It made no difference: Congress was wiped out in the June 1987 elections in Haryana.

Punjab remained under central rule for nearly five years. In

the period between May 1987 and the Punjab elections of February 1992, more than 15 000 people were killed in violence that official sources linked to terrorists.⁶¹ At the same time, tens of thousands of central-government paramilitary police and soldiers of the Indian army were deployed in Punjab. The state had five different Governors, and the Akali Dal – and the secessionists themselves – divided into a dozen or more groups or factions.⁶²

The technology of violence produced new and particularly intractable circumstances. In the past, as this book argues, violence has been common in Punjab and rural India; but such violence was often hand-to-hand. In the 1980s, as weapons from the war in Afghanistan flooded across Pakistan and north India, a few could quickly murder many, without ever having to look a victim in the eye. The list of the dead included the commander of the Indian army at the time of the battle at the Golden Temple in June 1984, murdered in retirement in Pune in 1986. Barnala's Finance Minister and chief manipulator, Balwant Singh, was gunned down in a car in Chandigarh in July 1990.⁶³ Even Ribeiro, the police chief from 1986 to 1988, though made ambassador to Rumania in an attempt to protect him, was seriously wounded by would-be assassins in Bucharest in August 1991⁶⁴ (and see below, pp. 183, 213).

Rajiv Gandhi's government after the middle of 1986 brought no new ideas to Punjab, though it attempted halting initiatives to bring various Sikh groups into political negotiations.⁶⁵ But the government did not prosecute people accused of murder and riot in the grim days in Delhi after Mrs Gandhi's murder in 1984 when thousands of Sikhs were killed.⁶⁶ Sikhs could legitimately complain that the government had no interest in justice. Indeed, the evidence suggests that Punjab interested members of the government mostly as a weapon in calculations about electoral politics. In December 1989, the new Prime Minister V. P. Singh made an emotional visit to Amritsar and the Golden Temple, but the enthusiasm of that visit quickly passed. Because Singh led a minority government, even if he had been inclined to order elections in Punjab, his essential supporters – especially the Bharatiya Janata Party – may have prevented him.

It was as if the view from New Delhi invariably made India appear as a giant chess board on which Punjab was a capital piece, important to be sure, but not to be analysed and consid-

ered in its own right but moved about to satisfy the larger game. Evidence of such calculations extended well back into Mrs Gandhi's lifetime (pp. 124–6 below). But they were not her responsibility alone. India's constitution, much of it inherited from colonial rule, and the thrust of Soviet-inspired economic policy after independence, have excessively concentrated power and initiative with the central government. From the comfortable vantage-point of New Delhi, the view of India too often becomes distorted.

The question of elections in Punjab and in north India illustrates the proposition. The transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab – the one symbol that might have sustained Barnala and his government – was put off because of fears of the effect on impending elections in Haryana, just as Barnala's government was eventually dismissed just prior to Haryana elections in the desperate hope that such actions would influence the result. In Punjab itself, elections were called for late June 1991 as part of the national general elections. Virtually every political group in Punjab threw itself into the campaign, and though more than a dozen candidates were murdered,⁶⁷ electioneering went on unabated and a good turnout of voters seemed likely. But only days before Punjab's polling, once it became apparent that Congress would form the new national government but lose in the Punjab assembly, the Chief Election Commissioner 'post-poned' the Punjab election. The official reason was that security could not be guaranteed. The real reason, it appears, was the fact that Congress would do poorly: the BJP would poll well in Punjab's towns and various Akali Dal groups would win rural seats. The Governor of Punjab, O. P. Malhotra (b. 1922), a former commander of the Indian army (1978–80), protested and resigned.⁶⁸

When elections were finally held in Punjab in February 1992, it was after the entire state had been declared 'disturbed' and the Indian army had been deployed on counter-insurgency duty for more than two months.⁶⁹ Ultimately, only one of half-a-dozen Akali Dal factions contested – the one associated with Amarindar Singh, the erstwhile Maharaja of Patiala (see below, pp. 42, 163) – and it was humiliated. The turnout was about 22 per cent; the turnout of Sikh voters was estimated to have been 10 per cent or less.⁷⁰ Congress won 12 out of 13 seats to the national parliament – a valuable accretion for a minority gov-

ernment – and three-quarters of the 117 seats in the state assembly.⁷¹ The new Chief Minister, Beant Singh (b. 1922), elderly and platitudinous, seemed the classic ‘creature of the centre’ against which Sikh militants had railed for years. Yet *any* elected government seems better than central rule. By the end of 1992, Beant Singh and security chiefs were claiming – and journalists were confirming – that rural Punjab was safer than it had been for two years.⁷² Police killed leading secessionists, including prominent foreign-based men like Talwinder Singh Parmar of Vancouver, Canada. Parmar was often named in accounts of the bombing of the Air India jumbo-jet off the coast of Ireland in June 1985 that killed more than 300 people.⁷³ Police claimed that if such highly-placed leaders were forced to return to Punjab, the secessionists were on the run. To reinforce this impression, the Punjab government held successful local-government elections in rural areas in January 1993.

The politics of Punjab pose a challenge to the Indian state, yet they also suggest ways forward. In ten months under an elected government (even a dubiously-elected one) in 1992, Punjab seemed to move more noticeably towards relative peace than it had in nearly five years of central rule between 1987 and 1992. Genuine federalism remains India’s best bet, though the odds are not short, nor the result certain. But outcomes for nations never are: ‘quests for the political community of the future are never quite finished’. What is ‘the nation’? ‘The outcome’, according to Gyan Pandey, ‘of many different visions and the struggle between them’.⁷⁴ Punjab is likely to remain a cockpit for those struggles.

SOCIALISM: WHAT SORT OF ECONOMY?

‘Socialism’ and ‘non-alignment’ are themes scarcely touched on in the first edition of this book. When it was written, their intonation in India was a regular as sunrise. The fact that this is no longer so requires examination. Fundamental changes in economic and foreign policies have ramifications for the structure and survival of the Indian state.

Anyone who thinks about India’s poor⁷⁵ must ask whether the dismantling of government controls, created in the name of ‘socialism’, also means abandonment of the belief that govern-

ment has a role to play in economic activity. The intention of Jawaharlal Nehru when the Planning Commission was established in 1950 and the First Five-Year Plan inaugurated in 1951 was that the 'commanding heights of the economy', the heavy industries and infrastructure, should be under the control of government and 'the people'. The wealth generated by such major investments would then be reinvested in projects that would increasingly benefit the mass of the population. 'Socialism is not the spreading of poverty', he told parliament in 1956. 'The essential thing is that there must be wealth and production.'⁷⁶

Economic regulation in India, however, has produced too few beneficial results. The crisis of 1990 was many years in the making. Though a few public enterprises, notably those with the monopoly on petroleum products, returned profits, the majority did not. By the late 1980s, it was estimated that 244 enterprises conducted by the central government with US \$40 billion worth of capital invested in them brought a return of less than 4 per cent on the investment. If the huge earnings of the petroleum monopoly were deducted, the return was less than 1 per cent.⁷⁷ The record of companies set up by India's 25 state governments was worse. A 1989 survey of 843 state-government enterprises found losses of US \$800 million, and 'the bulk' of the companies surveyed were at least two years behind in completing their annual accounts.⁷⁸ Even a publication like the famed *Seminar*, founded by two Communist sympathisers in the 1960s, concluded in 1991 that 'nobody even claims that the present system works The poor . . . eke out a living that is almost shameful.'⁷⁹

Attempts to find new economic vigour began with 'productivity year' in 1982 and gathered momentum in 1985 after Rajiv Gandhi came to power. Members of his Planning Commission argued that 'liberalisation is not inimical to the objectives of true socialism, as opposed to the sham socialism practised in this country'.⁸⁰ Restrictions on imports were relaxed; the old policies of 'self-sufficiency' through 'import substitution' were diluted; producers were mildly encouraged to *export* so that India would earn more foreign exchange to pay its international bills, especially for oil. Indian industry grew: by roughly 8 per cent a year in the 1980s.⁸¹

The results, however, were troubling. To be sure, between

1985 and 1989, exports increased by 55 per cent to US \$24 billion. But imports increased by 50 per cent to US \$32 billion, and a large trade deficit remained. Total debt grew from US \$40.8 billion in 1985 to US \$62.5 billion in 1989 to US \$75 billion in 1992.⁸²

Until 1990 India had sufficient foreign exchange to pay its bills because of the flow of hard currency into the country from Non-Resident Indians (NRIs), both working people in menial jobs in the Gulf, Britain and Canada and wealthy professionals in countries like the USA and Australia. But the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, only days before V. P. Singh's announcement of the adoption of the Mandal Commission's recommendations, added financial crisis to domestic upheaval. Indians in Kuwait, whose monthly remittances hitherto provided a reliable source of foreign exchange, lost their livelihoods and became a foreign-exchange liability. The price of petroleum products, India's major foreign-exchange expense, rose – at one point from US \$17 to US \$42 a barrel for crude oil.⁸³ An Iraqi debt to India of US \$800 million was frozen and looked unlikely to be repaid.⁸⁴ Once India's credit rating was lowered in October 1990,⁸⁵ Non-Resident Indians began to withdraw their deposits from India. Foreign exchange had to be found to honour such withdrawals, which hit a peak of US \$56 million a week.⁸⁶ In January 1991, the minority government of Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar was forced to negotiate a US \$1.8 billion loan from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund,⁸⁷ and by the time P. V. Narasimha Rao's (b. 1921) newly-elected Congress government took office in July 1991, India had taken a reported US \$2.4 billion in World Bank and IMF loans.⁸⁸ Within days, the new government devalued the rupee by 20 per cent, and began to remove economic controls.⁸⁹

The ensuing restructuring of India's economy has been open to challenge in three major ways. First, the apparent capitulation to the IMF and the World Bank left Indian pride painfully exposed. 'Socialism' had been a broad codeword for 'Indian control' and 'self-sufficiency'. Critics argue that foreign capitalists were responsible the last time India lost its independence: to the English East India Company in the 1760s. Today, even those who might wish for fewer government controls can deplore 'the IMF–World Bank takeover of the Indian economy'.⁹⁰ Opponents of the economic changes claim to be both patriots and defenders

of the poor.

Second, in the middle of 1992 India's biggest stock-market fraud disgraced banks, other financial institutions and the stock market. Involvement of foreign banks fostered fears that the capitalist economies of the West were leading India into a sinister economic trap. The corrupt dealings permitted profits of tens of millions of rupees to be made on the basis of promises of money that did not exist.⁹¹ Opponents of economic change could argue for more, not fewer, government controls in the face of rampant free-enterprise corruption.⁹²

Third, there was no certainty that an economy made free of government controls would produce more wealth or distribute it more widely. The best that defenders of liberalisation could claim was that forty years of 'socialism' had not done enough – an economic growth rate of 3.5 per cent a year between the 1950s and the 1970s, while population grew at 2.5 per cent. Such figures, they argued, made the need for change urgent. To be sure, government documents proclaimed the need 'to protect the poor during the adjustment process', but a close observer of the economic transformation concluded that government had not worked out systematically the way in which an unregulated, internationally-connected economy would affect the poor.⁹³ Can we afford, a critic asked, to 'worry about taking 15 per cent of our urban population and our industrial sector closer to the most advanced industrialised countries . . . at the risk of ignoring the social and economic development of the other 85 per cent who live in the rural and semi-urban areas?'⁹⁴ For many Indians, the economic changes lead into fog-shrouded, unknown territory.

NON-ALIGNMENT: WHAT SORT OF WORLD?

Foreign policy and economics are linked. Now the Soviet Union and communism in Eastern Europe are gone, India's communists and socialists find immense difficulty in defending a 'planned economy'. Internationally, the consequences are even more troubling: with whom is India 'non-aligned'? Moreover, a liberalised economy requires foreign investment which must come from the major capitalist countries – the USA, Germany, Japan, the United Kingdom.

To encourage such investment, Indian planners have targeted

wealthy Indians abroad (NRIs), particularly in the USA, who might either be induced to invest in India themselves or facilitate investment by nationals of their new countries. By the 1990s, close to a million Indians lived in the USA where they were held to be the best-educated ethnic group in the country.⁹⁵ Such considerations must now be part of Indian foreign policy.

The Gulf war of January 1991 emphasised the disquiet, disarray and ‘near-paralysis’⁹⁶ of Indian foreign policy. India did not influence events in the Gulf. It had no plan to prevent the war and the slaughter of thousands of Iraqis. Nor did it support the war and move closer to the United States and the Western powers. And India was unable to ensure its oil supplies or the savings and futures of hundreds of thousands of Indians who had been working in the Gulf.⁹⁷ When the minority government of Chandra Shekhar permitted US planes to refuel in Bombay in January 1991, the government was denounced on all sides for abandoning non-alignment.⁹⁸ Yet none of the critics had suggestions about what India’s positions on foreign affairs should be. When the government fell in March 1991, it was not on the issue of India’s place in the world, but over the placing of parish-pump policemen: Haryana police had been used improperly to observe Rajiv Gandhi’s house in New Delhi. According to one critic, the Minister of External Affairs admitted to parliament that ‘New Delhi did not know what its policy on the Gulf was!’⁹⁹

By the end of 1992, India had established full diplomatic relations with Israel,¹⁰⁰ and the Indian cricket team was playing test matches in South Africa where a ‘cultural centre’ with full visa facilities was to be opened. Formal diplomatic relations with Israel or South Africa were almost unthinkable when Mrs Gandhi died.

One interpretation of India’s position in the transformed world of the 1990s holds that it must be ready to face an Islamic onslaught. The Muslim states of central Asia, including Afghanistan, have the potential to align with Pakistan and Iran to confront an India that is portrayed as oppressing a Muslim territory – Kashmir. The destruction of the mosque at Ayodhya can also be built into such an evaluation: a Muslim coalition could quickly involve itself in India’s internal affairs. Even the most sober Indian foreign-policy analysts feel the need to note – albeit to discount as ‘a trifle exaggerated’ – the ‘horrendous the-

ory of an immediate threat from an Islamic fundamentalist movement of continental dimensions'.¹⁰¹

With 'non-alignment' no longer a meaningful concept, a recipe for an Indian foreign policy has to be devised from a complex list of ingredients. The new desire for foreign investment would support closer relations with the USA and Western capitalist countries; yet national pride and longstanding suspicion suggest that such a policy could be a liability in Indian elections. The disintegration of the Soviet Union and the end of the insurgency in Afghanistan pose the question of how to relate to new, militant Muslim states in central Asia, and the interest such states might show in the condition of India's 100 million Muslims. The loss of the Soviet Union as a reliable supplier of arms (for which payment did not have to be made in hard currency) means that foreign policy must ensure arms supplies and not assume positions that overstretch a vulnerable Indian military. India may be dominant in South Asia, but it was unable to enforce a settlement in Sri Lanka by using troops there in 1987–90. Nor has such dominance enabled easy suppression of insurgencies in Punjab, Kashmir and the northeast.

The domestic consequences of foreign policy are underlined in the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi in 1991. Campaigning in the national elections, he had returned to Tamilnad to reinforce the chances of his Congress (I) Party. He was murdered, the available evidence suggests, by Sri Lankan Tamil separatists, the LTTE, once clients of the Indian government. Their motive appears simple: revenge for the use of the Indian army against them in Sri Lanka in 1987–90 and fear that if Rajiv Gandhi were returned to office, he would be an implacable opponent.¹⁰² The domestic consequences of his murder – as with that of his mother in 1984 – appear to have been a flow of sympathy and votes towards his party and revulsion against the LTTE among the people of Tamilnad. Similarly, the insurgency in Kashmir, the dispute at Ayodhya and the uprising in Punjab have threads that extend across international borders. While the map of Eastern Europe is being redrawn, and wolves in the guise of international bankers are at the door, defenders of the present Indian state have to contend with a host of interconnected, yet often unknown variables. They might well yearn for a time when Nehru could be applauded for saying 'we are in no camp and in no military alliances. The only camp we should like to be

in is the camp of peace and goodwill.’¹⁰³ In the 1990s, a similar speech would be dismissed as simply naive.

THE POOR AND THE POLITY: WHAT SORT OF FUTURE?

In the programme of economic liberalisation, little is said of the effect on the poor, who constitute 30 per cent of the population even by the central government’s rosy-spectacled calculations.¹⁰⁴ The first edition of this book ended with suggestions that ‘action groups’ or non-government organisations held the potential to force major changes in the distribution of power and wealth. Those suggestions remain to be fulfilled. Action groups have not diminished in number or in local influence since the mid-1980s. One estimate in 1988 identified 8800 individual groups attracting annual donations from abroad of roughly US \$300 million. But voluntary associations have so far not fulfilled the hopes of those who saw them as vehicles for broad change in the Indian political system. Governments have attempted to co-opt them by incorporating them into the planning process.¹⁰⁵ Moreover, the groups themselves show few signs of being able to unite to work for wider goals.

The strength of such groups lies in their particular or local interests and their ability to wax and wane independently of government. Thus in the 1990s a group like the Narmada Bashao Andolan, founded to resist the huge dam-building programme planned for the Narmada River in Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat, rises to prominence,¹⁰⁶ while other groups disband or disappear. The social energy embodied in such voluntary associations remains impressive and full of hope, yet there is no sign that the groups themselves can become more than what they currently are: local responses to local concerns.

Nor have the parties of the Left been able to take up or take over the energy that drives the voluntary associations. Shared economic interests are not potent enough to act as an organisational principle or heart-stirring rallying cry. The energy nevertheless remains. More people read, discuss and organise than ever before. But to mobilise beyond the locality appears invariably to require appeals to religion or caste. The target for tens of thousands of impassioned people in December 1992 was a

mosque in a small town in Uttar Pradesh, not the Reserve Bank of India in Bombay (see below, p. 212).

The unresolved tensions of federalism may command more attention in the 1990s. In January 1992, Rasheeduddin Khan, who twenty years before had advocated redrawing the boundaries and increasing the number of India's states (see below, pp. 198–9) produced a new book on the same theme. *Federal India: a Design for Change* calls for more, smaller states to promote economic development and bring decision-making closer to the people.¹⁰⁷ Though such change is unlikely in the near future, politicians allude to the possibility of redrawing the federal map. In Uttar Pradesh, the BJP government declared its commitment to create a hill-state of Uttarakhand. The former Prime Minister, V. P. Singh, said he favours smaller states. And even the Home Minister in Narasimha Rao's government argued that a new state of Jharkhand ought to be established in southern Bihar.¹⁰⁸

The Home Minister's intervention illustrates a recurring theme: the compulsion for central politicians to interfere in the politics of the states (see below, pp. 189–96). In the case of Jharkhand, the Home Minister, S. B. Chavan (b. 1920), could be portrayed as being on the side of the decentralising angels: let us have more states, he seemed to be saying. Yet his statement had more to do with discomfiting the non-Congress government of Bihar than with commitment to a revamped, more genuine federation. From New Delhi, to interfere in the states seems essential, whether to benefit friends and allies or to preserve the nation-state against some perceived threat.

However, evidence powerfully suggests that such interference seldom succeeds in achieving the aims of its instigators and often inflames powerful regional sentiment (see below, p. 196). In Punjab, five years of central rule between 1987 and 1992 resulted in little noticeable progress towards ending the secessionist movement. On the other hand, ten months of an elected government – even a dubiously-elected Congress government – appeared to bring a notable return of public confidence by the end of 1992.¹⁰⁹ Why then is it so difficult for governments in New Delhi to forswear interference in the states? First, central politicians genuinely fear that a state may go too far and either embroil India in the affairs of its neighbours (for example, with Tamil causes in Sri Lanka) or try to slip out of the federation

altogether. Second, to survive at the centre one must have allies in the states, and such allies demand help when out of office. The nature of Indian society – there are few safety-nets to sustain out-of-office politicians – means that those cries come quickly and insistently.

The first edition of this book ended with the suggestion that ‘contests to appropriate symbols and win mass sentiment’ (p. 212), which a revolution in communications had fostered in Punjab from the 1970s, would become increasingly common throughout India. The destruction of the mosque at Ayodhya, struggles over the Mandal Report and the insurgency in Kashmir since 1989, are of that kind. Now, however, other areas of the world join India in similar quests and upheavals. In comparison with the erstwhile Yugoslavia or parts of the former Soviet Union, India’s democratic federation has flexed, strained and bounced back relatively successfully in the years since 1985. Federalism and democracy will not guarantee survival, peace and economic well-being; but they seem to offer better long-term prospects than the alternative visions of religious or ethnic-based one-party states enforcing an arbitrary orthodoxy.

NOTES

Notes to subsequent chapters appear at the end of the book, preceding the Select Bibliography, where abbreviations are explained.

1. For an introduction to the BJP, Yogendra K. Malik and V. B. Singh, ‘Bharatiya Janata Party: an Alternative to the Congress (I)?’ *Asian Survey*, Vol. 32, no. 4 (April 1992), pp. 318–36.
2. All India Radio, General Overseas Service, 6 December 1992.
3. *IT*, 15 May 1991, p. 61.
4. David Butler, Ashok Lahiri, Prannoy Roy, *India Decides* (New Delhi: Living Media Books, 1991), p. 74.
5. *Statesman Weekly* [hereafter *SW*], 22 June 1991, p. 3. *Hindustan Times*, [hereafter *HT*], 21 June 1991, various pp.
6. *Tofl*, 20 February 1987, p. 19. *India 1990. A Reference Annual* (New Delhi: Publications Division, 1990), pp. 277–9. Lloyd Rudolph, ‘The Media and Cultural Politics,’ *EPW*, 11 July 1992, p. 1489, accepts an estimate of 90 million viewers and 11 million television sets in 1988.

7. *Press and Advertisers Year Book 1990-1* (New Delhi: INFA Publications, 1991), p. 445c.
8. Manjunath Pendakur, 'Political Economy of Television: State, Class and Corporate Confluence in India', in Gerald Sussman and John A. Lent (eds), *Transnational Communications: Wiring the Third World* (Newbury Park; Sage, 1991), p. 246. See also Arvind Singhal and Everett Rogers, *India's Information Revolution* (New Delhi: Sage, 1989), p. 62, where the estimate is a still more modest 90 million.
9. Singhal and Rogers, *India's Information Revolution*, p. 85.
10. An Australian description of television is apposite: 'a mirror [that people] take for a window'. A. F. Davies and S. Encel, *Australian Society* (Melbourne: F. W. Cheshire, 1965), p. 229.
11. Singhal and Rogers, *India's Information Revolution*, p. 112.
12. *SW*, 6 August 1988, p. 3. *IT*, 31 October 1988, p. 118.
13. Mehendra Ved, 'Doordarshan's Epic Serial', *India Perspectives*, October 1990, pp. 24-5 (my emphasis).
14. *Ibid.*, p. 28. See also Paula Richman (ed.), *Many Ramayanas: The Diversity of a Narrative Tradition in South Asia* (Berkeley: UCP, 1991).
15. Nicholas Nugent, *Rajiv Gandhi: Son of a Dynasty* (London: BBC Books, 1990), p. 67. Singhal and Rogers, *India's Information Revolution*, p. 144.
16. *ToFI*, 9 August 1990, p. 1. The figure of 27 per cent results from the fact that roughly 22 per cent of positions were already reserved for Scheduled Castes (untouchables) and Scheduled Tribes (tribal people).
17. Previous judicial decisions made it unlikely that the courts would uphold reservations totalling more than 50 per cent of all jobs – thus the proposed figure of 27 per cent for OBCs. To make the system work, OBCs would at the time of entering government service have to prove their caste status.
18. *ToFI*, 3 September 1990, p. 7, for profile of Mandal.
19. *IT*, 15 December 1989, pp. 10-16.
20. On 17 November 1992, the Supreme Court ruled that the recommendations of the Mandal Report were constitutional and could be implemented, but it laid down terms and conditions that would have to be met, including provision to take 'economic backwardness' into account. BBC World Service, 'South Asia Report', 17-18 November 1992.
21. See the calculations about the composition of the Bihar assembly in *Muslim India*, No. 89 (May 1990), p. 196.
22. Dharma Kumar, 'The Affirmative Action Debate in India', *Asian Survey*, Vol. 32, no. 3 (March 1992), p. 290.

23. *HIE*, 20 October 1990, p. 2.
24. *IT*, 31 October 1990, pp. 1, 5, for example. For a critique of the October 1990 edition of *Newstrack*, see *Manushi*, Nos 63–4 (March–June 1991), p. 54.
25. The *Times of India* did the same on 28 September 1990, p. 18 with a headline: 'India's version of Tiananmen Square'.
26. *Newstrack*, October 1990. One of the youths who attempted to kill himself in New Delhi was elected president of the Delhi University Students' Union a year later. *HT*, 15 September 1991, p. 1.
27. Estimate in *Business India* [hereafter *BI*], 3–16 September 1990, p. 10 and 15–28 October 1990, p. 56. Agitations about reservation of government jobs were part of political life in south India from the time of the First World War. For example, Robin Jeffrey, 'Travancore: Status, Class and the Growth of Radical Politics, 1860–1940', in Jeffrey (ed.), *People, Princes and Paramount Power* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 148.
28. *Tofl*, 2 September 1990, p. 9. Interview with Rajiv Gandhi. Emphasis added.
29. The first edition of this book traced a similar strand of this story in Punjab in the 1970s. See Chapter 4 below, pp. 73–97.
30. For scholarly attempts to deal with caste, 'Hinduism' and the implications of electoral politics, see for example Lawrence A. Babb, *Redemptive Encounters: Three Modern Styles in the Hindu Tradition* (New Delhi: 1987), pp. 1–2 and Douglas E. Haynes, *Rhetoric and Ritual in Colonial India: the Shaping of a Public Culture in Surat City, 1852–1928* (Berkeley: 1991), p. 295.
31. B. D. Graham, *Hindu Nationalism and Indian Politics. The Origins and Development of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh* (1990), pp. 3–4, 253–8.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 258.
33. For earlier developments at Ayodhya, see Peter van der Veer, "'God Must Be Liberated!'" A Hindu Liberation Movement in Ayodhya', *MAS*, Vol. 21, no. 2 (1987), pp. 283–301.
34. This is the so-called Shah Bano case, in which an elderly Muslim woman was awarded alimony, but the outcry from Muslims was so great that the Congress (I) government legislated to exclude Muslims from the civil code. *Tofl*, 5 February 1986, p. 12.
35. L. K. Advani, quoted in *Tofl*, 26 September 1990, p. 1.
36. For examples, see Neeladri Bhattacharya, 'Myth, History and the Politics of Ramjanmabhumi', in S. Gopal (ed.), *Anatomy of a*

Confrontation. The Babri Masjid-Ramjanmabhumi Issue (New Delhi: 1991), p. 126.

37. Advani, quoted in *Tofl*, 21 November 1990, p. 7.
38. *Tofl*, 26 September 1990, p. 1. *IT*, 15 October 1990, p. 18.
39. *Tofl*, 21 October 1990, p. 1.
40. *HIE*, 22 December 1990, pp. 2, 3
41. *Tofl*, 31 October and 2 November, both p. 1.
42. Mark Tully, 'South Asia Report', BBC World Service, 13 December 1992.
43. *Ibid*.
44. These observations are based on videotapes of film screened on Australian television in the week of 7–13 December 1992. See also *IT*, 31 December 1992, pp. 18–29 and *Newstrack* video, December 1992.
45. Chandan Mitra in *HT*, 6 December 1992, p. 12.
46. India had four governments in twenty months between November 1989 and July 1991.
47. Bihar (54), Delhi (7), Haryana (10), Himachal Pradesh (4), Madhya Pradesh (40), Rajasthan (25), Uttar Pradesh (85).
48. *Tofl*, 29 November 1990, p. 9.
49. Four in Karnataka and one in Andhra Pradesh. *Sunday Observer*, 23–29 June 1991, p. 7.
50. A rough piece of evidence: throughout south India, Brahmins were never estimated to constitute more than 3 per cent of the population. In Uttar Pradesh, on the other hand, they were estimated at 9.1 per cent in 1931.
51. K. Jayaprasad, *RSS and Hindu Nationalism. Inroads in a Leftist Stronghold* (New Delhi: Deep and Deep, 1991), especially pp. 336–50.
52. The insurgency in Kashmir exploded immediately after the election of the V. P. Singh government in December 1989. *Seminar*, No. 392 (April 1992), is devoted to the Kashmir struggle.
53. K. K. Mathew (1910–92). *Frontline*, 11 September 1992, p. 19. *HIE*, 9 May 1992, p. 16.
54. *IE* (Chandigarh), 28 January 1986, p. 6.
55. Headed by judges Venkataramiah and Desai.
56. *HIE*, 8 November 1986, p. 4.
57. *Statesman* (Delhi), 28 January 1986, p. 1. *IT*, 28 February 1986, p. 22.
58. Estimates were that 'more than 50' people had been murdered between September 1985 and mid-January 1986. *SMH*, 13 January 1985, quoting Press Trust of India. In March, more than 70 murders were recorded. *Age*, 29 March 1986, p. 11.
59. *Age*, 2 April 1986, p. 7.

60. *HIE*, 12 July 1986, p. 1.
61. *National Integration Council Meeting, 31 December 1991, Agenda* (New Delhi: Ministry of Home Affairs, 1991), Annexure 1, p. 11. I am grateful to Manoj Joshi of *Frontline* for these references.
62. For discussion of some of the factions and their motives, see Joyce Pettigrew, 'Martyrdom and Guerrilla Organisation in Punjab', *JCCP*, Vol. 30, no. 3 (November 1992), pp. 387–406.
63. *Frontline*, 21 July–3 August 1990, p. 16.
64. *SW*, 24 August 1991, p. 3. *HIE*, 31 August 1991, p. 4.
65. *IT*, 15 October 1988, p. 22 and 31 March 1989, p. 14.
66. Uma Chakravarti and Nandita Haksar, *Delhi Riots, Three Days in the Life of a Nation* (New Delhi: Lancer, 1987) has 650 pages of interviews with victims. Attempts to prosecute a Congress politician led to the police being mobbed and driven away by his retainers. *HIE*, 22 September 1990, p. 11.
67. *HT*, 16 June 1991, p. 1.
68. *HT*, 23 June 1991, p. 1.
69. *HIE*, 30 November 1991, p. 1.
70. *IT*, 15 March 1992, p. 20. *FEER*, 5 March 1992, p. 11. *HIE*, 29 February 1992, pp. 1, 13.
71. *SW*, 29 February 1992, p. 7.
72. *Frontline*, 20 November 1992, pp. 27–34.
73. *HIE*, 24 October 1992, p. 2 and 31 October 1992, p. 4. Salim Jiwa, *The Death of Air India Flight 182* (London: W. H. Allen, 1986), p. 76. Ian Mulgrew, *Unholy Terror: The Sikhs and International Terrorism* (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 1988), pp. 128–32, 179. Parmar was reported killed in a shoot-out with police in Jalandhar district on 15 October 1992; two Pakistani nationals died in the same fight.
74. Gyanendra Pandey, *The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India* (New Delhi: 1990), pp. 22, 261.
75. The Government of India estimates 29 per cent of the population lives below a calorie-defined poverty line. *HIE*, 19 August 1989, pp. 8, 16. The World Bank in 1990 estimated 40 per cent of the population lives in poverty; an Indian market-research group estimated closer to 50 per cent. *HIE*, 28 July 1990, p. 12. *SW*, 15 December 1990, p. 3.
76. Jawaharlal Nehru, Lok Sabha, 23 May 1956, in K. T. Narasimha Char (ed.), *The Quintessence of Nehru* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1961), p. 145.
77. *IT*, 30 April 1991, p. 55. Abid Hussain, *Indian Industry in the 1990s – Challenges Ahead*, 17th Frank Moraes Memorial Lecture (Madras: United Writers' Association and Southern

- India Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 1989), pp. 10–12. *The Financial Times* (London), 16 September 1991, p. v. *FEER*, 8 August 1991, pp. 48–9. P. N. Agarwala, 'Restructuring the Public Sector,' in *The Hindu Survey of Indian Industry 1991* (Madras: Kasturi and Sons, 1992), p. 51.
78. *HT*, 30 April 1991, p. 55.
 79. *Seminar*, No. 380 (April 1991), p. 12. Romesh and Raj Thapar, the magazine's founders, died in 1987.
 80. Hussain, *Indian Industry*, p. 20.
 81. *Ibid.*, p. 2. *BI*, 11–24 December 1989, pp. 57–8.
 82. *EPW*, 9 February 1991, p. 318. *BI*, 26 October–8 November 1992, p. 50. India's debt-service ratio in 1991–2 (repayment requirements as a proportion of total export earnings) was 26.2 per cent. India's foreign debt was three times greater than its total export earnings in 1991–2.
 83. T. N. Anantharam Iyer, 'Towards a Viable BOP', *The Hindu Survey of Indian Industry 1991*, p. 35.
 84. *HIE*, 29 September 1990, p. 2.
 85. *IT*, 31 October 1990, p. 56.
 86. S. L. Rao, Director-General, National Council for Applied Economic Research, seminar, Melbourne, 23 November 1992.
 87. *HIE*, 29 December 1990, p. 12. *FEER*, 18 April 1991, p. 70.
 88. *Australian Financial Review*, 31 July 1991, citing *New York Times*.
 89. T. A. Seshan, 'Testing Time for Indian Economy', *The Hindu Review of Indian Industry 1991*, p. 13.
 90. *Frontline*, 31 July 1992, p. 9.
 91. *Frontline*, 19 June 1992, p. 27. *FEER*, 18 June 1992, p. 76.
 92. *HIE*, 14 November 1992, p. 12.
 93. *HT*, 20 July 1991, p. 12, quoting the pre-budget Economic Survey. S. L. Rao, Director-General, National Council for Applied Economic Research, seminar, Melbourne, Australia, 23 November 1992. See also P. V. Narasimha Rao, *Planning for the Poor and Market Mechanism for Competitive Efficiency Must Go Together* (New Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 1992), speech of 22 May 1992, especially p. 2.
 94. T. Krishna Kumar, 'Forgetting to Remember', *EPW*, 17 October 1992, p. 2301.
 95. *HIE*, 22 June 1991, p. 9. *FEER*, 23 May 1991, p. 34; 25 July 1991, p. 14. This was in striking contrast to the position of Indian immigrants in Britain or Canada where they often tended to be less qualified, working-class people.
 96. Dileep Padgaonkar, 'Changing Times', *Seminar*, No. 381

- (May 1991), p. 30.
97. *IT*, 31 March 1991, p. 34.
98. *Frontline*, 16 February–1 March 1991, p. 98.
99. Padgaonkar, 'Changing Times', p. 30.
100. *SMH*, 1 February 1992.
101. A. K. Damodaran, 'Reassessing Strategies,' *World Focus*, Nos 143–4 (November–December 1991), p. 5.
102. *HT Magazine*, 16 June 1991, p. 5; 25 August 1991, pp. 1, 5. *Frontline*, 22 May 1992, pp. 38ff; 5 June 1992, pp. 17ff; 19 June 1992, p. 18. Mohan Ram, *Sri Lanka: the Fractured Island* (New Delhi: Penguin, 1989) for detail on the period.
103. Nehru, speech at banquet for Bulganin and Khrushchev, New Delhi, 20 November 1955, in Narasimha Char (ed.), *Quintessence*, p. 196.
104. See D. P. Chaudhri and Ajit K. Dasgupta, *Agriculture and the Development Process: a Study of Punjab* (London: Croom Helm, 1985), Appendix D, pp. 188–91 for a discussion of definitions of the 'poverty line'.
105. *HT Magazine*, 18 October 1992, p. 15.
106. *Ibid.*
107. Rasheeduddin Khan, *Federal India* (New Delhi: Vikas, 1992), p. 46.
108. *HIE*, 31 August 1991, p. 7; 19 September 1992, p. 4. *IT*, 30 September 1992, pp. 22, 30. *SW*, 5 September 1992, p. 1.
109. Journalists toured Punjab freely in September and October 1992 and reported that 'Punjab is on the mend and no traveller who ventures into areas where silence and fear ruled at dusk last October can miss the lights, the people, the movement on the highways and an occasional marriage celebration [today].' Manoj Joshi in *Frontline*, 30 November 1990, p. 26. *IT*, 15 September 1992, p. 30.