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MAPPING THE ISSUE OF HARIJAN UPLIFTMENT IN THE MADRAS LEGISLATURE IN 1950s

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In early 1950s, the Congress' 'Harijan uplift' policy met with further criticism. The Scheduled Caste members of the legislature strongly criticised the government's land assignment policy. They argued that a large number of plots which had been enlisted by the government for such purposes were situated on the wet lands and had to be filled before starting any construction on work on them. 'The government was also requested to make substantial investments in the housing settlements of the Scheduled Castes.'²

Repressive Policy of Congress Ministry

The government was also flayed for its highly authoritarian attitude towards the rural masses. The P. Kumaraswami Raja Ministry was criticised for its repressive policy towards the Scheduled Caste agricultural labourers in Tanjore. It was alleged that while the Reserve Police harassed the agricultural labourers for being Communist sympathisers, rich farmers and landholders prevented them from cultivating lands as tenants. To eliminate such incidents of oppression, the government was requested to allot two acres of land to all Scheduled Caste families.³

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