

Politics in Orissa—IV

# The Oriya Movement

F G Bailey

THE President of the Utkal Sammilani (Utkal Union Conference), addressing its fifty-first session at Berhampur on March 16th 1959, said,

'We are the first people in the country to observe the feeling of unity in the Indian Nation but we cannot sacrifice our own interest.'

Earlier in the year, in the middle of February, the Budget session of the Orissa Legislative Assembly opened with an address from the Governor of Orissa. The speech was received with a motion of thanks from the House, to which Opposition members tabled amendments. Among these amendments were two, which I have selected from several having different words but the same substance. These are:

'But regret to find that: (a) there is no mention of the Government's failure to safeguard the interests of the people of Orissa and particularly the Adibasis in Rourkella and in the Dandakaranya scheme; (b) there is no mention of the failure of Government to take sincere and effective steps for the restoration of outlying Oriya tracts.'

The Utkal Sammilani is an organization founded to look after the interests of Oriyas. It is the business of the Opposition to pick holes where it can, and one might be tempted to regard these amendments as just another propaganda point to be made on the floor of the House. But those quotations mean more than this: time and again Oriya 'nationalism' comes up as a cause for political action or an explanation for political behaviour. It is a rallying cry, a moral imperative, in the name of which sacrifices are made and narrower personal or party or regional interests are forgotten. It is, since 1947 and the coming of Independence, the most widespread and the strongest 'cause' in Orissa politics,

Whether such feelings are good or bad is beside the point: they exist, and there is no understanding of contemporary politics without taking provincial patriotism into account.

Orissa—then the present districts of Cuttack, Puri, and Balasore—was taken from the Marathas in 1803 and governed from Calcutta. The southern part—the present districts of Ganjam and Koraput—was governed from Madras.

### Alien Administration

Bengalis had already a long experience of British rule, and most of the officials who came to the newly-annexed areas were Bengalis. They were the administrators and they became, as the leaders of the Utkal Sammilani later called them 'an intermediary ruling race.' Bengali was the language of the courts. The lawyers were Bengalis. The teachers were Bengalis. If an Oriya wanted responsible employment in the Administration, he had virtually to turn himself into a Bengali. There were no educational institutions in Orissa, using the Oriya language, which could give him the necessary qualifications.

It is ironical that the founder of the Utkal Sammilani, Madhusudan Das, went to Calcutta for higher education, and to the end of his life, so one person told me, spoke on informal occasions not 'chaste and elegant' Oriya, but Oriya with many Bengali corruptions and admixtures. There is a fragment of autobiography by Madhusudan Das which illustrates the feelings of ambitious Oriyas (Das was born into a zemindari family) in the last two decades of the nineteenth century:

'All the surroundings of my life in my village were calculated to develop pride.'

Then he was sent to the Government Zilla School at Cuttack to obtain an English education.

'My admission into the English School brought me into contact with Bengali boys and Bengali teachers ... I was the target. All my Bengali class comrades everlastingly fired their volleys of sarcasm and ridicule at me ... I had long hair which was tied at the back. This my Bengali friends considered a sign of my being a girl not a boy, for in Bengal by that time short-cropped hair was in fashion. One day one of my

Bengali friends cut it off with a pair of sharp scissors ... During the years of Bengali persecution at school I looked back with a sigh, a regret sometimes with tears, on the days I spent in my village before I was transported to Cuttack for English education, I thought of the days when I was loved, respected, and blessed as the scion of an old family of Zemindars, I was reconciled to a life where contempt and insult would be my share ...' Madhusudan's Immortal Words.—Edited by N Das. Kala Vigyan Parishad, Cuttack. 1958. P3.)

### 'Downright Robbery'

That was the position of Oriyas in the heartland of Orissa. The Administration was manned by aliens. Oriya culture was despised. There were several attempts to have Bengali pronounced the language of instruction in schools. There was even an attempt to prove that Oriya was merely a dialect of Bengali, whereas, as Oriyas pointed out, just as good a case could be made out that Bengali was a corrupted dialect of Oriya.

There were also more practical and immediate reasons why Oriyas disliked and feared the immigrant Bengalis. Many Oriyas lost their estates to Bengalis. The estates were sold to meet arrears of tax, and the sale took place in Calcutta often without the knowledge of the Oriya owners.

'In the second and third years after the extension of the Bengal Regulations to Cuttack, estates paying a jumma of 4½ lakhs of rupees out of a jumma of Rs 1,200,000 were sold at public auction for arrears of revenue ... The inadequate value at which these lands were sold also immensely aggravated the hardship of the measure, and has been termed by the Collector (in his report) little better than downright robbery.' (quoted in The Oriya Movement by 'Two Bachelors of Arts' Oriya Samaj. Ganjam. 1919. P7.)

If this was happening in the heartland of Orissa, in the administrative division in which Oriyas

were in the great majority, the same and worse was happening in those tracts where Oriyas were a minority in a larger linguistic group. This was the case on all the land borders of Orissa. To the south the Ganjam Oriyas were administered from Madras, and the officials who governed them were Telugu-speakers: to the west and north-

west Oriyas had to deal with Hindi-speaking officials: to the north there were large groups of Oriya-speakers in the districts of what is now West Bengal.

In these areas the language and culture of the Oriyas were maintained with difficulty. Oriya children were educated through the medium of Bengali or Telugu or

Hindi. A process, which is illustrated by the Census returns for Midnapore district in Bengal, must have been going on in all the outlying Oriya tracts. The total of Oriya-speakers in Midnapore were returned thus:

<b>1891</b> .....	<b>572,789</b>
<b>1901</b> .....	<b>270,495</b>
<b>1911</b> .....	<b>181,801</b>

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Census figures, on issues like this, are notoriously fallible, but whether they indicate a true diminishing of Oriya-speakers, or whether they indicate falsification by enumerators, the figures were equally disturbing to those who valued Oriya culture and the Oriya language.

The information on which I have based this account is got from conversations with Oriyas and from publications of the Utkal Sammilani. It is therefore likely to be biased. The sufferings of Oriyas and the danger to their culture may have been exaggerated. But this, for our purpose, is beside the point. The history which is relevant to our analysis is not fact—what actually happened—but rather what Oriyas today and in recent decades believe happened. History for our purpose is history as the Oriyas see it now, and believe it to have happened.

### The Union Movement

There were many petitions and memorials about these grievances submitted to the Government in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, but a systematic campaign for the rights of Oriyas began only in 1903, when the Utkal Union Conference was organized by Madhusudan Das. The president (on that occasion) was the Raja of Mayurbhanj and the chairman of the reception committee was the Raja of Kanika. In the years following, the Conference met annually, usually under the presidentship of one of the Orissa Rajas. Branches were organized throughout the Oriya-speaking area; paid propagandists ('missionaries') were employed; schools where Oriya children could be taught in their own language were opened in such outlying tracts as Singbhum, Oriya students taking courses of higher education outside Orissa were given grants. Memorials were submitted to various provincial administrations about the Use of Oriya as a court language, about the founding of an Oriya university, about the teaching of Oriya in schools and universities, and, as a main aim, about uniting all Oriya-speakers into a single administrative unit. The Conference also interested itself in developing industries, mostly cottage industries, and in improved methods of agriculture. Madhusudan Das himself promoted tanning and silver filigree work in Cuttack.

The long and persistent agitation of the Utkal Union Conference was met half-way by the uneasiness of the British administrators. This uneasiness sprang partly from pangs of conscience and from the knowledge that Oriyas in the outlying tracts—in Madras and Bengal and other areas—did suffer severe disadvantages compared to those who spoke the same language as the Administrators. Oriyas were at the 'tail-end' of the Administration in all these provinces, and they suffered in consequence. Partly the British were influenced by administrative difficulties: senior officials had either to stay in one area or to learn several languages. The existing provinces were large and communications were poor. There was, for instance, a belief that the horrors of the 1866 famine could have been averted had Orissa not been so far from the eyes of the Government in Calcutta.

### Formation of Orissa Province

As far back as 1875 memorials had been submitted to the Bengal Government to have all the Oriya tracts united under one Administration. At first the Utkal Sammilani agitated, as a minimum aim, for the inclusion of all the Oriya areas within one province, either the Central Provinces or Bengal, and they were content to see this as a step on the way to a separate Oriya province. Yet the first change was concerned not so much with bringing in the outlying tracts, but rather with relieving the Bengal Government of some of its responsibilities. In 1911 Bihar and Orissa were formed into a separate province. Sambalpur became part of the Orissa section of the new province.

Oriya agitation continued and there was a regular complaint that Bihar received first share of what was to be had, and Orissa got only what was left.

In 1936 Orissa became a separate province, after protracted negotiations in the course of which the Oriya leaders went to London to argue their case. The outlying tracts to the south (parts of the district of Ganjam and the Koraput Agency in Madras) were taken into the new Orissa province, Orissa then consisted of the following districts: Cuttack, Puri, Balasore, Ganjam, Koraput, and Sambalpur. This

is an area of 32,198 square miles and in 1941 it had a population of 8,728,544.

### Saraikeila and Kharsawan

In the agitations which led up to the formation of a separate province in 1936, there were two main aims: one was to safeguard the interests of the Oriyas in the existing Oriya division, by making it possible for them to compete with aliens on equal terms; the second was territorial, to bring Oriya-speaking tracts within the boundaries of the division, or, as it later became, the province. Both these issues are alive today.

In 1936, when the province was created, the main aims of the Utkal Union Conference were accomplished. Not that there was universal satisfaction: parts of Gunjam, the whole of Singbhum and of Midnapore and other areas to which the Union Movement had laid claim, were not included in the new province. Beginning from 1936 there is a steady trickle of literature complaining of trickery, of the falsification of census returns, of the use of double standards to prevent Orissa from getting all the territory demanded, of bad faith in other ways, of victimization, and so forth. But by and large the Movement subsided between 1936 and 1947, because it had achieved its main aim and because the energies of that articulate class which had organized the Union Movement, were taken up by the struggle for Independence, either on one side or the other. But Oriya nationalism came sharply to life again in 1948.

### Merged with Bihar

From some aspects, as I have said in an earlier article, the struggle to merge the Feudatory States with coastal Orissa was a struggle to preserve the importance, if not the existence, of Orissa. But this was not 'Oriya Nationalism'. There is a distinction to be drawn between the Oriya Movement proper, and those movements in which the Congress took the lead. Neither side in the merger conflict saw this primarily as a struggle between Oriyas and outsiders. It was an internal dispute between the forces of reaction and the progressives, or, from the opposite point of view, between stable conservatism and revolution: it was a dispute between Oriyas.

But in 1948 a conflict broke out which is straight in the line of descent from the earlier struggles of Oriya nationalism. In that year Mayurbhanj had not yet acceded to Orissa. Mayurbhanj lay between the new Orissa and two states which had once been within the jurisdiction of the Political Agent for Orissa. These were Saraikella and Kharsawan. First they were allotted to Orissa along with the rest of the Feudatory States. But when Oriya officials arrived to take over, they were met with demonstrations of hostility, organised, so it is alleged, not by the people of those states, but by interested outsiders who wished the states to accede to Bihar. It is not, fortunately, our business to judge on whose side right lay, or who was responsible for the disorders: we have only to see what Oriyas believe happened.

### S R C Report Disappoints

Whatever the cause of the disorders, they were considerable. The police opened fire and people were killed. At the intervention of the Union Government it was decided that the two states should join Bihar, until the question could be taken up again in more settled times. This decision was prompted both by the disorders and by the fact that, until Mayurbhanj acceded, Orissa had no territorial boundary with Saraikella and Kharsawan.

Mayurbhanj joined Orissa in the following year, but, so far as I can discover, the question of Saraikella and Kharsawan returning to Orissa did not come up again until the States Reorganization Commission in 1956. From my discussions with Oriyas, both politicians and others, there seems to have been at first a fair amount of confidence that Saraikella and Kharsawan and possibly some other outlying tracts would be given to Orissa. Some propaganda was carried on to strengthen the Oriya cause, both in those two states and elsewhere. But Saraikella and Kharsawan remained with Bihar.

### Resignation Expected

It was also generally believed that the Congress Ministry in Orissa would resign if the two states were not allotted to Orissa. But, presumably on the advice of the Union Government, the Orissa Congress remained in office. Demonstrations erupted throughout Orissa,

directed both against the Congress Ministry in Orissa and against the Union Government. There was a general strike. Shops were closed. Transport was blocked. The agitators concentrated upon Union institutions: the railways, the post offices, and the All India Radio. Disorders continued for about a week. At Bhadrak the trains were held up for a week and the picketers (mostly students) organized canteens to feed the stranded passengers. At Purl the railway station was burned and the houses of some officials attacked. The police opened fire and one person was killed. In Cuttack Union forces were flown in to protect Government installations, and it was these forces, protecting the All India Radio, which opened fire, wounded some members of the crowd, and killed a youth. He has since become a martyr, and his name was used in the 1957 elections by parties opposed to the Congress.

Public meetings were forbidden. But the leaders of the main Opposition party courted arrest by defying the ban on meetings. Later they, and some members of other parties and Independents, resigned from the Assembly and the Parliament, in protest both against the decision of the States Reorganization Commission, and against the manner in which the disorders had been suppressed.

### 'Closed Shop'

Orissa now has its University, and the greater number of people in regular administrative service are Oriyas. There are still many people of Bengali descent here, but this issue is no longer alive. From time to time a domiciled Bengali politician may have to put up with the gibes of his opponents, but few of them have connections with Bengal proper and most are solidly identified with Orissa. Nor is the language issue any longer of importance, and it is significant that I have heard no complaints about the propagation of Hindi as the national language on the grounds that the Oriya language thereby suffers.

But there are still some fields in which the 'Orissa for the Oriyas' feeling is strong. Oriyas complain that particular forms of business—the kendu leaf contracts and the mines, for example—are in the hands of outsiders: that sufficient profits from them do not accrue to

the Orissa State, but go outside. There is a popular distrust of the non-Oriya commercial classes—the Marwari businessmen and shopkeepers, for example.

Projects under the control of the Union Government are a particular target for Oriya nationalists. They complain that Oriyas displaced by these projects are not properly compensated, nor are their interests looked after. Hirakud is a notorious case and the results of the elections in Sambalpur demonstrate the strength of feeling against the Orissa Congress, which in such situations is identified with the Union Government. I quoted above an amendment to the address of thanks to the Governor which raised just this issue, the interests of local people being neglected by Union concerns in Rourkella and the Dandakaranya area. They also complain that local people are not given sufficient employment and that the benefits to be got from the new concerns, particularly during the period of construction, go all to non-Oriyas. The presence of Union officials, who may not be Oriyas, is also resented. Altogether, there is some evidence that a 'closed-shop' mentality exists from the level of the politician and official right down to the ordinary worker. Orissa, of course, is not unique in this.

Nor is she unique in the complaint heard everywhere, that the State gives too much to the Union and gets too little in return. This complaint is so universal that we need not go into details. It would be surprising if it were not made. Whether or not such claims and complaints are based upon accurate information, and just what constitutes a 'fair' proportion of Oriyas in the employment of Union projects in the State, are questions which cannot be answered here, for they depend upon the ultimate values held: the balancing of State interests against Union interests; the demands of economic efficiency; and so forth. What matters in this analysis is not the correctness or error of the beliefs of Oriyas: but rather the attitudes and actions which are founded on those beliefs.

### Political Lessons

Up to 1936 Oriya Nationalism advanced its claims largely through diplomatic and constitutional means. There was no resort to violence

and no attempt to force the Government's hand by 'direct action'. The strength of the movement rested on the moderation of the leaders and on their personal eminence. They were respected by the British as sober and responsible spokesmen of a worthwhile cause. Since Independence the movement has displayed much more the characteristics of an agitation. Protests are still made in the Assembly and the Utkal Sammilani still holds its annual meeting, but it was the disorder of 1956 that revealed the latent strength of Oriya Nationalism.

In the Utkal Union Movement many of the political leaders of the Independence Movement and of the present day had their first experience of politics. Under its auspices they learnt to make popular contact by carrying on educational and constructive work. They learnt how to work on committees and how to put pressure on the Government. But in the Independence Movement all these lessons were unlearned and the tactics of diplomacy and quiet behind-the-scenes pressures were laid aside. One gentleman, answering my question, said, 'Yes, I was in the Oriya Movement as a young man. But that was not real politics, of course: not the way we do things now...'

The lessons of political behaviour which have survived into Independent India seem to be those learnt from 1921 onwards, agitation of one form or another, rather than the patient diplomacy of the early years of the Oriya Movement.

#### Creative Work

Superficially the Oriya Movement is the hill-coast cleavage writ large: at first sight it appears to fall into the same structural category and to bear many superficial resemblances. There is the same conflict of loyalties: in the first case between either the hill or the coastal divisions and the Orissa State, and in the second Orissa itself on the one side and the Indian Union on the other side, standing for all the neighbouring States with which Orissa is in dispute. If the hill districts now complain sometimes that they are at the tail-end of the Administration, or that they do not get their fair share of the benefits of Government, that is exactly what Oriya patriots have been saying for the last seventy or more years about Orissa. Equally the suspicion

and dislike felt for 'Katakis' by the people of the hills, and the attitudes of superiority and disdain which are sometimes evinced by the coastal middle-class for those of the hills, correspond very neatly to what Oriyas were saying about Bengalis fifty years ago and to what Bengalis were saying about Oriyas.

But there is also a difference. Oriya nationalism has had a positive creative side, which the parochial loyalties of hill and coast have never had. From its very beginnings the Oriya Movement began to grow out of being a mere attempt at grabbing more privileges for Orissa and maintaining a 'closed shop' for Oriyas. It is, I suppose, an accident of the English language current at the beginning of this century that its workers were called 'missionaries': 'propagandist' and 'agitator' were not in vogue at the time. But the word 'missionary' neatly symbolizes the spirit of the Movement, especially in its early days, and distinguishes it from the more mundane and materialist ambitions revealed in the hill-coast rivalry.

#### 'Missionary' Spirit

The 'missionary' spirit indicates a willingness to sacrifice personal interest and comfort, and self-dedication to a goal the attainment of which is regarded as a moral obligation. The people who went to Singbhum or to the other outlying tracts and started schools where Oriya children could be taught in their mother-tongue did so because they thought Oriya culture and Oriya values and the Oriya language things of value in themselves.

At first sight one might conclude that this was simply an extension by a few idealists of a movement to secure appointments in the services and opportunities in the professions for the Oriya middle-classes. No doubt the difficulties which these same middle-classes experienced in competition with the Bengalis initiated the campaign. But their motives cannot be written off as mere self-interest, for the same aim could more easily have been achieved, if they were concerned with their own interests alone, by adopting Bengali culture and the Bengali language. The prime mover of the whole campaign, Madhusudan Das, had, so to speak, qualified himself as a Bengali, and need

never have troubled himself about those of his countrymen who had neither the ability nor the opportunity to do the same. Yet he spent his life in fighting for Oriya culture and the Oriya language.

#### Political Motivation

We are here reaching after a distinction in political motivation which is not easy to make. At one end of the scale are narrow parochial loyalties, material interests, self-interest even: actions dictated by the needs of the belly. To be set against this outlook is action for an ideal or a principle, action for the benefit of others. Action taken not in self-interest but in response to a moral imperative: action from the heart. These are, of course, conceptual distinctions. Any particular single action, still more a complex series of actions, are likely to belong to both fields. But even though it may be difficult to categorize concrete actions, nevertheless the distinction is valid. There is all the difference in the world between the MLA who threatens to resign because his rival has been made a Deputy Minister, and the MLA who resigns because he is in principle opposed to co-operative farming or to the compulsory re-settlement of podua cultivators or because he wishes to protest against corruption and inefficiency.

Oriya Nationalism comes between these two poles. On the one hand it appears as pure patriotism, in the name of which people make sacrifices for which they can derive no immediate reward other than self-respect and the gratitude of their 'countrymen'. From the other side, getting jobs in the administration, or securing a share in the Union-managed industries and projects, Oriya Nationalism appears as xenophobic self-interest. It stands midway between the abstract goals of social reform or Independence, and, on the other side, narrow personal or parochial or communal interests.

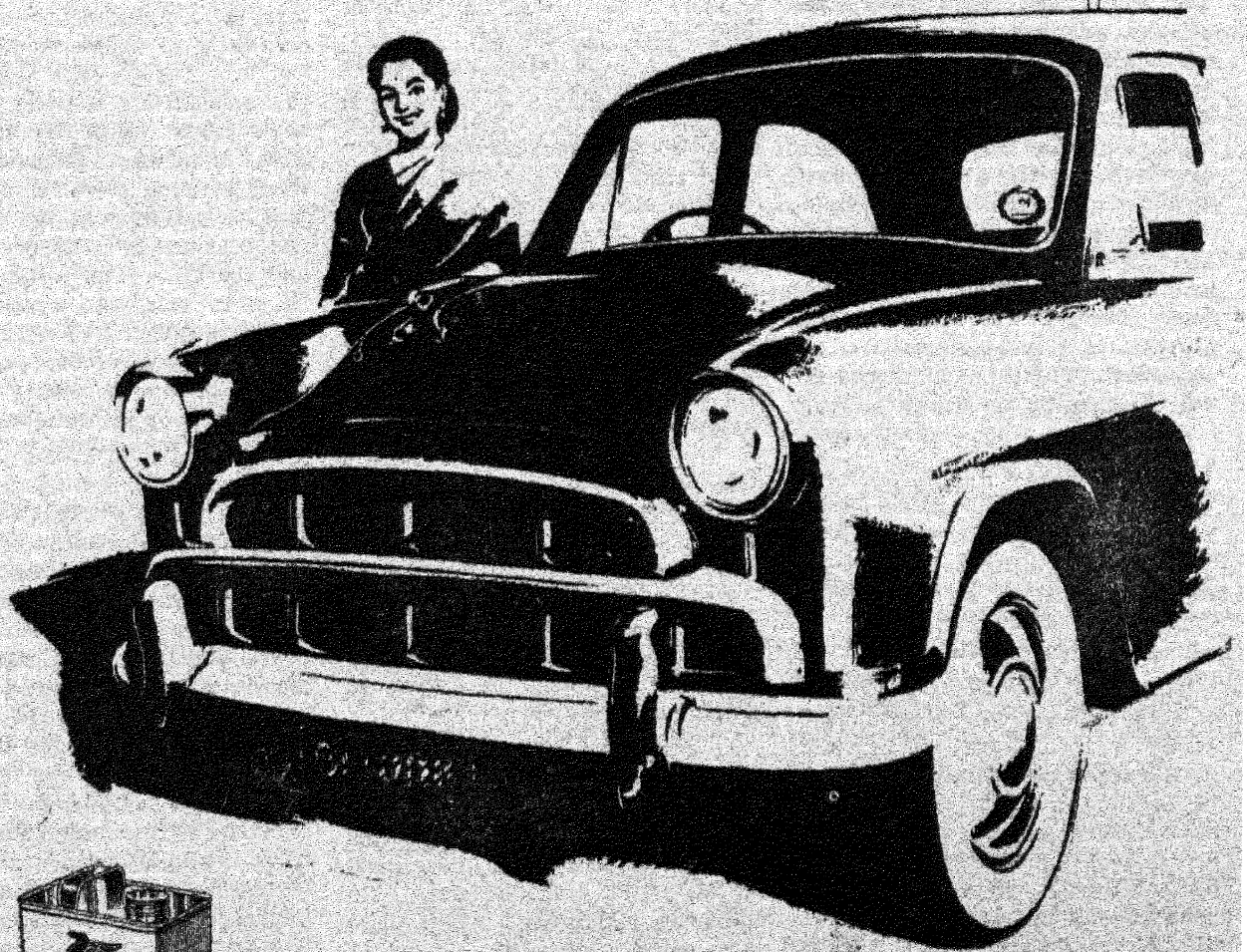
#### Not Self-Interest but 'Patriotism'

In an analysis which seeks to be scientific, moral imperatives are a nuisance. Self-interest is tangible almost capable of being measured. If it can be shown that Sri X, by doing action A, would have lost three lakhs of rupees, and would have gained a contract worth five lakhs by doing action B, which he did, then we feel that we have satisfactorily accounted for his choice, whatever he has to say in the matter.

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There is a temptation to be cynical and to look for an interested motive: indeed, it is a good maxim for research to distrust high professions and to look for material interests.

But one does not always find them. I have discussed the 1956 rioting with politicians and people outside politics; those who belong to the Congress say that the agitation was whipped up by the Opposition parties and used to discredit the Congress: they discount the moral imperative and look only to materialistic motives. Other people insisted that the agitation was spontaneous, and not fomented by any party, although the Opposition parties may have exploited these issues afterwards. While agreeing that nothing seems to be easier than to whip up a riot in the towns (twelve people went to hospital and twenty-two were arrested in Bengal recently after a dispute which broke out over the purchase of two bananas), one is nevertheless reluctant to believe that self-interest can be the whole story. Why should the students of Cuttack worry themselves over Sarai-kella and Kharsawan, which few of them can have visited and many must never have heard of before 1948? Why should relatively highly qualified middle-class Oriyas from the coastal districts take low-paid jobs teaching small boys to read and write Oriya beyond the borders of Orissa? The answer lies not in self-interest but in 'patriotism'.

I labour this point, perhaps, but it is necessary to make it strongly here, when first we meet it. It is easy to lose sight of the idealistic element in politics—Oriya Nationalism, social reform, independence in the welter of narrow sectional interests.

#### Difficulties of Congress

The cleavage between Oriya, Nationalism and Indian Nationalism has never been as clear and sharp as the cleavage between the hill and the coastal divisions within Orissa. To understand this one has to follow the intricate and changing relationship between the Oriya Movement on the one side and the Congress Movement on the other.

One way in which a political movement grows is by winning over existing congregations, formed for some other purpose and with some other aim in mind, and turning

their energies towards its own goal. The present political leaders, particularly of the Congress, make constant use of this device, and any group, even one formed for artistic or entirely non-political purposes, usually finds itself enjoying the patronage of a politician or a political party.

This was not the case in the early relations of the Congress and the Oriya Movement. There was in those days a dearth of articulate and public-spirited middle class people, and those who did interest themselves in public affairs were jack—of—all-trades. The leaders of the Oriya Movement were interested in social reform and economic betterment, and this was part of the Movement's programme. But in addition to this the same persons were leaders in other movements. The leaders of social reform movements were also protagonists in the Oriya Movement. From among their number, also, came the men who introduced the Congress into Orissa.

#### 'Divide and Rule'?

But quite soon the structural situation forced a division. About social reform there was no particular difficulty for it was consistent with—or at least not opposed to—either Oriya Nationalism or the Independence Movement, which was Indian Nationalism. But between the two latter there is a fundamental incompatibility, and the last sixty years have shown that when the one waxed the other waned. Some Oriyas came down definitely on the one side or the other. The founder of the Utkal Sammilani, although later enrolled in the Congress, resisted attempts to gather his organization into the Congress fold. Furthermore the Raj families and the bigger Zemindars, who were opposed to the Congress and who suffered at its hands, having devoted their political energies to the Utkal Sammilani, naturally resisted attempts to have it incorporated in the Congress. In 1936 the Utkal Union Conference at Puri passed a resolution expressing their loyalty to the crown. Thereupon the Congress denounced the Oriya Movement as a British device to 'divide and rule'.

The Congress hostility to the cause of Oriya Nationalism cost it the whole-hearted support of a section of the Oriya middle-classes. Many of these people continued to

work within the framework of the Congress for the achievement of Independence, but they did so with reservations, and from time to time, when Congress unity was weak and its aims uncertain, they broke away from it. The non-Congress Ministry which had a short spell of life in 1936, and the longer Coalition Ministry which was in office during the war years, were composed largely of men whose public life had been dedicated to the cause of Oriya Nationalism. Finally, when Independence was achieved, most of the people in this category either retired from politics, or remained as opponents of the Congress party.

#### Protest Votes

The Congress party has taken the strain of this conflict of loyalties to Orissa and to the Union. The Orissa Congress has two masters: its own Oriya electorate and the All India Party. Theoretically the other two All-India parties working in Orissa, the Praja Socialists and the Communists, are in the same dilemma, but not being in office they can more freely speak up for the rights of Orissa. The Ganatantra, a State party, and the Independents have no difficulties, since they do not have to measure the effect of their actions upon party members in other States, or to calculate whether their actions will damage the unity of the party at a national level.

When Sarai-kella and Kharsawan first went to Bihar in 1948, people said that the Orissa Congress leaders were weak in the face of central pressure, and naive in their failure to counter the manoeuvres and intrigues of the Congress parties in other States. In 1956 the failure of the Orissa Congress government to resign in protest against the award of the States Reorganization Commission, after the general expectation that they would make this gesture, and the subsequent firings, did considerable damage to the party's prestige in Orissa. In the elections the following year there were large protest votes against the Congress in the coastal area. In the Chief Minister's own constituency, a Ganatantra candidate polled over 19,000 votes in an area where the Ganatantra at that time had virtually no organization and no following: these can only have been votes in protest against what had been done in 1956. A candidate

who stood as an Independent told me that one reason why he had defeated an old and respected Congress leader was that he had been imprisoned for his part in the 1956 agitations, and it was generally believed that his Congress opponent, who at that time was the ML A, was concerned in his arrest. This same candidate issued a pamphlet with a photograph on the cover of a youth who had been killed in the police firing in 1956 and the caption 'Why you should give me your vote'.

### Conflicting Loyalties

But the difficulties of the Congress are not to be attributed only to their 'want of strength in face of the Centre', nor to the baser motives which are sometimes suggested as explanations for their behaviour in 1956. The point is that they are faced, in a very acute form, with the politician's dilemma: his loyalties upwards and to the wider group in this case India as a nation—conflict inevitably with his loyalties downwards, in this case to the State.

The conflict is particularly acute in Orissa for the various reasons upon which I have already touched. Oriya patriotism finds a ready symbol and inspiration in the Purl shrine, in the glories of ancient Orissa, and in the language. Many years of struggle underlie it, and the sense of unity is enhanced by the conviction that all outsiders are hostile, and that Orissa has had to fight for its existence, and still must do so to make up the leeway between itself and other States with a more fortunate history.

With this history behind them Oriyas are not thick-skinned. Gossip and rumours, particularly of adverse opinions on Orissa, fall upon sensitive ears. A distinguished Indian leader is said to have described Oriyas during the 1956 troubles as 'Goondas' (hooligans). 'Would he have dared to say that about Andhras?', one man said. Another distinguished person is alleged to have sent a telegram of congratulation to Mayurbhanj, when it refused to join Orissa along with other Feudatory States in 1948. It is also said that when the States Reorganization Commission in 1956 decided to leave Saraikella and Kharsawan with Bihar, they did so because they thought 'there would be no trouble', while presumably Biharis would make trouble if those two states

were taken away. During the debate in the House of Lords on the Government of India Bill in 1911, when Bihar and Orissa was made a separate province, Lord Curzon said, 'The interests of the Oriyas have been sacrificed without compunction...because the Oriyas are a non-agitating people'. It seems as if in 1956 the Oriyas were determined to prove that this was now no longer the case.

Nor is the position of the Congress Party in Orissa made any easier by the fact that the Utkal Congress before Independence included areas which now belong to other States.

There is no way out of this dilemma, except by the sacrifice of one or the other interest. 'We are the first people in the country to observe the feeling of unity in the Indian nation, but we cannot sacrifice our own interests...'

### State and Nation

So long as the great majority even of the middle and professional classes live out their lives in the one State, and so long as jobs in that State go for preference to its natives, then people will continue

to think of their 'own interest' as coincident with the boundaries of the State and not of the Nation. The measure of Indian national unity is firstly the weakness of loyalty to the different States, and secondly the strength of affiliations to other categories or groups which cut across the regional divisions, whether these are organized class-interests, or party loyalties, or professional associations.

Conflict within the smaller group is the price to be paid for unity in the larger. Few of the staunch Oriya nationalists with whom I have talked would admit this: they say that all Indians are brothers, and that feelings of brothers are not lessened because they live separately. Perhaps not: Oriya Nationalism is in no way incompatible with feelings of national solidarity, when the occasion is appropriate for them: it does not stand in the way of what Durkheim called 'mechanical solidarity'—the associating together of like but self-contained units. But it is the negation of organic solidarity, where no unit is self-contained but all overlap and are interdependent, and are therefore inseparable.

## STATE BANK OF HYDERABAD

(Constituted under the Hyderabad State Bank Act, 1941.  
Renamed and capital transferred to Reserve Bank  
of India, with limited liability, under State Bank of  
Hyderabad Act, 1956.)

**All types of Banking and  
Foreign Exchange Business undertaken  
through H. O. and branches.**

**ANDHRA PRADESH:** Head Office in Hyderabad and 27  
branches, including 4 in Hyderabad

**BOMBAY STATE:** 16 branches, including 2 in  
Bombay City



**MYSORE STATE:** 6 branches

**MADRAS STATE:** 1 branch in Madras City