APPENDIX-III

(Showing popular movement in the Orissa States)*

The birth of the Orissa States People's Conference in 1931 and its second session in 1937 were not stray accidents in the history of this province. If one examines the notable events in the humdrum existence of the people in these States for the past 25 years or so, one will be surprised to learn that in these tracts governed by the Chiefs under the direct advice of the British Political Officers there have been several popular uprisings aimed at securing redress of some urgent economic and political grievances. People in Baud, Bamra, Rairakhol, Ranpur, Nayagarh, Nilgiri, Talcher and many other States have spontaneously risen several times against arbitrary enhancement of land rent, bethi and other crying economic and political grievances. Severity of bethi, requisitioning of goats and buffaloes for sacrificial purposes, fees for killing wild beasts damaging the crops in the fields, grazing fees and increment of land rent are some of the prominent causes which have led to these risings.


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In Bamra, there were four popular movements against the arbitrary increase in land rent, within a period of 28 years led by Hara Padhan, Bhagavatia Padhan and Jagannath Garnaik, Daitari Hota and Bhagban Patel, respectively. Some of these were beaten and put in Jail, some were fined, while the rest were banished from the State. The fifth movement started in 1928 against the Meefar Settlement which increased the land rent still further. About 4,000 people advanced towards the Bungalow of the Political Agent at Sambalpur for demanding redress. A no-rent campaign was started on the failure to secure redress from the Political Agent. Six Gauntias (village headmen) were arrested and imprisoned for 3 months. Some leaders lost their jobs in service and 4 Gauntias were deprived of their Gaunti rights. Section 144 was served on Dayananda Satpathy and 5 others. The former had to go to prison for a month and a half. Several others were dealt with under various charges. The movement was thus suppressed.

In 1937 some persons had to disobey orders under Section 144 for which they were sent to prison for six months. In 1938 Kandarp Padhan, Krisna Padhan and 23 others asked the authorities to grant the people fundamental rights of citizenship. They were sent to prison for 3 years each under Section 110.

Land rents were increased in Baudh in 1930 under the new Settlement. There was an increase of 100,200, 300 and
in some cases 400 per cent in different places. About 2,000 people went to the Raja to lay before him their grievances. The officials prevented an approach to the Raja. Twenty-seven Khonds then went to Sambalpur to get relief from the Political Agent. On their return to the State they were cruelly beaten and imprisoned.

In Daspalla in the year 1913, there was a great rising against the Paramount Power's recognising the adoption of the successor of the deceased Ruler, ignoring the claims of one of the agnates of the Ruler. To quell this, very severe oppressive measures were adopted. It is said there were public hangings and looting and arson on a very large scale. Even to-day people shudder to think of the horrors of that period.

In 1928, people of Nilgiri started a popular movement against bethi and magan and in the course of this movement, about two thousand people left the State and came away to Balasore. Ultimately the Paramount Power intervened and a settlement was arrived at. Mr. C.F. Andrews has mentioned this struggle with his comments in his book "India and Simon Commission".

In Talcher, when the miscellaneous cess was first levied in 1911, there was an agitation which was suppressed by punishing the leaders. Another movement in 1922 was similarly
dealt with. Again the question was agitated in 1932 but to no purpose.

In Dhenkanal, at the end of the 19th century the Manager of the State contemplated enhancement of rent under a new settlement. One thousand people came and protested, in consequence of which the idea was abandoned. Again in 1922 the management wanted to revise rent. Forest rules were also revised and enforced just then. Against both these there was much resentment and agitation. Some redress was effected, but four of the leaders were charged with conspiracy and were sentenced to imprisonment for three years. This gave a set-back to the movement.