CHAPTER THREE

PEASANT MOVEMENT UNTIL 1936

Having dealt with the changes that came in the agrarian relations in Andhra - in the ryotwari as well as the zamindari areas - during the colonial rule, we would study in the next two chapters the agrarian movements during the period of the struggle for national independence.

Generally saying, the peasant movement in Andhra, as elsewhere in India, had originated as a measure of self-defence of the peasants - the causes generally were to protect their rights on land and a due share in the produce. The agricultural labourers were moved for better wages, for land and for adequate supply of food grains at reasonable prices. The Congress Party, and later the Communist Party - independently or through ryots' associations - were able to mobilise them by taking up the common demands like reduction of taxes and rents and the abolition of feudal system of land relations.

Before we proceed to discuss the peasant movement in Andhra let the premise of the researcher, in
the study of agrarian movements in Andhra be stated briefly, about the differing perceptions and policies of the Congress and the Communists regarding the agrarian question in India during the national movement. It is as follows: The Congress which was in the forefront of the national movement sought all class unity, including the cooperation of the zamindars, in conducting the freedom struggle, while the Communists stressed on 'all in peasant unity' - the unity of peasants and agricultural labourers against feudalism and imperialism. It was under the pressure of peasant unrest, agitation and struggle, the Congress had changed its policies and agrarian programmes from the 'moderates' demanding Permanent Settlement of land revenue (meaning differently to different Congressmen) to the no-tax campaigns and to the Congress Agrarian Programme leading to the peaceful abolition of the zamindari system with equitable compensation and the land reforms, limited and compromising they were, for higher levels of production and consumption.

The principal issues that distinguish the Congress and the Communist positions on the agrarian
question, subjected to modifications according to the changing production relations and political consciousness in the Indian countryside, had been centered around the questions of class struggle and agrarian revolution. The Congress stood for agrarian reform, class conciliation and non-feudal, non-imperialistic path of development providing for the protection of private property and promotion of private incentive which essentially and ultimately meant development of capitalism. It had only one programme, i.e. of national independence and drew heavily both for financial support and leadership, from the zamindars, professionals and rich peasants but sought to mobilise all peasant classes and agricultural labourers, in the cause of national freedom. It conducted only isolated, limited and strictly safeguarded (symbolic) agrarian agitations or campaigns with moderate demands. The Communists, on the other hand, attempted to grasp the correlation of class forces under the land revenue and tenurial patterns effected and imposed by the alien rulers and stood for agrarian revolution with anti-feudal, anti-imperialist tasks, which they regarded as the axis of bourgeois-democratic revolution, paving the way for the establishment of
socialism. They endeavoured to build an independent and class organisation of the peasants based on the agricultural workers and poor peasantry, having the middle peasant as a strong ally. They conducted widespread, mass peasant struggle against the oppressive taxes and rents and for rights over land. But given the compulsions for the peasants to fight, as a measure of self-defence, against imperialism and feudalism, we find a commonality between the two in their desire to channelise the economic discontentment of these vast masses into an organised political force to achieve national independence.

Given such an understanding, we shall discuss in this chapter the agrarian movement in the ryotwari and zamindari regions of Coastal Andhra districts until 1935-36, after which there was a decisive break in the character of the movement, mainly due to the entry of the Communists into the movement. Before this the movement remained largely constitutional, reformist and in the framework of Congress politics. Though an attempt is made to go into the movements in the ryotwari and the zamindari areas separately, because the issues
were different and the organisations were different, an interrelated account and analysis does occur as the areas under these two different systems of land tenure were geographically woven together, the agitations were conducted simultaneously and also the leadership, at least at higher levels, was not much different. The peasant protest against colonialism and feudalism was more than a century old, but the chapter is mainly confined to the organised agrarian movement - initiated, organised and led by ryot associations.

I. **Early Revolts and Protests**

The peasant protest in Andhra is one-and-a-half-century old. Apart from the last ditch battles waged by some desperate hill zamindars, recalcitrant and hostile to the centralising and exacting alien authority, by drawing support from the oppressed but faithful subjects, we also notice during the early period of the British rule the spontaneous uprisings of the masses against the newly imposed Rules and Regulations and its concomittant evils in the form of oppressive feudal overlords, moneylenders and contractors. In 1832 'the Bissoyes or hill chiefs of
Parlakimidi, were concerned in a conspiracy (fituri) against a manager of the estate, who was obnoxious to them. This state of insurrection had been chronic. In February 1836, a similar 'disturbance' arose in Coomsoor hills as the sepoys by their excesses had led the Khonds to reprisals, which was put down by 1837. The Manual of Madras Administration records: 'Affairs did not proceed satisfactorily on the first introduction of the new system (of administration) into Chinakimidi, partly from the dislike of the Khonds to fixed rule of any sort and partly from their being forced to work during the cultivating seasons on making roads. An outbreak in the Soodah malisahs was followed by a more serious rising in the West (of the Ganjam Agency) known as Koteiah rising of 1866 and these risings continued till 1877. In 1864, certain proceedings of a Police Inspector brought on a petty insurrection among the Sowrohhs, a wild race inhabiting an outlying corner of the Agency, on the borders of Ganjam... The Yernagudem hills in the Godavari Agency were the scene of disturbances in 1858. Accounts of these recurring uprisings were given in the early District Manuals and Gazetteers.
The second Rampa rebellion,\(^5\) one of the serious rebellions of the 19th century Andhra, broke out in 1879 and was soon spread into the adjoining Colconda tracts. 'The Rampa disturbance owned its origin chiefly to the imposition by the Manasabadar of a toddy tax. The people resented the measure and the fituri ensued...(which) extended on the West to Rekapalli in the Bhadrachalam taluka and on the East to Goodem and Macgole hill in the Visakhapatnam district.' The Police Station at Addateegala and Chodavaram were burnt and at Kota it was attacked. A large body of constables and some companies of sepoys were employed to suppress the rebellion.

In Mulkangiri the rebels 'derived their force from the fact that, owing to the ill-treatment by the Police and extortion on the part of the Raja's officials, the population was ill-affected towards the Government. The hill Pariahs, usually the money-lenders of their neighbourhood, came in for a share of the ill-feeling and many of them were murdered, often with sacrificial rites.'\(^6\) The 'fituridars', Chandrayya, Sambayya, Thammandera, Ambul Reddi and others, some among whom were muttadars,\(^7\) were captured one by one and the rebellion was finally suppressed.
in the early part of January 1881. In May 1900 at Korrevan ivalasa in Gunupur area in Selur taluka, four to five thousand hill people — savaras — gathered round a Ronda dora named Korrah Malliah who said that he would drive out the English and the rule the country himself.

Besides these struggles, there were revolts in the plains regions too. In 1846, at Koilkuntla in Cuddeppah district one Inamdar, Vuyyalevada Narasimha Reddy revolted against the proposed Inams policy of 1845 limiting the continuance of charitable grants. Afterwards and as an outcome of this revolt the British adopted a liberal policy regarding the inadvisability of disturbing long existing rights in landed property. In the Coastal Andhra plains the fight against injustices never took a rebellious form, though resentment prevailed at large among the peasants for different kinds of tortures imposed upon them for the collection of revenue arrears and dues. The rich ryots refused to cultivate the lands and left them fallow to protest against the enhancement of shist in some zamindaris. Some of the ryots and occupancy tenants took up the matter up to the Courts of Law.
II. The Beginning of the Peasant Movement

People from Andhra took part in the formation of Madras Mahajana Sabha in 1883, and later the INC in Bombay in 1885 and a large number from different Andhra districts participated in the Madras session (third) of the Congress in 1887. The Krishna District Association was formed in 1891, the first district association of the INC to be formed out of the twenty-one districts that constituted Madras Presidency. Political consciousness was increasing among the ryots, as among the other sections of the Andhra society. This was illustrated by a remarkable incident which happened in 1894 when the ryots in Krishna district held a conference in Elora to protest against the enhancement of water rate (by 25 per cent) and refused to cultivate their lands unless the rate was reduced. Some of the most influential ryots of Gudivada were even prepared to go to jails in that connection and suffer imprisonment. This conference was presided over by Nyapathi Subba Rao, a Rajahmundry lawyer. The ryots declined to use the 'government water' and later paid only dry rates. The government met their movement by consoli-
dating the rates, including the water cess in the land revenue assessment.\textsuperscript{14}

Various District Associations used to discuss in their respective Conferences, among other problems, ahist payment and resettlement rates (there was resettlement in the Krishna and Godavari districts in 1898 which resulted in an increase of 24 per cent), water rates and problems related to irrigation. Resolutions were adopted on these problems at the 11th Krishna District Conference held at Vuyyuru in 1902. Prior to that the Reception Committee sent out appeals to the ryots for participating in large numbers in the Conference.\textsuperscript{15} Range writes that Cajula Lakshmanarasu Chetti organised a constitutional agitation (year not mentioned) against the Madras Torturers Act and succeeded in getting it repealed.\textsuperscript{16}

From the beginning of the present century ideas were mooted and appeals were made for the necessity of forming the ryots into an association. The Krishna Patrika carried an editorial (Konda Venkatappayya was the editor) on 'The New Regulations regarding irrigation facilities to the low-lying lands in Guntur and
Krishna Districts,' in 1905, saying that 'if the ryots become intelligent and united they can put an end to the evil doings and corruption of water officials. They can pray and petition to the British to withdraw such inconveniencing Rules and Regulations'. 'But the ryots are highly disunited' and it says: 'The rich ryot in order to get water to his land first so as to start cultivation works, bribes the concerned employee to get the water released. The helpless poorer ryots were then forced to give bribes to their capacity. Even the educated rich are not attempting to clear their ignorance among the peasants, create unity and tell the ways to put an end to the injustice.\(^{917}\) On October 28, 1905 about 200 ryots met in Nujella village, Gudivada taluka, presided by Parvataneni Mallikharjunudu. The main issues discussed and on which speeches made were related to problems of irrigation, water to the low lying areas in time and the menace of drainage water. The President said that the peasants should be vigilant to submit petitions and memoranda to the officials at appropriate time. Parvataneni Mallikharjunudu, Adusumalli Suryanarayana, Kolli Seethayya, Luggirela Siviah and Tripirneni Ratnam
were appointed as secretaries and Parvateneni Kotaiah was made the treasurer. Appeals were continued for the formation of ryot associations 'with all the categories of peasants to create 'capital fund' and consolidate holdings to develop agriculture and remove poverty.'

In Nellore in 1906 a District Agricultural Association was formed. It submitted a memorandum to the Revenue Board about the pasture facilities for the ryots and worked to propagate agricultural methods profitable to the ryots. In 1907 it tried to procure iron ploughs and other agricultural tools. At the first Nellore District Conference, November 19-21, 1909, several resolutions were passed related to the problems of agriculture - that the right for remission due to the crops failure should take the shape of an Act and should not depend on the mercy of revenue officials; ryots should be given proper notices before their lands were auctioned for revenue arrears; cases should not normally be launched for the cattle trespassing into the reserved forests; ryots should be allowed to take timber for agricultural tools and manure for land without any tax; the Government revenue demand on land should be permanently settled and the additional irrigation projects should be constructed.
III. Formation of Local Ryots' Associations:

In 1913, a Zamindari Ryots' Association was formed in Nellore, but by 1914 it had become ineffective. In 1915, the Krishna District Ryots' Association was formed and it regularly held yearly conferences. In 1915, the Krishna Patrika carried an article declaring that the zamindari system should go. Venkatagiri Raja gave a notice to the paper on that account. When Gandhi came to Vijayawada on March 31, 1919, this Association presented him a citation in which the problems faced by the ryots were mentioned and pledged their support to non-cooperation movement. The ryot Conference of Duggirala division, Tenali taluka was held on April 16, 1919 at Emani. The ryots got agitated when the Government decided in 1918 to enhance the water cess and issued notices. Several meetings were held and memoranda submitted opposing such a measure which was stalled that time. Presiding over the 44th Godavari District Conference, May 6-8, 1919, at Pithapuram, Duggirala Suryaprakasa Rao said, 'The quinquennial enhancement of local cess and water rate for the second time (1918) threatened the lives of the peasantry and they were temporarily stopped due to the ryots agitation.' He
also deplored the divisive tendencies between the Brahmins and the Non-Brahmins. 26

At the 29th Krishna District Conference, held at Pedakallepalli, Divi taluka, under the presidency of Kanuri Venkatachalspathi, a resolution was passed stating the ryots' problems in about 800 zamindari villages cultivating 15 lakhs of acres. It declared 'The Conference demands the Government to take over the zamindari lands and provide a permanent source of income to the zamindars.' 27 The Cannavaram Taluka Ryots' Association asked the peasants to attend in large number the 8th Andhra Provincial Conference which was to be held on May 19-21, 1920 at Mahanandi in Kurnool district. The President and the Secretary of the Association wanted to bring forth the ryots' problems, and particularly the question of permanently fixing the land revenue. 28 It later held its conference at Aatkuru on 27 June 1920. It had asked for Permanent Settlement of land shist on ryotwari lands, for the maintenance and supervision of the tanks and canals in the zamindari villages by the Government and for the establishment of an enquiry commission to go into the wretched conditions of the ryots in the zamindari villages. 29
In Nellore, the delegates at the District Conferences from the beginning discussed the ryots' problems and passed several resolutions related to indebtedness, shist remissions, irrigation projects, forest and pasture problems, etc. In 1918, when the land shist was enhanced after inquiries in Kovuru, the ryots that time had agitated against the 'unjust shist enhancement' and consequently the amount was decreased. After the 9th District Conference held at Atmakuru in 1919, a ryots' deputation under the leadership of Kasaveeraju Narasinga Rao met the Governor of Madras on 18 December 1919, when the latter came to Nellore and submitted a memorandum on ryots' problems. The editorial of the Nellore Patrika (February 28, 1920 issue) cautioned: 'The existing land revenue systems of the Government are causing serious discontent among the ryots. The Government is not taking note of this and no positive results are seen from the debates in the Legislative Council on this matter. The condition of the poor peasants is extremely deplorable.'

The Congress election manifesto issued from Madras in connection with the 1920 elections assured
that 'Congress will work for the stabilisation of the ahists, for streamlining the payments strictly according to the laws and for protection to the ryotwari landowners in the courts. It also promised to find out the necessary measures to reduce the present burden over the poor peasantry.34 Suggestions were made in the press to end the 'defective system of land revenue settlement'. One of them, written under the caption, 'Land Revenue and Coming Elections', proposed the abolition of land tax altogether and introduction of a tax on the income from land which goes beyond a certain limit.35 Appeals were made through press and local conferences to all ryots that they should elect persons to the Madras Legislative Council who were known for their sympathy and affiliation to the cause of the ryots.35 Sankara Venkateswara Rao, Secretary to the Gannavaram Teluka Ryots' Association outlined the issue which the aspirants in the elections should accept.37

For the first time a fervent appeal was made and a coherent scheme was presented in Nellore in 1920 for founding an association for the zamindari ryots. In an 'Appeal to the Zamindari Ryots', one
Nodandaram Reddi from Ojili (Nayudupeta) asked that when zamindars formed their association to protect their interests, was 'it not necessary for the zamindari ryots to form into an association for the betterment of their conditions and rights?' In Venkaagiri zamindari the ryots, due to their jealousies and mutual conflicts were not able to submit petitions to the officials, and even when they were submitted the officials were often ignoring them. He wrote, 'It is everyone's knowledge that the state of zamindryots, compared to ryotwari ryots, is miserable. There is no alternative to endeavour for the improvement of our conditions than to form a zamindari ryots' association. If the association is formed on a strong foundation not only will we have the opportunity to submit petitions to the government, the government also will undertake gradually to notice the ryots' problems.' This appeal asked the important persons among the zamindari ryots to meet as early as possible to discuss the matter and start the necessary activity and arrangements to establish the zamindryots association in Nellore district. It expressed the belief that the zaminder would also cooperate in this effort.
In the same year, i.e. 1920, a journal called Ryotu was started from Tenali (Guntur District) under the editorship of Tripuraneni Ramaswamy Chowdary, an important leader of the non-Brahmin movement.\(^{39}\)

In 1921, the First Madras Ryotwari Landholders' Conference was held in Madras under the Presidentship of Cattamanchi Ramalinga Reddi, a leading Congress figure (who later distinguished himself as the Vice-Chancellor of the Andhra University).\(^{40}\)

In the Madras Legislature also questions were raised from 1920 related to ryots' problems with the efforts of Venkataratnam Pantulu, Mocherla Ramachandra Rao, Kanuri Venkatsachalapathi, etc.\(^{41}\)

The ryot-zaminder antagonism was also becoming manifest. In 1922 the ryots of Advaram village in the Bobbili zamindari refused to pay shists since they were not provided with pattas. The estate launched criminal cases in Courts on twenty-one ryots including Simha Suryanarayana, who later became a peasant leader. The accused were given different punishments but the Collector admonished the estate officials to grant pattas immediately.\(^{42}\)

In Venkatagiri estate also ryots went to Court for shist remissions and partially won their case.\(^{43}\)

In fact, some peasant
leaders trace back the beginning of such confrontation to the Chokkalingam Pillai's case of 1870 in which the High Court held that the ryot was a yearly tenant and no more - a judgement which adversely affected the ryots' interests.

Thus, by the year 1920 in Andhra there was an ardent feeling among the ryots about the necessity to form associations to redress their grievances. All the taluka, district and provincial Conferences were discussing the agrarian problems, voicing their support to ryot demands and passing resolutions expressing their readiness to resist more taxes, to secure better irrigation and drainage facilities - other issues being credit facilities, cooperative societies, provision for fertilizers and machinery, etc. The ryot associations were firm to take a right place under the constitution, to have ryot representatives in the law-making bodies, to make the government to see its responsibility towards the zamindari ryots and the non-cooperation in principle was accepted. The air filled with peasant discontentment and their new aspirations were portentously whistling at the
doors of the zamindars and the Government. The main forms of articulating their demands were moderate in tone and constitutional — sending deputations, submitting memoranda to the officials, holding meetings, writing in papers and raising questions in the Council.

IV. The Non-Cooperation and After:

It was in such an atmosphere the petty ryots, weavers and labourers of Chirala-perala, two neighbouring villages in the Bapatla taluka of Guntur district, with a population of 15,000 (1919) had launched a non-tax campaign in March 1921 under the leadership of Duggirala Gopalkrishnayya, a popular Congress leader in the area, to persuade the Government headed by the Justice Ramarayaingar, whose party was opposed to the Congress and its mass movement, to cancel the Chirala municipality status which tremendously increased the burden of local taxation. In Palnad, another area of Guntur district, a Civil Disobedience Campaign was launched in July 1921 by organising a social boycott of the forest and revenue officials and sending their cattle into the forests without paying the grazing fee imposed by the Government.
Although attempts were made to launch no-tax campaigns in Guntur, Krishna and Godavari districts, it was only effectively organised in Guntur; even here it was more effective in Pedanandipadu firka of Bapatla taluk than elsewhere. Conducted perfectly on bourgeois-democratic lines of non-violent non-cooperation it had achieved almost complete success as by the time it was called off in February 1922; not even five per cent of the total revenue demand was collected. The significant aspects of the campaign were that (i) the peasants determinedly stood the harassments meted out to them by the government officials, (ii) the leader of the campaign was a rich peasant himself, and (iii) the Congress leadership was divided and double-minded; the state leadership including Prakasam and central leadership under Gandhi asking the district Congress leaders and people not to launch such a campaign, and, afterwards, to withdraw it. When the campaign was abruptly withdrawn on 10th February, without even discussing the issue with the ryot representatives, on instructions from Gandhi, the ryots failed to 'adjust themselves' and in some villages the ryots continued the campaign and were slow in paying the revenue dues. In the
Police firing, at Minchalapadu (Palnad) on February 26, 1922, on the peasant families, who were attempting to rescue their cattle impounded by the forest officers, three persons were killed, including a woman. The leader of the struggle Kanneganti Hanumanthu was killed after he was called for negotiations.

Not even six months had passed after the withdrawal of non-cooperation movement, the tribal peasants in the Rampa sub-division of the Visakhapatnam and Godavari Agency broke out in a rebellion in August 1922. It was mainly because of the long sufferings due to the restrictions imposed by the British on the rights of tribal peasants upon the forest products and to cultivate land as large portions of forests became reserves. This armed rebellion, under the leadership of Alluri Sitaramaraju, who was inspired by the ideal of Swaraj, lasted for nearly two years. The non-cooperation movement, despite the hesitant attitude of the Congress leadership and its inability to launch it on a wider scale and particularly its unwillingness to extend the campaign to the zamindari areas, aroused the consciousness of the peasant masses and brought them into the mainstream of national movement. The experience of mass
participation in the Pedanandipadu no-tax campaign was a prelude to larger struggle in the future politics in Andhra Region.

Peasants' unrest and the efforts to organise them did not subside though the non-cooperation movement was abruptly withdrawn. In 1923, a ryot Conference was held in Appikatla under the presidency of Paturi Venkatapayya. Here the Guntur District Ryot Association was formed. Ranga said that the aim of the Association was to gain control over Government and political power by the peasants, who constituted a majority in the society. It was also discussed here about to whom the ryots should vote in the ensuing elections towards the end of 1923. A 'Peasant Pledge' was drafted with the cooperation of Gollapudi Sitarama Satre, a Congress leader. It was claimed that the ryots had voted to those candidates who swore by this pledge and defeated the Justice Party candidates. Between 1923-28, the 'Peasant-minded' Congressmen like Ranuri Venkatachalapati, Maganti Seethaiah, Duggirala Suryapakasa Rao, Maganti Bapineedu, etc., were propagating the necessity of forming ryot associations. In Ongole a ryot association was formed to take up famine-relief
measures in the area during 1926-27. The Guntur Taluk Ryot Association Secretary Pingali Suryanarayana with the help of Ranga, who was the Irrigation Board Secretary until his arrest during the anti-resettlement campaign in 1931, 'achieved' the Pedavadlapudi project which provided irrigation to 25,000 acres, like wise the Appapuram project in Bapatla taluk was granted. When the Government imposed additional shift on the Guntur district ryots, the ryot association, with the support of Gollapudi Sitarama Shastri and P.V. Krishnayya Chowdary and with the help of the Congress, agitated against it and the Government suspended the collection of the additional amount. N.B. Needu, who wanted to organise ryot associations on the lines of European and American ryot associations, appealed in 1928 for immediately setting up of 'Andhra Ryot Association' with units at taluk and District levels, in the service of the ryots and to express opinion on their problems such as (a) resettlement, (b) to bring the ryots' problems to the notice of legislative members, (c) marketing agencies, (d) long-term loans, and (e) agricultural implements, fertilizers, seeds, etc.
In 1924 the Madras Government began a reassessment of the Krishna, East and West Godavari districts, as it did earlier during 1868 and 1898, and revised rates of land revenue were to be implemented from 1929. But in view of the considerable opposition to the previous resettlement in 1898 and also the Pedanandipad no-tax campaign due to high land revenue grievances, the Government of Madras appointed B.G. Holdsworth as Special Settlement Officer for the Krishna-Godavari operation. Taking into account the rise in prices, without noting the rise in production costs, he had recommended (1926) that the land revenue may be enhanced at the rate of 3 annas for a rupee or $3 per cent (see Chapter One). The rich ryots, who had profited during the years of favourable prices were not willing to part away more produce than they did. These sections also in a position, as they were on firmer financial and social grounds, to organise the various sections of the peasantry against the increase in the settlement rates.

The Krishna District Ryot Association held on February 5, 1928, at Machilipatnam (Guduru Lakshmana
Rao Pantulu presided) stated: 'The tax burden on the peasants was heavy in this district. A majority of them were sinking due to the debt problems, whereas the agricultural expenditure and cost of living were increasing. The Government's attempt to enhance the land shist and water rates through resettlement is beyond reason and should therefore be stopped.' Important Congress leaders like Prakasam wrote on 'Resettlement' criticising the enhancement attempts.

V. *Anti-Resettlement Campaign and the Formation APRA*

The Bardoli Satyagraha had begun in 1928 again; the enhancement of revenue rates, which was of some inspiration to the peasant and Congress leaders in Andhra, both of whom denounced the 'Resettlement'. At the Andhra Provincial Congress Committee annual meeting on 7 July 1928, Prakasam explained the history of resettlement and condemned the report of the Special Officer as a perversion of truth. He wanted that an extensive propaganda should be carried on in the districts explaining the question of land revenue and resettlement to the ryots. Speaking as if the
Government was concerned with the welfare of the peasants, he urged that every village should hold a meeting and collect facts and figures with reference to their debts, agricultural income and expenditure and thus the Government should be made known of the 'defective inquiry'. Bulusu Sambamurthy, also a member of CWC, moved the following resolution:

The Andhra Provincial Congress Committee resolves that the order the Board of Revenue to levy three annas enhanced rate in the rupee in the districts of Krishna, West Godavari and East Godavari in the settlement is entirely unjust, unconstitutional and unbearable; that the Government had no right to impose taxes without the consent of the people; that therefore the Andhra Provincial Congress Committee should carry on intensive propaganda and educate the people and avoid the imposition of the extra resettlement rate by all peaceful and legislative means.50

In moving the resolution Sambamurthy made an appeal to fight out once for all the question of land revenue policy. The attention of the masses should be attracted by agitation on this important issue, he said. Since the resolution only says to
'avoid' the imposition of the enhancement, Pattabhi Seetharamayya wanted to know whether they should preach about the non-payment of extra-rate or not. To this, A. Kellaswara Rao responded by saying that the issue was not paying or not the extra rates. His point was that the opinion of the country should be sounded first by educating the ryots thoroughly on the question of land revenue policy of the Government. If strenuous agitation was carried on and if the Government recognised its fault and retraced its steps their task was done. 'The Congress as the trustee of the nation should help the ryot population in their hour of need to agitate for the cancellation of the extra tax'. Thus Congress politics in his view was not to organise the ryots and lead their agitation, but limited to help the ryots in their agitation. K. Venkatappayya proposed, on the lines of the Bardoli campaign, to select a small area in the three districts where the whole energy would be concentrated. But Prakasam wanted that the ryots should be educated enough to enable them to gauge the situation themselves and in this process presenting petitions to the Government was necessary. He said that if the whole ryot popula-
tion in these three districts spoke with one voice, it would 'produce a change in the mentality of the Government'. The above resolution was then carried without any opposition and a sub-committee was appointed to give effect to the resolution. The point to be noted here is that despite the differences and equivocality in the views of the important Congress leaders regarding initiation and intensity of the campaign, there was the common recognition of the need to attract the countless peasant masses into the Congress politics and ideology by linking their immediate problems with the freedom movement. But they were not ready and even opposed to impart a militant character to the agrarian discontentment and desirous of launching limited agitations to effect change in the thinking of the Government.

In August 1928 Pandu Narayana Raju founded and became the Chairman of the West Godavari Anti-Resettlement Campaign Committee. He and Venkata Satyanarayana, a Congress leader from East Godavari, went on a visit, sponsored by a Committee of Ryots and Landowners of Krishna, West and East Godavari districts, which met in January 1929, to Bardoli to
observe the movement there. The Government under the popular pressure appointed an Economic Enquiry Committee to report to the Government of Madras on the resettlement of the East Godavari, West Godavari and Krishna districts consisting of members from the Legislative Council with R.N. Arogyaswamy Mudaliyar as President and N.C. Ranga as Secretary (who was not a Congress member at that time). Meetings were held at village, firka and taluka levels during the itinerary of the EEC. Attendance was consistently good and in Ramachandrapuram, Rajahmundry, Amalapuram and Razolu taluks of East Godavari district; even small meetings attracted 500-600 people. The tone of the speeches was quite radical and in each case the main resolution was to resort to Satyagraha against the new measures. Influential and rich ryots had provided a lot of support for the meetings, the Chairmen of local boards, professionals (particularly lawyers), merchants and caste leaders were also present. The matter came up for consideration before the East Godavari District Conference and Andhra Provincial Political Conference held in November 1929. A resolution was passed at the letter that in case the government undertook to collect the enhanced taxes the ryots should be asked not to pay. The mover of
the resolution observed: 'It is not impossible to create in Andhra country conditions similar to those in Bardoli and therefore adequate attempts should be made in that direction from this forward'.

The HEC submitted its report stating that wages of labour had increased by 150 per cent, the cost of cultivation by 300 per cent, the margins available for maintenance of the cultivator's family after paying the assessments were inadequate and the majority of the peasants were in debt and losing their hold on land. The report vehemently opposed any further enhancement of assessment through resettlement. The release of this report played an important role for building a strong case for agitation, convincing the people of the impending burden and in providing grist to the Congress leaders to stir the peasantry into the CDM. In the wet regions of Guntur also there was considerable interest in the anti-resettlement campaign because land revenue assessment in these areas were to be reviewed in the early 1930s. The 1930-31 Civil Disobedience campaign was most intense and the district salt marches were effective where resettlement campaign had been most successful.
Meanwhile, the first Andhra Rashtra Ryotu Mahasabha was held in July end and August 1st of 1928 in Cuntur. Bikkina Venkataratnam, MLA, presided over the meeting. He spoke on lack of investment in agriculture by the government, lack of encouragement for using better technique seeds and fertilizers and also the need to make the cooperative movement more effective in order to meet the money demands of the peasants. B.V. Ratnam and M.B. Needu were elected the President and the Secretary respectively. The second conference was held at Vijayawada in 1929. N.G. Ranga was the President. He urged the ryots 'to consolidate the ryot associations in order to establish peasant state power' or peasant control over the Government. Mere national independence would not give complete protection to the peasantry nor obviate the necessity of peasant state. The third was held in 1931 at Bapatla. Dandu Narayana Raju was the President. N.G. Ranga, Bapinesedu, Chalasani Satyanarayana were elected as Secretaries.

When the first phase of the CEM was coming to an end, the Board of Revenue opined that the EEC's conclusions on vital points had little to
commend them and that 'the proposals in the Scheme Report are based on sound grounds and that there is every justification for introducing the rates proposed therein.'  

By this time the economic Depression had set in and the new settlement rates became all the more threatening. Politically the Gandhi-Ir in Pact in March 1931 had dissipated the enthusiasm of many a Congress workers. Gandhi advised the Congressmen of Andhra 'not to start a no-tax campaign as a protest against the new land revenue settlement in the Godavaris and Kishma and wanted that such a campaign should, if necessary, be started by separate ryots' organisations.'  

There was also a factional fight between the 'moderates' group led by V. Ramdas Pantulu and the other group led by Ranga to capture the provincial ryot association. Ranga's efforts were aimed at to become the Congress leader and to capture the Congress on the strength of the ryot associations. By October 1931, the APRA passed completely into the hands of moderates and Justicites and V. Ramdas Pantulu became its President. N. Prasada Rao notes that one reason for the slow growth of the ryot associations until this period was that the leadership of these associations
was in the hands of landlords. These leaders were interested in only using these associations to secure place and position in the Legislature and in general politics. Ranga, who could float new organisations whenever he feels necessary, started along with others, Peasant Protection Committee, which first came into existence in June 1931. He writes: 'From that time till 1935 when the APRA came to be captured by the socialist-minded workers, it was the Peasant Protection Committee that kept up the militant attitude and tactics of our peasants' movement, maintained morale of our peasantry even when many Congress workers were demoralised by the overwhelming ordinances, devised and developed the Peasant Marches...and mapped out the vast Andhra country with a fine network of taluk and district organisations....' A Resettlement Committee was formed with Dandu Narayana Raju and M. Rapineedu as President and Secretary respectively. It included leaders like N.C. Ranga (who became a member of the Central Assembly in 1930, representing two Godavaris and Krishna districts), Komareddi Satyanarayana Murthy, Buggirela Balarama Krishnasayya, M. Tirumala Rao, T. Prakasam, G. Brahmayya and some other Congress and Kisan leaders.
The Resettlement Committee jointly with PPC gave a call against the payment of enhanced rates and launched the protest agitations against the upward revision of revenue rates. The first Kisan Day was celebrated on 1st September all over the Andhra. Such kind of celebrations were the first of its kind in India. In October, several ryot meetings were held and new ryot organisations were formed not only in these three districts but also in Nellore, Cuntur and Visakhapatnam districts. Anti-Resettlement Day was observed throughout Andhra on 1st November 1931. A School was run for fifteen days for training organisers and propagandists for this agitation. Sevadale were formed (voluntary squads) under the leadership of K.S.N. Murthy for carrying on agitation in the villages. The Government pursued its repressive policy, which it unleashed in June 1930 by banning the Congress Committees at various levels. In November 1931, the Government arrested eight top leaders of the agitation, including Ranga, who already became famous for the Satyagraha in the Venkatagiri zamindari, Duggirala Balaramakrishnayya, Bapinesedu, etc. But the Government failed to collect the full 18.75 per cent
enhancement and in the end had accepted to suspend the collection of enhancement until the inauguration of the 1935 Reforms. When the Congress Ministry came to power in Madras Presidency in 1937, the system of carrying resettlements was abolished.

The very launching of anti-resettlement campaign in 1928-29 when the prices of foodgrains were considerably high shows that the peasantry by that time was ready to move into action to protect its interests and the leadership was able to discern the link between agrarian question and the national movement and the agitational potential of the peasants in the countryside. The Government's decision to implement the enhanced assessment despite the unfavourable report by the EEC and the onset of Depression, no doubt, had added vigour to the campaign. But interestingly the resettlement campaign was not widespread during the second phase of the Civil Disobedience campaign launched by Gandhi in 1932, though the Depression became severe and had telling effects on the agrarian economy. This might be due to the organisational weakness, and was evident from the fact that the campaign became weak with the arrest
of some top leaders. It was also partially due to the merger of peasant discontent into the larger national struggle. However, this agitation had contributed not only for the consolidation of the ryot associations and the Congress, but also for throwing up new leaders and experience of a relatively widespread peasant agitation.

The Andhra Provincial Peasant Protection Committee (Ranga was the President, G. Brahmayya and Nukala Veeraraghavaiah were secretaries) met on 24th November 1934, and passed a resolution for the abolition of zamindari (APZRA had already passed such a resolution) and for the necessary constitutional reforms. In another resolution, it demanded that 'like Government made law on trade unions for the protection of workers, the Government and the Zamindars should recognise the needs of the ryots and that the Government has the duty of making such a law relating to ryots' associations.'70 With these demands the Committee observed a Peasant Protection Week from November 29 to December 9, 1934. District ryot conferences and several other ryot meetings held during the ryot week propagated that the oppressive situation of the ryots was due to their lack of influence upon and right to participate in the govern-
ment. They had to realise that unless they stand on their strength there was no solution to their grievances. So long as the alien rule continues, their aim will not materialise and hence the necessity to struggle for self-rule.71 Ranga was elected in October 1934 to the Central Assembly. Earlier in June at the first Andhra Provincial Congress Socialist meeting (held in Vijayawada on June 23, 1934) he was elected as the President. But when the APCC made him as the Candidate in the elections (1934), to represent the Cuntur and Nellore districts, he resigned from the CSP as its policy would not allow him to contest the elections. As a member of the Legislative Assembly, he had organised in 1935 the Peasant Group of MLAs and became its Secretary. He wrote that 'many of its members are erstwhile landlords and big men of the country and large vested interests.'72 Through the Peasants Group 'an effort was sought to be made to create public opinion from the forum of Legislative Assembly on various peasants' problems.' Ranga was then elected as the President of the Andhra Provincial Ryots' Association at the 4th Andhra Rashtra Ryotu Mahasabha, held in Visakhapatnam on December 30, 1934. In his inaugural speech, D.N. Raju demanded that the
taxes should be on the net incomes of the peasants, and also asked for shifting remission up to 37 per cent. It was resolved (i) to set up ryot associations on the lines of trade unions, and (ii) to work for the development of zamindar ryot movement all over Andhra. Prior to this conference, the Nellore District Ryot Conference asked the Congress to spend more of its time in the work of building ryot associations.73

The Ryot Association had organised a campaign against the failure of the Government to relieve the agrarian distress due to indebtedness. On May 12, 1935 the Andhra Provincial Rural Indebtedness Relief Conference was held at Vijayawada. The Conference demanded that no person should be sent to jail for debt arrears, for scrapping of debts due to buying of land from 1931 and reduction of tax burden in the zamindari areas. Vemavarapu Ramadas Pantulu spoke at the meeting.74 Ranga wrote that there had been agitations for debt relief since 1931.75 In 1932-33, Ranga and others started the Village Panchayat Movement. They succeeded in founding 700 panchayats out of 900 villages of Guntur District alone. They demanded that the forests should be brought under the control of Panchayats. The Government was 'persuaded' to raise
the contribution from land revenue for panchayats from one-quarter anna (3 pies) to half-an-anna (6 pies) in every rupee of land revenue collected from the lands within the Panchayat. This work also helped to obtain some activists to the peasant movement and training to the peasants in the management of their own affairs.

The South Indian Federation of Peasants and Agricultural Labourers' Associations was organised on 28th April 1935. The APRA, the APZRA and several other district associations were affiliated to it. It demanded, among other things: (i) for the ultimate abolition of zamindari and all other intermediary institutions between the peasant and the government, (ii) a uniform and standard rate of assessment shall be charged, (iii) peasants' unions in zamindari areas and also in other places should be statutorily recognised by the zamindars and the Government, (iv) zamindars should not be permitted to stand for general constituencies so long as they wish to have any reservation of seats, and (v) a political fund should be set up for workers and peasants to finance their electioneering for local boards, provincial and central legislatures. It also included
the demands pertaining to indebtedness, sub-tenants and agricultural workers. This long list of demands was submitted by a deputation of the Federation to the Congress President, Rajendra Prasad and pleaded that the peasants' minimum demands and their 'economic thought' should be incorporated in the Congress Programme.

With the release of several Congress, Congress Socialist and Communist leaders from the jail, the APRA's activities were revived. The APRA-organised peasant marches on 22 November and 7 December, 1935, demanding adequate land revenue remissions, opposing any further attempts to make resettlement in Guntur and Nellore districts, demanding Viceroy's signature on Inamdar Ryots' Bill and passing of Patnaik's bill for remissions, etc. Ryots were asked to take festive processions in groups not less than five persons through the streets of the villages. The innumerable village, taluka and district ryots conferences and the peasant marches made the Madras Government to yield to grant some remissions.
The All-India Conference of Peasant Activists was held at Madras on 17th October 1935 in an attempt, as Ranga claimed 'to lay foundations for the organisation of the All-India Peasants' Federation'. Kameshadevi Chattopadhyaya gave the inaugural speech. In his Presidential speech Ranga said: 'Both the Government and the Congress have realised the necessity of going into consultation with industrialists, commercial interests, industrial workers, planters and landlords because they have fairly well-organised national organisations with provincial units. Peasants alone, excepting the agricultural workers, lack an all-India organisation supported by Provincial and District Committees to ascertain their views and to take concerted action'.

The Andhra Provincial Kisan Committee met on 8 November 1935 at Vijayawada and gave directions to Kommareddi Setyanarayana and Pidikiti Ramakotiah, secretaries of APRA and Ranga, its President, to register the association which was registered on 11 June 1936 under the Act XXI of 1860 with its official headquarters at Nidubrolu.

VI. The Formation of Andhra Provincial Zamin Ryot Association and the Initial Struggles:

As we have already seen that a definite change
was taking place in the social and political relations in the zamindari areas, from that of awe and submission among the ryots to the zamindars to one of simmering protest and determination to secure their rights. Attempts were made and appeals were broadcast for the formation of zamindari ryots' associations. In 1928, an Association of the zamindari ryots called 'The Andhra Provincial zamindari ryots' Association' was brought into existence. The first inaugural Conference was held at Elora on 14th August 1929. The Convenor, R. Mandeswara Sharma, narrated various grievances of the zamindari ryots and the baneful effects of the zamindari system and explained the necessity of launching a provincial zamindari ryots' movement. Andhra Provincial Zamindari Ryots' Association was then formally constituted 'for protecting the rights and safeguarding the interests of the Andhra Zamin Ryots'. B. Venkatapathi Raju, R. Mandeswara Sharma became the President and General Secretary respectively. A Standing Committee 'containing influential ryots and publicmen of various districts' was set up. They were unanimous that the Madras Estates Lands Act had failed to safeguard the ryots' interests, and therefore, appealed that the members of the Madras
Legislative Council should throw out all grants demanded by the Government and a Private Bill should be drafted on the question.87

Soon after this conferences were held in several places and district and local zamin ryot associations were formed. Viswanath Das worked for the formation of zamin ryot associations in Visakhapatnam, Ganjam and Godavari districts. The Ganjam District zamin ryot meeting was held in February 1930 and resolved that the district association should become a branch of Andhra Zamin Ryots' Association. The Nellore district zamin ryot association was initiated on 19 October 1929.88

On March 9, 1930, a zamin ryots' meeting was held at Mallam, Venkatagiri zamindari, and was attended by V. Raghavaiah, Nelloru Venkata Rama Naidu, Baddepudi Venkatanarayana Reddi (who later defeated Venkatagiri zamindar in the 1937 elections) and others, though the zaminder tried to prevent the meeting.89 At Umagala 1500 ryots held at a meeting on 30 January 1930 to protest against the unbearable rule of the zaminder. While B. Viswanatha Das presided, M.V. Naidu and Sankara Venkataramaiah, District Ryot Association Secretary spoke at the meeting.
against the zamindori system. In that meeting the Munagala Zamin Ryot Association was formed. Details of the meeting were published in *Swarajya* (2 Feb. 1930), *Andhra Patrika* and *Desa Seva.* On March 22, 1930 nearly 3000 zamin ryots had a meeting at Munagala village under the presidency of Norni Venkateswarlu. Some village *karnams* also had participated in the meeting. A district level meeting of the Nellore zamin ryots was held in Alluru under the Presidentship of Tikkavarapu Rami Reddi on 14 May, 1931. Katikoneni Venkatarama Rao became the Secretary of the Nellore District Zamin Ryots' Association. The West Godavari zamin ryot conference was held on 27 August 1931 in Tanuku. Kannuri Venkatachalapathi was the President.

It is interesting to go through an essay written by the General Secretary of APZRA, R.M. Sharma on 'The Peasants' Movement'. It was an essay combining Hindu religious and philosophical concepts in an egalitarian approach and asserting Peasants' demands, including land reforms from that framework. He wrote that the aim of the peasant movement was to be attained through the spiritual unity of the eternal with the
human spirit (advaita) and through this harmony consecrate the economic life of the peasantry. The peasant fulfils his obligation to the society most effectively only when he acts in his collectivity, thus incarnating his Dharma; or in other words the ryots' organisation incarnates the higher purpose of peasantry. He also demanded that the land reforms should be done immediately with the following measures: every cultivating family should hold at least five acres of land; capital should be provided and the modern agricultural methods should be properly available; and the land tax should be according to the economic status of the agriculturist.\textsuperscript{93} An appeal was made through the Zamin Ryotu to the Ryots to vote in the election (1930) only to those who were willing to cooperate and support to make necessary amendments to the R	extit{EL} Act.

One of the early peasant protest movements, in any zamindari in Andhra, took place in M	extit{and}asa estate where the ryots of Haripuram, Ambugaoon, Telapradha, Madanapuram and Pidim	extit{and}asa agitated in 1930 against the heavy cash rents fixed by the settlement in 1922, which increased the demand in each village by many folds.\textsuperscript{94} They even went to the High Court.
When the sub-collector, Tahsildar, Police and estate staff went to Madanapuram to collect shist dues and attach properties, the ryots en masse deserted the village. The estate suspended eight village munsiffs for their failure to force the bankrupt peasants to pay the rent areas in time.95

The First Conference of APZRA: In such a situation was held the first Andhra Provincial Zamin Ryot Conference on 8th September 1931, at Venkatagiri. Open sessions were held with 5000 people under the Congress flags, in violation of the Section 144 Cr.P.C. which was imposed in the area to prevent the Conference (Kumararaja of Gampalagudem attended the Conference). In his Presidential speech Ranga demanded the total scrapping of the zamindari system, arranging necessary financial provision for the zamindars.96 He said that Gandhian was opposed to zamindari system and because illusions persist among Congressmen regarding the matters dealing with the zamindars, the Congress, at Bombay session, rejected the proposals moved by Viswanath Das, for the abolition of zamindari, and T. Viswanatham, for gradual abolition of the zamindari.97 The conference then resolved:
The aim of the Andhra Provincial Zamin Ryots Association is to work towards the final elimination of all the zamindaris and intermediaries between the peasants and the Government through legislative action. 98

An enquiry committee to go into the economic conditions of the zamindari ryots was also set up (it did not seem to have submitted its final report). The Conference exhorted the ryots to enlist themselves as members of the Association. A report with the details of the Conference, the promulgation of Section 144 Cr.P.C. by the Government under the instigation of the Venkatagiri zamindar, and mal-administration in different zamindaris was forwarded to Jawaharlal Nehru, the then General Secretary of the Congress, who wrote back: 'You should try your best to establish ryot associations and merge them into Congress.' 99

In the same month Nellore Zilla Zamin Ryots Conference was held. The membership fee was fixed at one anna. On 3 October, 1931 the first Venkatagiri Zamin Ryots Association convention was held in Nopuru attended by 3000 peasants. It demanded that the sufficient pasture lands should be given without grazing tax to the cultivators. On the rest of the pastures the village as a whole should be given
permanent patta with two annas per acre as shist. The zamindari revenue assessments should be made as they were done in the ryotwari regions categorising the lands into dry and wet. The minimum demands they had listed were: (i) the zamin ryots should have some agricultural and civil rights as their brethren under the Government, (ii) the zaminder should cooperate in amending the MEL Act and (iii) a people's committee should be set up and all the expenditure of the estate should be ratified by it. It was also resolved that the ryots should elect only Congress nominees to Legislatures and local bodies. One important feature to be noted is that in the villages where the zamin ryot associations were formed at the same time the Congress units were also established.

During the initial days of the formation of the ZR Associations it was, however, difficult to find even office bearers in some places. The peasants were afraid and hesitant to attend the association meetings. They were not united and still leaned and 'partial' towards the zamindars and moneyed classes and against the propertyless and agricultural workers. Even the AP ZRA Committee meetings had to be postponed at several times due to lack of quorum. This showed
the state of organisation in many places. The
Zamin Ryotu was not in a good shape and appeals
were made for sympathetic donations.\(^1\) It how-
ever had 2000 subscribers. The leading papers like
Andhra Patrika, Krishna Patrika, The Hindu, Swarajya,
were indifferent to zamin ryot movement. "They
were not ready to write about and expose the atro-
cities by the zamindars. Even the leadership of the
zamin ryots in the initial years was more inclined to-
wards the zamindars than the ryots.\(^1\) T. Prakasam,
contrary to his promise, did not attend the Munagala
zamin ryot conference in 1920. A. Keleswara Rao along
with the Sub-Collector and some others in fact, partic-
cipated in a parallel meeting for unveiling Munagala
Reja's photo at Naidigudem hospital organised by the
Zaminder against the ryots' conference.\(^1\)

Venkatagiri Satyagraha: The first open and organised
confrontation between a zamindar and the peasants took
place in Venkatagiri zamindari in the year 1931. A
tussle was going on between the ryots and the zaminder
from 1923, in the year in which the ryots agitated for
remissions for that year due to poor harvests. Twenty
eight ryots went to the Court. After considerable
hardship and financial trouble to the peasants and the
and the zamindar, the estate officials accepted to reduce the shilt in kind. There were also two important judgements during this period related to the Venkatagiri estate, which gave encouragement for the peasants' agitation. By 1930 the zamindar ryots association was formed and the ryots' agitation to achieve for their minimum demands started in September-October 1931. In October the peasants of Venkatagiri launched a Satyagraha (conducted by N.G. Ranga). The zamindar refused to meet the ryots' delegation because he thought that any such talks would imply the recognition of the zamindar ryots' association. The Hindu, Andhra Patrika, Swarajya, commented that it was unwise on the part of the zamindar not to recognise ryots' association. B. Viswanath Das appealed to the Government to intervene in the affairs of Venkatagiri zamindari, since it was the duty of the Government to protect the ryots. The Nellore DCC met on 10 December 1931 and appealed to both the zamindar and the ryots to arrive at a compromise with mutual accommodation and understanding. It asked them to abide by the verdict of a Government officer not below the rank of a Collector and that the Government should not use its police forces on the side of any party.
Tension prevailed when the ryots sent their cattle to the government pastures instead of zamindar’s pastures and the estate employees obstructed and impounded them. Civil and criminal cases were lodged against the ryots. Venkatagiri Raja impressed upon the government officials that the agitation was instigated by the Congress people. The Government rushed special police forces and set up temporary police stations in eight villages. Finally a compromise was worked out on 1 September, 1932 between the zaminder and the ryots. Accordingly:

(a) Grazing tax per goat was reduced from 5 to 2 annas;
(b) Pasture tax was reduced;
(c) Certain shikaris (forest area reserved for hunting purposes by the zaminder) were exempted for cattle grazing;
(d) Vetti was stopped;
(e) Road cess was halved;
(f) Interest rates were fixed at 6 per cent;
(g) Twenty five cases lodged against the ryots during the ten months of agitation were withdrawn;
(h) Police had dropped security cases against ryot leaders. 109

This was the first agitational success for the zamir. ryots and this episode injected some confidence
to the ryot movement. Then in October from 23 to 30, 1932, a Zamin Ryot Week was observed. Several meetings were held in Venkatagiri, Pithapuram, Parlekimidi estates opposing the Government's Bill to amend the MEL Act, which was highly dissatisfying. The Nellore Zamindari Ryots' Association had meanwhile decided to contest the local board elections. Ranga wrote that the Justice ministry was making economic and political decisions only at the signals by and to the satisfaction of the zamindars. The cooperative societies and lend mortgage banks were not allowed to start in the zamindari villages. The zamindars were dominating the local boards in different districts. In general constituencies the ryots, traders and merchants could not compete with the zamindars in the elections. The zamindars above all, has special representation in the legislatures - having six seats. The majority of the voters were peasants and middle class urban residents. Ranga commented that the peasants still did not give up 'their servile mentality, of respecting the zamindars. The ryots would get adequate importance and representation only when they get organised, become independent to work for their association and able to disobey the zamindars.' The candidates of the ryot association, Katikaneni Kalyana
Rao and Baddepudi Venkatanarayana Reddi were also elected as Presidents of Venkatagiri and Sullurpet taluka boards. This was the first blow to the zamindars' attempt to capture and continue in political power through local bodies and legislative councils and an ominous portent to the zaminder for the years to come. This was also a victory of Ranga-type Congress politics of solely aiming at the capture of decision-making representative and legislative bodies.

The Second Ellore District Ryots Conference was held on April 2, 1933 in which nearly 7000 people participated. It was presided by Bollini Muniswamy Naidu, the former Jusstice and CM of Madras; C. Ramalinga Reddi, N.C. Ranga, etc., took part. It demanded that the debt arrears should be scrapped as the ryots were in miserable condition due to the economic depression, high rents and Court expenditures. It asked the government to amend the relevant Acts disabling zaminder or his agent to stand for elections to local bodies or legislative bodies. The second APZRA was held at Elore on 27 August 1933. A sub-committee consisting of Ranga, K.N. Sharma, and N.V. Rama Naidu (editor of Zamin Ryotu) was appointed to enquire into
the conditions of the zamin ryots (its report came out in December 1933). It asked for the appointment of ryots advisory committees in zaminderis and called upon the government for assignment of all waste lands in the zaminderis to the labouring classes for cultivation and house-sites and for the levying of import duty upon the Japanese rice. 114

In December 1933, Gandhi in his tour propagating against untouchability addressed the peasants at Venkatagiri, where, according to Ranga, he spoke in favour of the abolition of the zaminderi system. Whatever be the case, his tour and 'advices' were used and interpreted by Ranga to further the anti-zaminderi campaign. These years saw the intensification of the conflict and its expression between the ryots and the zamindar in Challapalli-palli, Munagala, Bobbili and Mandasa estates. 115

District level conferences were regularly held and ryoty varams were observed. The problems of peasants in paying the money rents, when the value of money was greatly appreciated due to the Depression were voiced. The Gajjam District Conference (December 1934; President Dukka Rajanna Reddi) said that the money-rents in Mandasa were 'unbearable' and nowhere prevailing in the Gajjam district. 'Due to low prices and worst condi-
tions of the ryots, it is necessary to give a mini-
imum of 3.0-3-0 remission or accept rent in kind.
It also suggested several measures for ending the
indebtedness of the peasantry - like setting up of
land mortgage banks; amending the moneylenders Act to
limit the interest rates to 12 per cent; providing
takkevi, cooperative and low-interest loans for the
development of agriculture.\textsuperscript{116}

The third APZRA conference was held in March
1936 at Srikakulem (presided over by Correpati Venka-
tasubbiah). It declared that he who cultivates the
land must have the right to occupancy, and on this
principle supported the inams legislation in the Legis-
lature (brought by the Justice Government), subject to
the deletion of the provision for 
\textit{mazaranas}. The
Madras Government also passed during this time the
remission amendment to the Estates Land Act without
taking note of the APZRA suggestions on the question.\textsuperscript{117}
The Conference requested the zamindars to remit 8 annas
per rupee in the rent. It also asked the ryots to vote
for the Congress candidates in the coming elections to
the Legislature and urged the Congress to adopt the
minimum demands charter of the APZRA.\textsuperscript{118}
Organizational Set Up: Organizationally, the zamin Ryots' Association was able to evolve a definite structure during this period. The formation of ryot associations throughout the Andhra was intensified. The base of the ryots' association was also getting widened as more and more peasants were ready to stand against the more powerful zamindar. It was realised by the peasant leaders that neither the government nor the zamindars would listen to the ryots unless the ryots associations were widespread and strong. Regarding the organisational structure the main features of the constitution of the APZRA were: (i) a biannual conference of the APZRA delegates who should be above sixteen years of age and subscribe to the creed of APZRA; (ii) a Central Executive consisting of upto hundred members would be elected to function for two years, which was ordinarily responsible for laying down the strategy and technique of the entire Andhra zamin ryot movement and controlling it, (iii) a Working Committee which might have upto twenty five members would discharge all the functions of the Executive during the intervals but subjected to its control; and (iv) from the Central Executive, a President, one Secretary and two Joint Secretaries would be elected. The membership fee was fixed at one anva.
VII. The Response of the Zamindars:

The Andhra Zamindars played an active role in the Congress in its initial stages at least until the beginning of the Non-Cooperation Movement. At the third session of the INC at Madras (1887), the Maha- raja of Vijayanagaram sat on the speakers platform. The Raja of Venkatagiri sent his Diwan to the session. Several other zamindars, including the zaminder of Challapalli, offered support to the Congress, either in person or through agents. They also established their own organisation — the Madras Landholders' Association — in the year 1890. The official history of AP says that in the years during the first decade of the twentieth century the leadership of the Congress in Visakhapatnam district was in the hands of zamindars 'who exercised a large amount of control over the public opinion'. K. R. V. Krishna Rao Bahadur, the zaminder of Polavaram, East Godavari District, was active among the Congress circles. The Raja of Munagala attended the Calcutta session of the Congress in December 1906. When B.C. Pel on his tour came to Vijayawada from Rajahmundry on April 25, 1907, he was the guest of the Raja of Munagala. The Raja also was the Chairman of the Reception Committee at the Krishna-
Guntur Conference at Nandigama in May 1907. He observed that 'Swaraj, Swadeshi, Boycott and national education are the four Vedas of reformers'. Raja Ankleeddu Prasada Bahadur, Zamindar of Challepalli, forwarded during this time a vague idea of trusteeship of the land by the zamindars and the ryots. Some of these zamindaries were to witness, after nearly thirty years, fierce struggles between the ryot associations and the zamindars. The zamindars' active involvement in politics would have also led to increased political awareness among certain sections of people in their zamindaris. Not only the zamindars continued their active role in the Congress through the second decade of the Present Century, they also dominated the caste and non-Brahmin associations.

But the Zamindars became restive as the political consciousness and unity among the ryots increased. They adopted a double course of endearing the ryots by way of giving some concessions on the one hand and on the other coercing them into submission by threats, imposing severe hardships and other kinds of intimidation. The Justice Party Government, which stood for the protection of the zamindars' rights, introduced and amendment Bill to the MEL Act, but the peasant leaders
were not at all satisfied with it. The British rulers, e.g. the Governor of Madras, Lord Erskine, advised the zamindars to fraternise with the peasants so as to prevent them from organising themselves into associations and voicing new demands. The then Chief Minister of Madras, Raja of Bobbili, attended the peasant conference at Tiruttani where he claimed to be the friend of peasants. During his tenure an Act was passed (1936) providing complete rights for occupancy peasants on inam lands — they would get these rights by paying one year’s shist extra to the inamdar. The Justices were so kind in granting rights to the peasants on inam lands was due to the reason that most of the holders of major inams — agraharams, shrotirooms, etc., were Brahmins. This measure of the Justice government was claimed to be a proof of its sympathy to the peasantry and, in fact, the Madras Mail criticised the Inams Act that it was on the lines of the Communist principles.

Ranga wrote that ‘divide and rule is a common policy followed by the zamindars today. Crumbs by means of petty remissions and other favours are temptations for the ryots to desert the ranks, and those who stand firm have to dearly pay.’ The peasants in Venkatagiri
were divided into 'disobedients' and 'loyalists' and the latter were normally granted remissions. Thus, the remissions, whatever granted, were not guided by any principle or policy, but as a means to corrupt and demoralise the peasants. Even some peasants considered rent remissions as cutting away zamindars' portion of money. The Venkatagiri zaminder declared that granting remissions was merely a matter of grace. The zamindars wanted to grant remissions to whomsoever they like, to the extent they like, than allowing the right to the ryots to claim as a matter of course. They are more anxious to retain in their hands as much discretionary power as possible. 

A policy of repression was let loose on the other hand in an attempt to put down and contain the growing rebelliousness and united strength of the peasantry. In some estates grazing fees were arbitrarily raised and permits to fetch wood and other forest materials were refused to the 'rebellious ryots' and their cattle were impounded by the zamindars' servants. In Venkatagiri zamindari, the 'disobedients' - those who went against the wishes of the Raja or who did not vote to 'Raja's Party' in the local Board and
Assembly elections - were implicated in several Court cases and some of their names were removed from the voters' list. The zaminder harassed the ryots with threats of Court decrees and to sign statements saying that the zamindars' rule was peaceful and comfortable to them and all that they had stated before the enquiry committees was not true. The people complained that the 'estate created parties in every village among the ryots and village factions are on the increase. The estate is not allowing the ryots to be united'.

In Bobbili estate, the officials, enraged at holding of the ryot conferences stopped water supply to some villages for two or three years. People were scared not to attend the peasant conferences; meetings were disturbed and the ryot leaders were beaten, insulted, ill-treated and hooted down by the hooligans employed by the zaminder and at times by the estate servants themselves. Often Cr.P.C. 144 Section was clamped whenever there were meetings. 'The Police was at the beck and call of the zamindars. The Bobbili Raja, who was that time the Chief Minister (1936), and his officials tried to disperse Jawaharlal Nehru's meeting at Bobbili with the aid of
The zaminder’s men at the meeting abused Nehru (then President of the Congress) and afterwards took out a procession carrying the garlands presented to Nehru on a broomstick. In Pithapuram estate ‘political differences influence the zamindars in carrying out improvements to the irrigation sources. Even in the distribution of available water, the whim or caprice of the estate officials or pettamedar governs. The right of water distribution was used as a weapon to put down the opponents.’ In Nuzvid estate the ryots were increasingly harassed on their refusal to listen to the zaminder’s advice not to become members of the Congress. In Chalapalli estate ‘the zaminder is responsible for the worst crimes that are being done by his samudars, for they interfere in village politics and thus to perpetuate zulum.’

In Munagala estate in 1930, for the ‘crime’ of participating in a ryot’s meeting the Collector, acting on the report of the Raja, suspended karanams of Repala, Karivirala and Kelakova villages for eleven months and of Akupamula village for eighteen months. They were later dismissed. The zaminder also imposed Rs.200 fine on a ryot for his participa-
tion in a meeting addressed by Viswanath Das (held on January 30, 1930). Thus, the zamindars, standing above the feudal structure whose base ironically was slowly eroded by the rule of their own allies, desperately tried to continue their powers to keep the peasants under control with all the devices of intimidation.

The general tendency among the zamindars was not to recognise the peasant associations, though in a few estates the zamindars had to recognise the associations. The zamindars refused in many places to meet the peasants, who went as the representatives of the association to talk to the zamindar. They propagated that the peasants' agitation was the handiwork of some malcontents in the estates. Zamindars who were mostly either members or supporters of the Justice Party were active in their opposition to the peasants' organisation and the Congress.

There were also some differences regarding the approach to the peasant organisation and attitude to national movement. Some zamindars recognised that the days of tyranny were ended and democracy became the ideal of the day. The Raja of Pithapuram noted with
alarm (1932) that 'the zamindars and the more powerful rulers of native states will be swept aside if collectivism or Bolshevism spreads in India. Nothing can protect them in such a situation.' He wrote that even if the Collectivism did not come, the downfall of the zamindars was inevitable because the ryots had no confidence in the zamindar and they were treating him as 'poison'. In the future the ryot and other people's representatives would gain majority in the legislatures and they could pass any decision they make. Referring to the consequences of the Russian revolution, he warned that the ryot representatives would abolish the zamindars and drive away the zamindars out of the land with the ideal of bringing all the land under government control. To avoid this, he felt that the zamindars should become the 'natural leaders' of the ryots and work for the development of the national movement. Such a line of thinking led some zamindars to join or support the Congress, especially after the complete political and electoral defeat of the Justice Party. There was also the group which thought that loyalty to the ruler was the natural characteristic of the zamindars and rejected civil disobedience and nationalism. The Venkatagiri Raja felt that the
'middlemen' were only responsible for the peasant struggles; he proposed that a committee consisting of the real representatives of both the ryots and the zamindar should be set up to settle disputes between them. 145

The continuation of the rule for a long period by the Justice Party, dominated by the zamindars, which followed the British line and opposed the nationalist movement, made the Congress in Andhra broadly to oppose the zamindars and to side with the peasantry. The Congress, however, was not ready to disassociate itself from the zamindars and launch a militant fight against them. In fact, the belief in the Gandhian approach of 'change of heart' was continued for a long time among the Congress circles and some of the peasant leaders. Mandeswara Sharma, the General Secretary of the Zamin Ryots' Association, presiding the Tenuku taluka ZR conference (5 November, 1932) said: 'With a changed heart the zamindars by themselves should initiate the necessary reforms for the welfare of the peasantry.' 146 The Congress by this time was veering round the opinion that the peasant interests have to be protected without substantially harming the zamindar's status. At the 4th Nellore district Zamin
Ryot conference on January 7, 1935, T. Prakasam said in his Presidential address that the Ryots’ Associations policy should be one of promoting mutual understanding and confidence between the zamindars and the ryots. The Nellore District Congress Committee met on June 15, 1935 expressed in a resolution its sympathy to the zamin ryots and urged the AICC to endeavour for the alleviation of the problem of the zamin ryots in Andhra. At the Krishna District Z.A. Conference, held on 25 October 1935, A. Kaleswara Rao, said that the British did two wrongs at the time of Permanent Settlement in 1802: (i) giving rights to the zamindars on the communal lands, and (ii) failing to specify peasants’ rights.

We see from the discussion in this chapter that the agrarian movement in Andhra began as a movement of the land owning middle and rich peasants and the landlords – for the reduction of revenue and water cesses in ryotwari area and for reduction of rents and formalisation of property rights to the occupancy tenants (a category which included several categories of rural population ranging from the landlords to the poor peasants) in the zaminwari area. In order to secure their interests they were opposed to the
zamindars, to the big inamdar and the colonial rulers, though they were always ready to compromise with these feudal-colonial rulers. Thus petty-bourgeois, rich peasant and the landlord sections became the base of the peasant and national movement in Andhra countryside. The initial radicalism of some of the peasant leaders like Ranga also originate from this source. This is significant in the sense that the Communists who started with agricultural labourers' movements, when took over the leadership of the agrarian movement from the hands of Congress leaders - moderate as well as radical - came to rely on the middle peasant/occupancy tenant sections to conduct the militant peasant struggles and a gradual shift can be observed in their emphasis from that of agricultural labourers' problems to mainly peasant problems, under the slogan of all peasant unity. Thus not only the peasant movement but also the Communist movement had based itself among these petty bourgeois sections in Andhra which has remained for long as an essentially agriculture-based economy.

Secondly, we also notice the emergence of leadership from the peasant castes. In the first and
second decades of the present century it was the rich-ryots who expressed their discontent against the bad rule of the zamindars and the necessity for the unity among the peasants. Though the Congress under the pressure of peasants' unrest, did provide leadership (presiding meetings etc.) in some places, later took up the question of revenue problems and sympathised with the zamin ryots, it was only the leaders coming from these castes who were interested in uniting the peasantry into independent organisations. It was this that distinguished this section (e.g. Ranga, Bapineedu, N.V.R. Naidu, Venkatarayana Reddi, Dendu Suryanarayana Raju, Bikkina Venkataratnam, Gottipati Brahmayya, etc.) from the urban based Brahmanic leadership of the Congress. It was this newly emerging leadership, some of whom were highly educated, who also became the Congress leaders and later replaced the Brahmin-dominated Congress leadership in Andhra immediately after the independence and the land reforms (abolition of zamindari, etc.). Thus during this period the leadership of the ryot organisations also remained in the hands of landlords and rich peasants.

Another prominent feature that has to be noted is the rise of N.G. Ranga's leadership. A man hailing
from a rich peasant Kamma family, he was educated in England in the years of post-Soviet Socialist revolution and returned to this country with some vague socialist ideas. His political career began with his voicing of the rich-peasant problems whose growth was stifled by the feudal and colonial modes of exploitation. He said that the peasants should strive for the capture of state power, that the peasants alone can fight the evils of feudalism, capitalism and colonialism. He wanted the peasant associations to be organised on the lines of trade unions. He proposed cooperative farming and control of panchayats over the communal and forest lands. He stood for 'peasant political power' and peasants controlling the government and for that he forwarded the slogan of peasants'-labourers' unity. He was mostly interested in winning elections, to secure positions both in the legislature and peasants' associations - and to use the strength of the peasants' associations and his position to bargain with the Congress for higher positions in the Congress Party.

Fourthly, the leadership of peasant movement conducted campaigns after enquiry into the problems of the peasants or tenants, make a list of them, publish
them in papers and propagate among the ryots. Schools were run to train propagandists and seva dals were formed to implement the plans and ryot varams were observed to propagate the demands. A definite form of organisational structure had evolved and the conferences were held at different levels. But the functioning of the organisation was not regular and proper. Though the peasant participation in the agitations and organisational activity was increasing, still the peasant unity was not achieved as some peasant sections remained loyal and fearful of the zaminder.

The zaminders, angry and fearful of the growing unity and political consciousness among the peasantry, adopted two-fold policy of concessions and intimidation. The Congress leadership was ambivalent in its attitude to the zaminders, sometimes expressing support to them and at other times siding the peasantry in opposing them. It was due to its policy of all-class unity and no struggle against the zaminders and at the same time recognition of the necessity of drawing peasant masses into the national movement and to strengthen the Congress Party. But, as we noted in the chapter, because the Justice Party, whose links with
the non-Brahman movement and the zamindars were very strong, ruled the Madras Presidency for long, and the fact that the leadership of the Congress came from urban based middle class Brahman professionals, it can be said that the Congress was more or less opposed to the Zamindars - though they maintained that the problems between the zamindars and the ryots had to be solved through mutual accommodation and adjustment. The policies and the positions of the Congress leadership and the 'peasant leaders' become more clear in the next chapter in which we study the peasant movement in Andhra during the 1937-48 period.
REFERENCES:


2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., pp.66, 72.


5. Known after the Rampa region on the Chodavaram taluka of East Godavari district. The first rebellion took place in the years 1800-02.


7. Persons who hold the right, by appointment or through auction, to collect the shist from the ryots in a mutta or sub-division and pays a fixed sum to the Estate holder or the Government.


17. Krishna Patrika, August 1, 1905.

18. The editors of Krishna Patrika put a note at the end of the above report: 'If the ryots in order to make their grievances known to the Government, hold such meetings and send the resolutions to the editors, they would not only publish the resolutions but also bring them to the notice of the officials'. Krishna Patrika, November 15, 1905.


20.ZR, December 27, 1935.

21. Ibid.


23. ZR, July 24, 1936.


26. Andhra Patrika, May 7, 1920. He also led a ryots' deputation to Lord Willingdon of Kakinada on 14 September 1913 to represent the problems regarding low lying lands in tankas (islets).


30. Details of 1909, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16 conferences were given in ZR, December 27, 1935.

31. ZR, December 21, 1934.
32. They include – the reserved forests should at least be a mile away from the village; the inability of the ryots to bid pastures in the auctions; granting remission when the fields become unusable; the big ryots may be allowed to draw water, without seeking the permission from Tahsildar, when there was sufficient water for the wet lands of poorer ryots, and the drainage canals. Nellore Patrika, February 28, 1920.

33. Ibid.

34. Nellore Patrika, May 1, 1920.

35. Ibid., July 10, 1920.


37. They are – to reduce the heavy burdens of shist and resist all the attempts of the Government to impose additional ones; to see that the Government spends more on agricultural development and construction of irrigation facilities; to work for a responsible constitution to the ryots; to accept that non-cooperation was the only way with a Government which was rejecting the genuine demands of the ryots. Ranga's Peasants' Pledge came 16 16 years later on similar lines, Andhra Patrika, July 30, 1920.


39. ZR, April 9, 1954.


42. ZR, January 26, 1935.

43. RELAC, Part I, p.245; ZR, August 22, 1931.

44. For details of NC movement and Seetharamaraju Revolt see M. Venkatarangaiya, vol.III, pp.31-38, 40-50, 80; V. Raghavaiah, 1977, p.35; Atlury Murali, Social Change and Nature of Social Participation in Non-Cooperation Movement in Andhra, 1920-22. M.Phil. dissertation, Centre for Historical Studies, JNU, New Delhi, 1979; C.J. Baker, "Non-

45. ZR, June 19, 1936.

46. N.G. Rango, 'The Aims of the Peasant Movement', ZR, April 19, 1944, also ZR, June 19, 1936.

47. ZR, June 19, 1936.

48. He wrote: 'The secret of the success of the peasants in America, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Japan, etc., lie in the strength of their associations and principles of cooperation. Since Andhra peasants lack them they are weak, ignorant and helpless', ZR, November 14, 1931.


51. Ibid., p.444.

52. Ibid., p.445.

53. It consisted of T. Prakasam, K. Nageswara Rao, B. Venkataratnam, members of Legislature representing these three districts, Presidents and Secretaries of DCCs in the area, K. Venkatappayya, B. Pattabhi Seetharamayya, B. Sambamurthy, A. Govindachari, D. Subbamma and Y. Tillekenna.


55. Ibid., p.118.


57. Stoddart, pp.119-20.

58. Krishna Patrika, August 11, 1928.

60. ZR, Ibid.

61. ZR, November 21, 1931.


64. N.P. Rao, 'Peasant Movement in Andhra', Visalandhra, April 7, 1961.


66. Ibid.

67. In Krishna district alone as many as 300 village ryot associations were formed. Ranga, Modern Indian Peasant, 1936, p. xxiv; several other new organisations were formed in other districts, ZR, October 3, November 7, and November 21, 1931.

68. AIKS (CPI), 22 AIKS Conference, Souvenir, 1979, p. 7.

69. ZR, November 21, 1931.

70. ZR, November 30, 1934.

71. ZR, December 14, 1934, December 21, 1934.

72. Ranga, All India Kisan Movement, p. 288.

73. ZR, January 4, 1935.

74. ZR, May 24, 1935.

75. ZR, May 3, 1935.

76. Ranga, 1936, p. XVIII.

77. K. Nageswara Rao Pantulu was the President, N.C. Range was the General Secretary and E.M.S. Namboodiripad was its Joint Secretary.
78. Ranga, 1936, pp.68-78.

79. Ranga summed up the 'new system of economic thought' thus: It stands for the ultimate collectivisation and cooperation of mechanised and progressive agriculture and seeks to eliminate the institutions of middlemen. He said: 'This may sound dangerously like socialism; yet it is the logical outcome of the Gandhian turn in our politics', Ibid., part II, p.11.

80. Peasant marches were also held earlier though on a limited scale in a few places. On November 7, 1933, Peasant Marches were taken out with thousands of peasants at 18 places as a result of which the Government granted one-and-a-half anna shilt remission, ZR, December 6, 1935.

81. ZR, November 8, 1935.

82. Ranga, 1936, p.15. After this conference an Organising Committee was formed to get into touch with the various Provincial and District Peasant Organisations and to form such committees where they did not exist. Ranga, President of the Committee then toured in Punjab, Orissa, Bengal and United Provinces. Later a meeting of the left minded political workers and representatives of peasant organisations was held in Meerut on 15 December 1935, at the time of the national conference of CSP. The need for the development of an All-India Peasant Congress was recognised and it was decided to convene the Congress in Lucknow. Ranga became the first General Secretary of the All India Kisan Congress at its first session in Lucknow held on 11 April, 1936.

83. ZR, November 8, 1935; Ranga, All India Kisan Movement, p.289.

84. R.M. Sharma, RELAC, Memoranda, Supplemental volume, p.606. This might be at the zamin ryot conference held at Vijayawada, presided over by V. Ramadas Pantulu, NVR Naidu, 'History of Zamin Ryotu Patrika', ZR, April 9, 1954.

85. Viswanath Das later the first Chief Minister of Orissa, was in the President's Chair. Among those present were C. Ramachandra Rao Pantulu, M. Narayana Rao (Zaminder of Gundepalli), M. Bepineedu, etc.
86. R.N. Sharma, p.610.

87. At the General Body meeting of the Andhra Zamin Ryots Association held at Visakhapatnam on 30th November 1929 a sub-committee was appointed consisting of N. Ramadas Pantulu, Viswanath Das, B. Mahiswamy Naidu, R. Handeswara Sharma and A. Kaleswara Rao to propose a draft Bill to amend the Estates Lands Act. The Bill was prepared and published in English and Telugu newspapers and was later submitted to the Government on 2 September 1931, Ibid.

88. ZR, December 10, 1932.

89. ZR, March 16, 1930.

90. ZR, April 22, 1938.

91. A resolution moved by Ranga was adopted at this Conference for setting up an enquiry committee to go into the problem of Nellore Zilla Zamin ryots. Ranga was the President of the Committee, ZR, August 22, 1931.

92. ZR, September 12, 1931.

93. ZR, March 23, 1930.

94. RELAC, Memoranda, Part II, p.15.

95. ZR, September 18, 1936.

96. The compensation according to him should be twenty per cent of the total revenue collection in the Zamin-dari as family allowances for ten generations. The Congress leaders, including Ranga, however radical in their rhetoric, would not go for the abolition of zamindari with no compensation. Even the zamindars of Chalapalli, Kumaramangalam, etc., some time after that told the Viceroy that they were willing to give up their zamindaris, provided they were paid 20 times to their net incomes, ZR, June 24, 1931.

97. ZR, September 12, 1931.

98. ZR, September 19, 1931.

99. ZR, November 17, 1931.

100. ZR, October 10, 1931.
101. ZR, October 24, 1931.
103. ZR, September 6, 1935, May 22, 1936.
104. ZR, November 19, 1932.
106. Ibid.
107. ZR, August 22, 1931.
108. The two judgements given separately held that (i) the Kasuri system (including of a clause in muchilika stipulating that the ryot at least once in three years should pay rent equal to the assessment on a field if turmeric was raised) was amounted to enhancement of rent, which the zamindar was not entitled to impose and (ii) where the land was left waste due to failure of water in the zamindar's tanks and not due to the tenants' neglect, the tenants were entitled to remission. RELAC, Part I, pp. 239, 245.
110. ZR, October 29, 1932.
111. ZR, December 17, 1932.
112. ZR, January 28, 1933.
113. ZR, April 18, 1933.
114. Reacting to this Sunderayya wrote an article in Prabha, saying that imposition of such a duty only help the merchants and landlords, but not ordinary people and peasants and it was harmful to the wage labourers. K. Satyanarayana, Communist Movement in Andhra, 1983, p. 147.
115. The Krishna District Ryot Conference held at Beedugallu in November 1934 decried the Challespalli Zamindar's actions of bringing ryots to the Courts for the payment of one-third of the money given by the government as compensation to the land taken from the ryots to build East Bakk Canal. In January 1935, R.N. Sharma, the General Secretary
of APZRA issued a warning to the Challepelli estate not to encroach upon the common land meant for cattle grazing in Chantasala village, ZR, January 11, 1935.

116. ZR, December 21, 1934.

117. The Justice Party and its government under the pressure of the ryot movement and to woo the peasantry in the ensuing elections, took hold of a private Bill (Patnaik's Bill) for rent remission amendment to the MEL Act. The amendment took the existing rent rates as fair and provided for remission if there is a fall, not less than 18% per cent in the prices. No remission for crop failure was given. The APZRA felt that 'even if a case is made out in these days of lowest prices it will result in the reduction, if at all, in an insignificant pittance from the prevailing high rents which were settled and further raised on the only principle, i.e. of threat of eviction and coercion.' R.M. Sharma, RELAC, p.609.

118. ZR, April 10, 1936.
119. R.M. Sharma, pp.611-12.
121. ZR, December 10, 1932.
123. Ibid., p.42.
124. He expressed his views in Krishna Patrika under the title 'The Zamindars Tasks for National Development', which came in three parts in the issues dated July 15, August 1, and September 1, of 1905.
125. The third Andhra Conference met at Vizagapatnam in May 1915. Raja Ramasayyana Reddy, later the Raja of Panagal, was the President. The fourth Conference met at Kakinada in May 1915 with KRV Krishna Rao as the Chairman of the Reception Committee. The Godavari District Conference held at Peddapuram on October 3, 1920 under the Presidentship of Kothagiri Krishna Rao Bahadur, the Kumara Raja of Campalagudem.
126. A conference of 'non-Brahmin gentlemen of position and influence was held in Madras on 20th November 1916. A political association under the name of 'South Indian Liberal Federation' was founded to advance and safeguard the interests of the non-Brahmin community. This federation, which later became Justice Party, had Zamindars as members, including the Raja of Pitampuram. Washbrook, p. 297, M. Venkataragaiya, vol. II, p. 422.

127. The period of the Ministries formed by the Justice Party and the Chief Ministers.

1. 1920-26 Raja of Panagal
2. 1926-30 Dr. Subbaroyan, Raja of Kumaramangalam
3. 1930-32 Bollini Muniswamy Naidu
4. 1932-36 Raja of Bobbili.

128. Ranga, 1936, p. 16.
129. ZR, November 6, 1936.
130. Ranga, 1936, p. 16.
131. Ranga, 1933, p. 121.
132. ZR, June 22 and 29, 1930; August 29, 1931.
133. RELAC, Memoranda, Part II, p. 61.
134. He was called by Krishna Patrika, as 'Andhra Hitler', ZR, December 4, 1936.
138. Ibid., p. 145.
139. Ibid., p. 143.
140. ZR, April 22, 1938.
141. Kumara Raja of Venkatagiri actively worked for the defeat of ryot candidates in the taluka board elections; he won the Council seat in 1930 defeating P. Narayana Reddi, a ryot leader, with a margin of 400 votes. ZR, December 27, 1935.
142. The Telugu version of his article published in Modern Review was carried by the Zamin Ryotu, in its issue dated December 24, 1932.

143. Ibid.

144. Pithapuram Raja launched his own political party called paradoxically as 'People's Party', on July 25, 1936.

145. ZR, January 14, 1933.

146. ZR, November 26, 1932.

147. ZR, January 11, 1935.

148. ZR, September 24, 1937.