CHAPTER VI
This Chapter makes a study of the main Opposition parties in Orissa politics. In order to be able to appreciate the role played by the party in Government, it is necessary to understand and analyse the role of the party in Opposition in any political system. It will not be proper to classify the Congress party as the "Ruling" party and all other parties as "Opposition" parties because non-Congress parties have been in power after 1967, 1971 and 1977 elections in Orissa. During these years, the Congress, functioned as the 'Opposition' in the Legislative Assembly and its leader was accepted as the 'leader of the Opposition'.

Section A: Political Opposition: Its Concept and Meaning:

Opposition can be simply understood to be part and parcel of the political process as a whole.

1. The 1977 elections brought to an end the "Congress System" under which one party had dominated the national government of India and most of the states for 30 years. The numerous opposition groups, alone or in concert, or in alliance with factions of the governing party, had sometimes made inroads into individual states, but they had never shared the power at the national level.
Robert Dahl defines 'Opposition' as:

"No government receives indefinitely the total support of the people over whom it asserts its jurisdiction. Certainly the government of a large collection of people, is never completely supported in all that it does by all the people who claim to govern".

He further comments that the introduction of Opposition is one of the great milestones in the development of democratic institutions. The loyal and legal opposition is the means for "managing the major political conflicts of a society".

The twentieth century has seen the growth of the great industrial societies, with their twin problems: the enlargement of the sphere of responsibility of government, and the emergence of social conflict as the main issue of political life. The modern study of politics, is a study of the relationship between the state and the society, the complex interaction between rulers and ruled, the government and the governed. Conflict in the field of human

relation is perennial. The more developed the society, the more concerned and active are the pluralistic forces or groups which contribute by their activity to the functioning, indeed to the viability of the society itself. The second source is the conflict of values (beliefs, faiths, ideas, attitude and custom) between different categories of people living together in the same society, and between all of them on the one hand, and those who hold ultimate political power on the other. These two forms of conflict exist in all societies. When the society becomes more modern and complex, they require political outlets. If no safety-valves are provided, political conflict will erupt into violence. The conflict of value finds its outlet in the right of any group or individual to dissent from the official views and action of the state, by political or other channels.

Thus, political opposition is the most advanced and institutionalised form of political conflict. It becomes the crowning institution of a fully institutionalised political society and the hallmark of these political societies which
are variously termed as democratic, liberal, parliamentary, pluralistic, constitutional and even open or free.

Section B: Opposition in India;

In India, like many other states of Asia and Africa, Opposition parties are regarded as constitutionally legitimate. India, which has had the most stable and completely civilian government, opposition is free; parties in opposition to the ruling party are numerous and they function within the constitutional limits.

1. Indian history and tradition is imbued with tolerance for pluralism, dissent and opposition. It has developed a consensual style in dealing with problems and issues. Thus, the pattern of Opposition in India, its characteristics, strategies, structures etc. have all their base in the peculiarity of Indian tradition rooted in its past.

2. Segmentation and pluralism are the central themes of Indian society which is undergoing the process of modernisation. As Rajni Kothari observes: "India is still far from becoming a mass society, its pluralism also is a different kind from that in Western democracies. It is less of confrontation between aggregated subsystems and more a coexistence between historically autonomous diversities and identities. Hence, the great variety and diffusion of opposition and their lack of clear-cut boundaries.

Process of Opposition in Pre-Independence India:

The Congress movement before Independence was itself in the nature of an Opposition. It was a protest movement as well as a social reform movement.1

The Indian National Congress, in its earlier stage, worked to accommodate individuals and groups with different social backgrounds and ideological tendencies in the service of the over-riding goal of independence. The Congress, like any broad oppositional movement, allowed factions within its fold. It also tolerated dissenting groups which set up political parties at the national and state

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1. First of all, it was a protest movement which had 'non-cooperation' as its central theme against the British regime. The movement also undertook other oppositional functions like criticism of policies competing for popular support, ventilation of regional and national grievances, non-cooperation and non-violence protests etc. Secondly, it was a movement against the traditional forces of Hindu society. In other words, the Congress movement was simultaneously a social reform movement prior to 1947. Untouchability, Khadi spinning, village upliftment, etc. were some of the programmes which the Congress undertook to eradicate social-ills in this country.
levels. Other groups also emerged outside its fold and challenged its claims to represent the interests of this or that sections of the people.

To quote Rajni Kothari again,

"The tradition of Oppositional politics and of tolerance and accommodation of consenting groups were already part of the Congress ethos before it came to power, quite apart from its general commitment to a secular, democratic constitution and liberal political values".

1. In 1923, the Swaraj Party came into existence when a group of liberals, opposing the majority decision in the Congress chose to establish a separate party. The socialist section within the Congress established the Congress Socialist Party in 1934; and this laid the foundation for the emergence of several socialist parties in the post-independence era.

2. The Justice Party was formed as early as in 1917, on the basis of mobilising the non-brahmin section in Madras by some Congressmen. In 1936, the Unionist Party in Punjab was formed, which later merged with Congress in 1944 elections. The Hindu Mahasabha came into existence in 1925. The Communist Party of India came into existence in 1924 and the Forward Block in 1940. The Muslim League and the Adibasi Mahasabha were two political organisations which formed a strong opposition to Congress in early years. Similarly under Dr. B.N. Ambedkar, a well known Jurist and Scholar, the Scheduled Caste Federation was set up to serve the cause of backward classes of the society, and to contest the claim of the Congress to serve their cause.

This tradition of Oppositional politics continues even after independence.

**Opposition After Independence:**

The political system in post-independence India is characterized by the "one-party dominance." Thus, in the post-independence era, the Opposition has emerged on two levels:


2. Morris-Jones, describes this "one-party dominance" system with the Congress as the major party as: "... Like a shopkeeper in an Indian Bazaar, it squats with its large flabby shape in the middle of its wares, the heart of a political marketplace in which bargaining and dissent are the language of discourse."

a) Opposition that developed out of factional struggle within the Congress;

b) Opposition that developed from outside as a challenge to the Congress system.

The Indian political system until the Janta victory, was characterised by a dominant Centre (represented by the Congress) around which all kinds of opposition were clustered. The Congress dominance was challenged by the alliance of five major Opposition parties, which put forth an alternative programme to the Congress, and came to power in the Centre.

However, the return of the Congress-I, once again in 1980 elections, has raised the question of the role and functioning of the "Opposition" in the Indian political system.

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1. As Rajni Kothari writes:
"There are several historical-institutional features that have informed the development of the system. First, the Congress, when it came to power, assigned a positive and overwhelming role to government and politics in the development of society, with the passage of time, this model opened up, brought new groups and parties into positions of power..." Rajni Kothari, "Opposition in a Consensual Polity", Op.cit., pp. 321-322.
Party development, party splits and party decay at the national level has its wider effect on state politics as well. We now proceed to analyse the role and development of Opposition parties in Orissa especially after independence.

Section C: Opposition Parties in Orissa: 1947-1980

As we have discussed earlier in Chapter IV, the Congress had played a major role in the political development of the Province till independence. However, there were other national parties like the Muslim League, the Forward Bloc, the Congress Socialist Party, and the Communist Party of India, who had challenged and opposed to the Congress policies and programmes from time to time. The leaders of these parties were mostly ex-Congressmen. There were other political parties like the Independent Peoples Party, etc., which were organised by the feudatory rulers of Orissa. These parties had contested the elections of 1937 and 1946, and opposed the Congress ideology vehemently.

Having discussed the main Opposition parties in Orissa, prior to 1947, we now proceed to study the Opposition in 1947-1980. The Opposition in
Orissa can be broadly divided into the leftists, the rightists and those which emerged because of group-fighting in the Congress.

**Leftist Parties:**

**The Socialists and the Communists:** Among the leftist parties, both the Communist and the Socialist parties can be said to have originated in Orissa prior to the independence. But, their role in Orissa politics has been limited. Both the parties being nationalist parties, their base is limited only to the coastal part of the State. The Socialists' influence are limited to Cuttack, Puri and Balasore districts of the state. They have no base in Western Orissa, except in the district of Mayurbhanj. A majority of its members were ex-Congressmen. The peasants of the coastal areas constitute major support base for them.

After the split of the Socialist Party at the national level into SP and the PSP, the Socialists in Orissa too were divided into two groups. They continued to contest the elections and continued their separate identities till the PSP merged with the Congress on 27th May, 1972. Mrs. Gandhi's
socialist ideals drew the PSP group to join the Congress. The SSP on the contrary, became one of the five constituents of the Janta Party in 1977.

Some of the prominent leaders of the PSP in Orissa are Surendra Nath Dwivedi, Banka Behari Das, P.K. Das, P.K. Paul, etc.

A look at the performance of the SP and PSP in various general elections to the Orissa Legislative Assembly will indicate the role played by the party in Orissa politics.

**Table 6.1**

Performance of Socialist Party/PSP in Orissa Legislative Assembly Elections:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Seats contested</th>
<th>Seats gained</th>
<th>% of seats</th>
<th>% of votes</th>
<th>Total No. of seats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>11.76</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>10.50</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>11.40</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>33/ (SP/SSP) 11</td>
<td>21/ 11</td>
<td>15.0/ 7.8</td>
<td>15.78/ 11.40</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>49/ 15</td>
<td>4/</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>7.29</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An analysis of the Socialist/PSP performance in Orissa will show that in 1967, both the parties together fared best, both in terms of seats as well in terms of votes polled. It had won 32 seats whereas in the previous elections of 1952, 57 and 61, the party had won 10, 11 and 10 seats respectively. In 1971, the parties had set up maximum number of candidates (66), but won only 6 seats in the Assembly. In 1974, the SSP fought the election alone, as the PSP had merged with the Congress as early as 1972, but it failed to win a single seat.

However, even after the merger of the PSP with the Congress, a separate faction emerged under the leadership of B.D. Das, who was the Revenue Minister in the Bandhu Satpahy Government in 1974. Bitter factional fights finally led to the exit of Das from the Cabinet.\(^1\) The Congress attempt to win over the PSP after 1971 elections was to expand its base in the coastal areas. The Congress could not form the government after the 1971 elections. With the merger of PSP with the Congress and defection

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1. See the section on "Factionalism inside Congress" in Chapter V.
of opposition members into the Congress, the latter was able to come to power under Nandini Satpathy's leadership in 1973. Thus, the Socialist parties in Orissa by 1977, have ceased to exist as separate entities.

Communist Party of India/Communist Party of India (Marxist):

The role of the Communists in Orissa politics has been quite interesting too. The party which came into existence before independence, for the first time contested the democratic elections in 1952. If one looks at the role of the Communist parties in Orissa, then the Communist movement in Orissa is said to be absent in terms of its role in the States like West Bengal and Kerala. These parties have their base in the Coastal part of the State like the Socialists and the Congress. Some of the eminent Communist leaders of the State are Lokenath Choudhury, Gangadhar Paikray and others. The CPI which originated out of Congress factionalism prior to independence, could not escape the course of factional pulls inside the party. It resulted in the party's split at the national and state levels into CPI and CPM.
A look at the performance of the Communist parties in Orissa can be obtained from the following Table.

**Table 6.2**

Performance of CPI/CPM in Orissa Assembly Elections: 1952-1977

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Seats Contested</th>
<th>Seats won</th>
<th>% of seats</th>
<th>% of votes</th>
<th>Total No. polled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td></td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td></td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>CPI-30, CPM-9</td>
<td>7, 1</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>6.26, 1.22</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>CPI-28, CPM-11</td>
<td>4, 2</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>3.40, 1.20</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>CPI</td>
<td>7, 3</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>4.87, 1.77</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>CPI</td>
<td>1, 1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>3.57, 0.88</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled from Reports of General and Mid-Term Elections to O.L.A. published by Government of Orissa, Govt. of India.

The above table shows that the performance of CPI/CPM has been best in terms of seats in 1974. It had won 7 seats in 1952, 9 in 1957, 4 in 1961, 8 in 1967, 6 in 1971, 2 in 1977 and none in 1980. A comparative study of both the parties will show
that it is the CPI which gives a better performance in several elections than the CPM.

However, with the parties failing to win a single seat in 1980, it shows that the Communist movement in the State has received a great set-back.

In 1971, the Congress fought the election in alliance with the CPI, which won 7 seats and polled 4.6 per cent of votes in the said election. When Smt. Satpathy formed the government after the elections, the CPI extended its full support to the government.¹

But, in the 1977 election, the CPI did not side with the Congress because of "Emergency" issue. It fought the election alone and won only 1 seat. The CPM, on the other hand, which fought the election in alliance with the Janta Party won also one seat in the election.

After analysing the role played by the leftist parties, we now proceed to analyse the role of rightist parties in Orissa.

¹ In Orissa, the CPI has been able to side with treasury bench. CPI's support to the Congress has been an important issue in the factional struggle inside Orissa Congress in post-1967 period. Smt. Satpathy was criticised for her Communist background and taking a soft-attitude towards the CPI.
The Rightist Parties:

The Gantantra Parishad and the Swatantra are the two rightist parties, who have played a major role as "Opposition" in the political development in Orissa. They owe their origin and working to the social order that prevailed in the feudatory states of the province. In this section, we discuss the origin, development and role of these two parties in the political development of the State.

The Gantantra Parishad:

In the early years of independence, the Congress because of its historic role, was a national force to be reckoned with. From 1948 onwards, the Congress supremacy was challenged by the emergence of a strong regional party, the "Gantantra Parishad". Of course, there were other national and regional parties, but these parties had played a secondary role to the Indin National Congress.

National movement was the main platform around which the process of party building started in pre-independence Orissa. Later, these parties
reorganised themselves to fight the Congress in 1952 General Election. But the major opposition and challenge which the Congress faced was from the Gantantra Parishad. It was a party which emerged partly out of the regionalistic feelings among the people and partly out of the anti-Congress attitude of the feudal sections of the society in Western Orissa. The Gantantra Parishad was born as a right-wing, conservative party towards the year 1948. It has been branded as "reactionary", "dominated by feudal interests and medieval tradition", party of "disgruntled princelys". Michael Brecher, described it as a "sub-group of disposed princely's who were able to arouse feudal loyalty". Other critics of the party have commented that the rank and file of the party were tribal people who were illiterate, backward and less politically-conscious in comparison to their counterparts in the coastal areas. They were rather ignorant to distinguish between democratic and autocratic form of governments.

There is another view about the ideological character of the Gantantra Parishad. For example, the Anand Bazar Patrika, on 25th June, 1959, described
the Party as one which "believed sincerely in Parliamentary Democracy and accepted the socio-economic programme of the Congress".

Before going into a discussion of the class and ideological content of the Gantantra Parishad, we should discuss about the socio-political background to the emergence of this regional party in the State. The political movements in the Feudatory States had reached its acme by 1947. These princely rulers had tried their best to create an anti-Congress feeling among the people of the State. The merger of the States was finalised by making the rulers to sign the Instruments of Accession.¹ According to the agreements, the rulers of various States were granted privy purses and allowances.

The following table (6.3) shows the amount paid by the Government of Orissa to the rulers of the ex-states during the period 1955-1965.

¹ For a proper understanding of the integration process, see, V.P. Menon, *The Integration of Indian States*, (New-Delhi, 1964).
Table 6.3

Privy Purse and Allowance of the Rulers in Orissa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Privy Purse etc. in lakh of Rs.</th>
<th>State Revenue in lakh of Rs.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1955-56</td>
<td>22.22</td>
<td>1924.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956-57</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>2042.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957-58</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>2642.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958-59</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>3232.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959-60</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>2469.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960-61</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>3932.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961-62</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>4613.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962-63</td>
<td>7.95</td>
<td>6226.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963-64</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>7041.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964-65</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>7453.26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The amounts received in the form of privy purse did not satisfy the rulers, because they had lost their previous positions of supreme authority in their respective States. They held the Congress responsible for it. Secondly, the political situation just prior to the First General Election in the State was extremely bad. The anti-social elements were creating chaos and uncertainty throughout the State. The Congress faced stiff
opposition from the Communists, Socialists and the feudal rulers. There were Adibasi uprisings, Hirakud Movement, and the State Reorganisation Movement, which created fear, uncertainty and challenges among the people.¹

All these factors, which occurred mostly in the western part of Orissa convinced the people of the princely areas that they would not get any justice from the "Kathi rulers".² This enhanced the anti-Congress feeling and regionalism among the people of western Orissa. Thus, the need to establish a party to let out their grievances was realised by many in the feudal states of Orissa. This led to the establishment of the "Koshala Utkal Praja Parishad" with its headquarters at Sambalpur. The Parishad leaders wanted the right of self-determination. They had their own praja mandals for getting popular rule in the State.

¹ For a comprehensive picture of the political situation obtaining in the State during this period, see, Government of Orissa, Orissa - 1950-51, Public Relations Department (Bhubaneswar, 1951).
² The "Kathi rulers" referred to the Congress Government of Coastal Orissa.
The membership of the Parishad was mainly from people who were praja mandal accedors and anti-
nonogorists. The Parishad gradually expanded its base in several other states of the province -
like Kalabandi, Donai, Gangpur, Koonjhar, Athmalik etc. The leader of the Parishad was R.N. Singh
Doe. In 1950, the Parishad was renamed as the "Cantaktra Parishad" and was made a full-fledged
State-minded political party.

The party, initially had its base in the high-lands of Orissa, which has a maximum concentra-
tion of the tribal people. The party tried to expand its organisation in the coastal areas as well.
Therefore, the membership of the party gradually extended from princes to middle class
professionals, zamindars, middle-class peasants and other dissatisfied Congress leaders.

The objectives of the party were clearly mentioned in Article I of the Constitution. They
were:

"Political, economic, social, cultural and moral well-being and advancement of
the people; formation of homogeneous admini-
strative units on economic, linguistic
and cultural basis; safeguarding the civil,
political and cultural rights of the mini-
orities and backward classes; removing
Corruption, black-marketeering, inefficiency, robbery and irresponsiveness from administration; and restoring civil liberties, faith, justice and democracy among the people. 1

In its election manifesto, the Gantantra Parishad put forth a programme for guaranteeing each cultivator an "economic unit of land". The Parishad called for setting up, on State's initiative, large industries, planned reduction in educated unemployment, free and compulsory primary education and secondary education; the introduction of health insurance for the common man and the opening of maternity centres in various parts of the province. 2

An analysis of these objectives show that the Gantantra Parishad was not motivated by a desire to restore the status quo of the princely rule, although it was expected that since the party had a royal origin, it would strive to restore the princely rule in those parts of the State. It was not an extremist party like the DMK of Tamil Nadu.

demanding for a separate Dravid State and launching a secessionist movement. To be more precise, it was not a party which belonged to either left or right, but which followed a contrasit path.

Thus, the Cantantra Parishad had an aristocratic origin because many of its leaders were feudal rulers of Orissa. However, the role which it played in Orissa politics does not indicate the feudal character of the party. Its main purpose was to fight against the Congress rule. From the foregoing analysis it is evident that Cantantra Parishad emerged as the main Opposition party in Orissa independent of any prior links with Congress unlike majority of the other political parties, like Utkal Congress, Jan Congress etc.

The following table indicates the percentage of seats and votes polled by the Cantantra Parishad (which later merged into the Sutantra Party unit of Orissa), in State Assembly elections from 1952-1971.

1. The important leaders of the Party were Bajendra Narain Singh Doo, P.K. Doo, Raj Baldev Mishra, Haribah Patel and others.
Table 6.4

Gantantra Parishad and Swatantra Party in State Legislative Assembly Elections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total seats</th>
<th>Candidates</th>
<th>Seats gained</th>
<th>Seats % of seats</th>
<th>Votes polled</th>
<th>% of votes</th>
<th>Votes per candidate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>741,887</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>19,523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>1,221,794</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>11,209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961 (Mid-term)</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>655,099</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>5,414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>909,421</td>
<td>22.58</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>684,653</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mergor of Swatantra Parishad with the All-India Swatantra Party.

The fact that the victory of the Congress in 1961 mid-term elections, and the consequent decline of the GP in Orissa politics, however, does not contradict the important role played by the GP in the State politics. The Working Committee of the Parishad reviewed the possibilities of its merger with the like-minded Swatantra Party. A sub-committee was set up consisting of R.N. Singh Doo, P.K. Doo, Naj Ballev Mishra and Haribar Patol, to consider the issue of merger between the Swatantra Party and the GP. Talks were held between the leaders of the All-India Swatantra Party like Naj Gopalachari, N.G. Danga (President of the AISP) and M.B. Narani (General Secretary) and the members of the sub-committee of the GP.

The sub-committee in its report to the Executive Committee of the Parishad recommended for the merger of the two parties. This was materialised finally on March 3, 1962. Thus, the GP became the Orissa branch of the All India Swatantra Party.
sporting the "star" as its election symbol.¹

SWATANTRA PARTY: Origin, Development and Performance:

A study of the Congress Party makes it apparent that many of its leading followers believed in an ideology which later on served as the foundation for the emergence of the Swatantra Party. Under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership and during the days of the freedom struggle, the crystallisation of ideology remained submerged. However, signs of such conflict and differences surfaced when the Congress occupied office in seven provinces under the provisions of the Government of India Act of 1935. The leaders of the Congress party were divided into leftist and rightist groups on the issues of abolition of intermediaries, liquidation of agricultural indebtedness etc. While the leftists within the Congress wanted to take radical measures, the rightists were opposed to such drastic actions, thereby championing the cause of the vested interests.² In the post-independence era, this conflict

between the rightist and the leftist sections of
the Congress led to the emergence of the Swatantra
Party in India.

M.R. Masani was of the view that the ideolo-
gical conflict within the Congress served the basis
for the emergence of a rightist party in India.¹
The Nagpur Resolution of the AICC became the imme-
diate background for the creation of the Swatantra
Party.

Rajagopalachari criticised the resolution
on three grounds. Firstly, it imposed a ceiling
on land holdings which was devised in order to
break the back of the middle classes in the rural
areas; secondly, it attempted to establish a state
monopoly in the wholesale trade in foodgrains,

¹
(a) Tackling the problem of a description of
the Swatantra Party, Mr. Masani had commented,
"I do not much care what label such a party
adopted. Rajaji would like to call it a
conservative party. Being myself a liberal
and one of the ....... (but) it is not impor-
ant".
Minto R. Masani, 'Need for a Centre Party,' in
The Times of India, June 4, 1959.
(b) Nehru considered it as a party belonging
to the "Middle ages of lords, castles and
samindars", quoted in 'India's Swatantra Party',
by Howard L. Erdman, Pacific Affairs (Winter,
thereby eliminating thousands of small traders and leaving the farmers face to face, with the State as the only trading agency and thirdly, idea of "joint-cooperative farming" as suggested by the Congress leaders was nothing but a mere pretense to introduce collective farming of the Soviet-Chinese pattern through the pooling of land, uprooting of boundaries and the establishment of big cooperative farms under bureaucratic management and control.

The leaders of the Swatantra Party also considered that the landed peasantry which constituted nearly 53.75% of the Indian population and "middle classes" in the urban areas would support their thesis. Therefore, they appealed to the professional, the businessmen, and the landed peasantry to oppose the Congress move before it is too late. They considered that a correct challenge to the Congress ideology can be given by following a middle-of-the road or a centralist policy.

2. Ibid.

The Party was conceived at an informal meeting in Madras on June 9, 1959 and inaugurated on August 1 and 2 in Bombay with the adoption of the Statement of Principles and membership clause.
Having discussed the genesis of the Swatantra Party at the national level, we now proceed to examine its formation in Orissa.

As referred to earlier, the Orissa unit of Swatantra Party came about after the merger of the GP with the All India Swatantra Party.¹ P.K. Deo and R.N. Singh Deo became the leaders of the Orissa unit of the Party. Shri Rajgopalachari at one time, had thought that Mahtab, will defect from Congress to the Swatantra fold after he lost his base in Orissa politics (during the 1957-1961 period, especially after the failure of the Congress-GP coalition in the State). He had thought that

"not only Dr. Mahtab, but all the old warriors of the Congress, who do not approve of and are not happy with the permit-quota-licence raj that goes by the name of socialism, are to join hands with me.... I know that some senior politicians hope to improve the Congress from within, but I am trying to make them see that this is no longer possible and that they will thereby become instrument for the continuance of the present Congress policy."²

1. As it has been explained in the previous section of this Chapter, the most significant merger was that of the GP, which "unanimously decided to merge with the Swatantra Party in mid-November, 1961. The actual merger, however, did not take place until after the 1962 General Elections, but the Swatantra Party contributed to the Parishad's campaign, treasury and allowed the GP candidates to fight under its "Star" symbol." For merger of GP with Swatantra, See Link, February 7th, 1960.

But Bajaji was disappointed when Haftab and any other senior leaders joined Swatantra Party.

Giving a brief account of the background to the emergence of the new Party, R.N. Singh Doo said at the first annual convention of Orissa Swatantra Party held at Dhenkanal on March 27, 1965: "The need for a strong opposition was felt in Orissa as early as in 1948 within one year of the achievement of independence, when the ugly symptoms of aggrandisement for personal and party benefit—the result of a perversion of philosophy and distorted sense of values—manifested themselves in the ruling Congress Party. The orgy of repression and suppression of civil liberty and repeated and indiscriminate police firing, caused widespread and needless suffering and loss of hundreds of innocent and precious human lives. The partisan and callous attitude of an inefficient administrative control, favouritism and the resultant black-marketing and rising prices along with increasing corruption made the lives of the masses intolerable to check these totalitarian and oppressive trends, the Praja Parishad was formed as an Opposition Party in Orissa on October 7, 1968." 1

In another instance, Singh Doo had commented: "For the sake of the people, to champion their cause and to render positive services to the toiling masses with a spirit of dedication, I entered into politics with a view to channelising the popular discontent against the Congress misrule on healthy democratic lines whereby the evils of one party rule could be established in the

country. With that end in view, I founded the GP in 1950. That Party continues to function as the main Opposition in the Orissa Legislative Assembly during the elections of 1952, 1957 and 1961, and eventually, it merged with the Swatantra Party after the Parliamentary Elections of 1962.

According to Singh Doo, the Congress administration in the State had encouraged nothing but corruption, factionalism and nepotism to such an extent that it became imperative to organise a new political party to challenge Congress supremacy in the State. Thus, the ruling elite of the feudalatory States in Orissa found it difficult to remain away from the positions of authority for a longer period. They wanted to enter the new political set-up, but it was not possible for them to do so only by aligning with the new order. The representative institutions like political parties and elections, provided them with opportunities to face new political and social challenges in the coming years.

1. Ibid.
2. In an interview with Sari A. Sahoo, ex-U.L.A. and M.P. and an old follower of the Cantontra Parishad and Swatantra.
3. Therefore, some joined the Congress Party and others formed the Opposition, the Swatantra Parishad.
Having analysed the genesis of the party, we now proceed to study its appeal to the different sections of the society. The Swatantra appeal in Orissa reached these sections of the society who had been the followers of the Ganatantra Parishad as well. These were partly the privileged people of the old order who were adversely affected by certain radical changes brought about by the Congress in the socio-economic pattern of the State. The abolition of princely and zamindari system, pursued by the Congress Government in the early years of post-independence era, thus weakened the strength of the traditional order, which, in the emerging social and political system, felt humiliated and alienated. Although some of the princes and zamindars had made their entry into the Congress, yet the GP/Swatantra Party found that there still remained vast reservoir of unexploited sources which could be taken advantage of.

Another section which felt alienated against the Congress ideology, were the conservative section of the Hindu society. The abolition of Estates and Trusts, undertaken by the Orissa Government in 1952, led to an anti-Congress feeling among these sections of the traditional society. By the Public Trust Act (Debbottar Act), the Government had taken over the administration of temples and temple property. This also alienated the conservative sections and brought them into the Swatantra fold. Thus, the Swatantra appeal reached this class of the traditional society in Orissa.

The Swatantra appeal also caught the imagination of those belonging to the lower middle classes and who were affected by the rising prices. The elderly persons among them were in a position to compare the old and new order, and rushed to the conclusions that peace, contentment and harmony were the order of the day under the princely rule.

1. The Swatantra Party will restore religion to its legitimate influence on life. Gifts to religious institutions and private charities will be realized from taxes. C. Rajagopalachari, "The Swatantra Party", The Times of India, October 8, 1961.
The Swatantra Party looked for support on the "Big Business" who were afraid of the "socialist" policies pursued by the government. In Orissa, there were no "big business" classes unlike in other provinces of the State. But, the middle and the lower business communities were attracted towards the Swatantra. They were relieved to see that the Swatantra Party is founded on the claim that individual citizens should be free to hold their property and carry on their professions freely and through binding mutual agreements among themselves and that the State should assist and encourage in every possible way the individual in this freedom, but not seek to replace him.1 Swatantra's policy that the government should not actively participate in industry and trade, but should play the role of a guide, friend and philosopher, was the source of gratification to the business class.

The most important section, to which the Swatantra appeal reached, were the tribals of the Western Orissa. In fact, most of the leaders of the

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Orissa unit of Swatantra Party were of ascriptive status like the Rajas or ex-samindars, and leaders of the Scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes. They have played an important role in "balancing the political system of Orissa".  

Then, there were another set of people who did not find anything fundamentally wrong with the Congress, but they had no love for it, because it had ruled the State for so long that its continuation in the office was not favourable for the survival of and functioning of the democratic system in the province. They found in the Swatantra, an alternative challenge to the Congress, because the latter

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1. In fact, the scheduled tribes and their representatives have been the "balance of the system" in Orissa politics. Congress, Swatantra and other political parties vie with each other to gain the support of this community which constitutes a major portion in the feudal society of Orissa. For example, 1952-57, the Congress could form the Government with the support of Adibasi Congress and the Jharkhand Party and some independents. In 1959, there was the Congress-GP coalition, which had its base in the tribal areas of Western Orissa. In 1967-71, the JC-Swatantra coalition and another example, where the tribal section plays an important role in Orissa politics. Pattern of electoral politics show that Swatantra's stronghold were also in the tribal areas of the Western Orissa. In 1971, there was the UC-Swatantra-Jharkhand coalition.
promised to promote individual liberty to them.¹
They found a new hope in the emergence of such a party.²

Another section which appealed to the Swatantra Party in Orissa was the existing Opposition parties, like the Socialists and the Communists. Those parties, for one reason or the other, could not fully absorb the attention of the people and there were other sources of support which were to

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   The appeal of the Swatantra that "if we want our children to breathe the air of freedom and hold their heads high, there is no worthier cause to which we can dedicate ourselves than that of rallying a grand coalition of peasants and artisans, professionals and businessmen, intellectuals and technicians in defence of the free way of life..." also attracted them towards Swatantra as a national alternative.
   M.R. Nacani, "...", Times of India, June 6, 1969.

2. They had faith in C. Rajagopalachari's analysis of the political trends at the time of the origin of the party that "at one end of the scale is totalitarian social order based on the principles of an omni-potent state (designed by the Congress), in which the individual will is reduced to nothing, while on the other end is autocracy, with compassion taking place of law (the Swatantra ideal). These are the two extremes and nearer, we are to this, latter terminal of the scale, the freer we are and happier".
   See, Swarajya, June 23, 1962, p. 3.
be tapped. Of course, the dominant position of the Congress in the coastal areas in the early years, groups in the Congress, etc. led to a solid foundation of the Swatantra in Orissa in the 1960s and this is why the party played an important role in the political development of the State during those years.

The organisational set up of the Swatantra Party resembles the pattern as pronounced in the Constitution of the AISP. ² Neither the party was free from factionalism.² So far as defection politics is concerned, the Swatantra has been the worst sufferer in the game.³

1. See, Constitution, Swatantra Party (Bombay, 1970)

2. The faction inside Swatantra was led by Shri Harihar Patnaik, when the latter did not agree to the merger of the Orissa unit of Swatantra into Pragati Dal.

3. In 1957-59, the Congress could come to power with defection of four GP members and other independent members. During 1961-67, defections from the GP hardly had any impact on the Congress government and political stability in the State, because the Congress had mustered the absolute majority support in the State. On 3rd March 1962, the Gantanea Parishad merged with Swatantra Party. The party had 37 members in the OLA. But those who defected from the party were:

1. Sat. Baba Kurari Deb - defected to Congress
2. Ram Prasad Mishra - do -
3. Bageshwar Mishra } defected
4. Dabria Padam }- do
5. Kalia Dobini } Independents.

contd....
From 1967-1972, there were two governments in Orissa. They were:

1. Swatantra-Jan Congress coalition led by R.N. Singh Deo and Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, and

2. Swatantra-Utkal Congress-Jharkhand coalition under the leadership of the Congress-O leader Shri Biswanath Das who preferred to continue as an independent candidate during this period.

The Swatantra Party has played an important role in Orissa politics as an Opposition Party and also as a partner in the coalition governments (with Jan Congress and later with Utkal Congress and Jharkhand). Its success in Orissa politics is also revealed in the electoral politics of the State.

Amongst the Opposition parties in Orissa, the Swatantra Party had the strongest organisational wing. Its success as the main Opposition party in Orissa had been true till 1971, when it became a constituent unit

F.N. 3 from previous page contd....

One member of the OLA who defected to GP from Independent was Shri Ghaniram Majhi. Because of this defection, the Congress-GP coalition could not continue, resulting in the mid-term election of 1961. However, defections that occurred in post-1967 period is quite significant with regard to the Swatantra Party in general and also the political stability in the State in particular.
of the Pragati Party in 1974. This success can be accounted to several factors:

Firstly, with the emergence of the Congress as the ruling party, major reforms were introduced in the State, but they were far from being satisfactory. The lot of the common man could not be improved and many challenges that came in the process of transformation of an agrarian social order into a democratic one, could not be successfully met. The new pattern of socialist society could not emerge and the repeated assurance made by the Congress for a "socialist society" still remained a distant hope.

Secondly, the hold it had on the western region of the State accounts for its repeated success at the polls. The discipline, which existed in the GP/Swatatra in the early years were not due to ideological commitment but also due to their respect for their rulers, thereby perpetuating anti-Congress and anti-coastal feelings in this part of the State. Shri R.N. Singhdeo as the leader of the party was a great force to be reckoned with in Orissa politics.

Thirdly, history of Orissa shows that the value pattern of the people is traditional. The
socio-religious philosophy of the Hindus was not challenged by any authority in the early days. Their thinking is affected by the culture of a society whose main pillars have been belief in God, respect for the priestly class and religious scriptures, and blind faith in the social traditions. In such a society, the processes of transformation under the impact of science and technology has not made much headway. The cultural pattern of the people exercises great influence on the politics of the State. There was the large tribal section which had remained out of the orbit of modernisation process. The phenomena of traditional society and the politics of the rightists parties are so closely related that one cannot be studied or understood without understanding the other.1

An analysis of the Election Manifestoes of the Swatantra Party, to assess the character of the party in detail, is equally important. In 1967 General Election, it entered into a 21-point electoral

1. C.P. Dhambri, "Rightist and Traditional Society in Rajasthan: a View Point", The Political Science Review, 1963, Department of Political Science, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, p. 36.
alliance with the Jan Congress. The main points which the Swatantra Party put forward was to cut government expenditure, reduce direct and indirect taxes, abolish land revenue, control rising prices, by increasing production, help the farmer to grow more food, limit state control and interference. The main charge of the Swatantra Party in Orissa against the Congress government was corruption and the perpetuation of "permit-quota-licence Raj". It declared that the entire administrative set up under the Congress government is corrupt and the growing abolition of the ruling party need to be curtailed. It also spoke that the concentration of the political and economic power in the hands of the State is dangerous and it leads to corruption and inefficiency in the administration. The Party wanted to dissolve the Planning Commission and scrap the disastrous Five Year Plans. It promised to end all monopolies, whether in the State or Private Sector. Thus, the Party was opposed to any form of nationalisation.

The purpose of the Party, the manifesto declared, was to create conditions for the smooth functioning of industries and providing facilities for
economic development. It placed more importance for the welfare of the "common man" and provide him with enough food, drinking water, clothing, shelter, hygienic condition and gainful employment.¹, ²

Therefore, an analysis of the Swatantra Party shows that the leaders of the Swatantra Party in Orissa came from mainly two sections - the princely and the tribal sections of the society. However,

1. "Swatantra Party believes in building a democracy in which the inviolability of personal freedom and of individual possessions and the incentives to individual effort form the basis and where economic power, as Gandhiji has envisaged, a decentralised and ownership is as widely diffused as possible. In such a society, the self-employed man, whether he is a farmer, artisan, shopkeeper or professional, has the fullest opportunity to thrive and grow without any..... restriction". Election Manifesto, Swatantra Party (Bombay, 1967), p. 7.

2. "This is India's basic industry. It can provide enough food for our people, raw material for our industry and full employment. It is the foundation on which India's prosperity can be built. It should be given highest priority". It urged for the "repeal of the 17th Amendment, the acceptance of the right of tenants to a fair rent and security of tenure, the abolition of land revenue, the adequate provision of essential requirements such as credit, water, fertilizer, pesticides, seeds, electrification etc... the acceptance of his right to the best price he can get for his produce in the free market and guarantee for a floor price." Election Manifesto, Op.cit., p. 8.
the party ideals show that it never championed for
the revival of the old feudal order in the State.
No member of the party, inside and outside the legis-
lature, gave expression to the fact that the demo-
ocratic form of government or the way of life is not
desirable. There was never any criticism against
the democratic principles of the Congress Party, but
it did criticize the socialist aspect of the Congress
ideals. This, however does not mean that the Swatantra
wanted to re-establish the good old days of the
princely raj.

To sum up, the Odisha unit of the Swatantra
Party is the old GP of the province. It has essen-
tially a feudal and tribal leadership. None of the lead-
ers have an all-India image. Its leadership lacks
the drive and radicalism to press the right of the
State vis-a-vis a strong centre. This is why the
Party partly failed to continue in government both in
1967 and 1971. It has only indirect perception of
its role in the modernisation and industrialisation
of the province. The Party's stronghold is only in
Western part of the province. Political mobilisation
in Western Odisha is comparatively less than the
Coastal Odisha. The party failed to recruit members
Coastal Orissa, and failed to develop as a modernized, dynamic political party in the State.

Section D: Dominant Party, Factions and Opposition Parties:

In Orissa, the two regional parties, the Jan Congress and the Utkal Congress were the outcome of factional struggle within the Congress. At times, group rivalry within the dominant party leads to party splits, where the dissenting faction proceeds to establish a separate party of its own. They act as a party in Opposition to the dominant party in the election.

Party building around factions defecting out of the "dominant party", weakens the parent party to a great extent. In case of Orissa, the Jan Congress and the Utkal Congress were formed by factional leaders, who defected from the Congress for their own personal reasons.

Thus, the emergence of Opposition parties in Orissa after 1961 has been around the various general elections in the State.¹ The process of

¹ For example, the JC was formed in 1966 before the Fourth General Election (1967); the UC was formed in 1970 prior to 1971 elections; the Pragati Party was formed in 1973 prior to 1974 elections and the Janta Party before 1977 elections.
merger and alliances among the Opposition parties have been temporary since these parties were united basically to "oust Congress". Once this was achieved, the merger and alliances weakened and the parties fell apart from each other. This is how the JC-Swatantra coalition, the Swatantra-UC-Jharkhand coalition ended in Orissa. This can also be one of the reasons, why the Janta Party failed in its attempt of party building at the national level.

An analysis of the origin, development, role and functioning of the JC and UC is undertaken in the following pages:

The Jan Congress:

For example, in 1964, the relationship between the two Congress leaders, Biju Patnaik and Pabitra Mohan Pradhan were strained on account of their differing attitudes and approaches towards the organisational issues of the Congress Party. At the meeting of the UPCC (Executive) on Aug 22, 1964, Patnaik demanded that Pradhan should withdraw certain allegations made against him and other members of the Party. When the latter refused, Patnaik, according to Pradhan "pounced upon and assaulted" him.

Pradhan had the support of some other Congress leaders like Mahtab, Banamali Patnaik, Surendranath Patnaik and others. These dissidents of the Congress formed a separate Committee and started functioning independently in August 1965. In November (26th to 28th) 1965, a three day convention of the dissident workers was organized at Bhubaneswar. In the convention, they resolved to organise themselves independently, while remaining loyal to the principles and ideology of the Congress Party. Mahtab, who presided the Convention, spoke that it is their moral duty to remove the Orissa Congress leadership, which had been responsible for the demoralisation of the administration, corruption, and misuse of rule of law. These rebels on April 10, 1966, took a final decision to organise a separate party in order to ventilate their grievances and organise public opinion against the corrupt Congress Government. The new Party was named "Jan Congress".1

The UPCC on 26th April 1966, in a meeting, suspended seven dissident MLAs for "gross indiscipline". This was followed by the first founding conference of the Jan Congress on May 5, 1966. The Secretary of the new party, Shri Upendra Mohanty was deputed to Kottayam towards the end of May 1966 to meet Kerala Congress leaders and to explore the possibilities for creating an all-India party of robol Congressmen. The party was further strengthened with defection of more MLAs from the Congress between August and October, 1966.

The first move made by the party was an electoral alliance with the Swatantra Party on December 31, 1966. Like Swatantra, the Jan Congress also had wanted to set up an alternative government to the Congress.

The basic program of the party was pronounced in its resolution and manifestoes. The party stood for broadly:

1. They were, Damodari Patnaik, Himancha Sekhar Padhi, M. Chidhar Jena, Upendra Mohanty, Sonaran Seren, Kunvnd Chandra Singh, Surondra Nath Patnaik, Santana Kumar Das, Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, B.D. Singh Bariha and Mamohan Tudu.

"the establishment of a commonwealth, on the basis of the principles of economic, social and political democracy; establishment of honest and efficient administration; equal opportunities to all; enlargement of employment opportunities through extension of industry especially in the medium, small and cottage sectors; to reorient national planning; to increase production by laying special emphasis on both public and private sectors in industry; better agricultural production through small and medium scale irrigation, mixed farming, better seeds, manures and fertilisers etc.; imposing land ceiling; and providing better opportunities to the backward classes and tribes and other minority communities in the State etc." 1

These fundamental aims of the Jan Congress show that the party was slightly to the right of the centre. 2


2. Basic industries, according to the Jan Congress, were to be put under undefined "national regulation" but both public and private sector should be "given encouragement on the principles of economic, social and political democracy. In agriculture, the Party promised to provide for cooperative farming and state farming, as well as farms run under the joint stock companies. To make room for such farms, it will fix not land ceilings that could be different for mechanised and traditional farms but would permit no holdings below a fixed "floor". With regard to their protection for the minority section and their interests, the party proclaimed that it would enforce rights already granted by the Constitution and make constitutional amendments necessary to ensure equal opportunities in employment, industry and it promised to work for the betterment of the backward sections of the society.
The Jan Congress as a regional party with a separate identity contested the 1967 General Election under its own symbol.1

It signed a 21-point common electoral programme with the Swatantra in 1967. The leaders of both the Jan Congress and the Swatantra parties appealed to the voters:

"The last five years' of Congress misrule in Orissa is a sordid story of corruption, inefficiency, wasteful expenditure and blatant disregard of moral values. To oust the discredited and corrupt Congress Party from power in Orissa and provide a clean alternative government, the Swatantra Party, Orissa Unit, and the Orissa Jan Congress, hereby agree to collaborate to form a Swatantra-led-Coalition in Orissa. Both parties have agreed to an electoral adjustment in regard to the constituencies enumerated in the schedule in which there will not be neutral contest between the two parties. The constituencies not mentioned in the schedule will be open, where the parties will be free to set up candidates if they so desire".2

1. The pattern and functioning of the coalition government in the post-67 period proves that conflicts arising out of ideological and programmatic differences among the coalescing parties may not prove to be as formidable as they could expected to be. These conflicts were, successfully resolved through a prior agreement between the two partners on various controversial issues and programme.

2. The common programme with the Swatantra, included various aspects, like the establishment of a clean and good government, setting up of a Commission of Inquiry to look into the corruption charges against the ministers, setting of contd....
It was further agreed that both the parties would implement the common programme and "under no circumstances will either party support the Congress Party, whether in Opposition or in the Government".  

In the 1967 General Election, the alliance between the Swatantra-Jan Congress proved to be a great set back to the Congress in Orissa. In fact, Orissa has been always a problem State for the Congress. And in this election, the Congress performance was the worst. Both the partners formed the Government with R.N. Singh Deo as the Chief Minister and Pabitra Mohan Pradhan as the Deputy Chief Minister. The achievements of the new government was first manifested in the appointment of an Inquiry Commission.

F.N. from previous page contd....

ombudsmen; establishment of rule of law, efficient and impartial administration, sound police system, equal justice for all, abolition of land revenue, reduction of tax burdens, increasing employment opportunities, introduction of Oriya as State language, expansion and organization of Universities, special privileges for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, abolition of multi-farms, panchayat taxes, liberating primary education from the control of Panchayat, expansion of general and technical education etc.


2. See, Chapter on *Electoral Politics.*
headed by Mr. Justice H.R. Khanna of Delhi High Court, against three former Chief Ministers and several other ministers. 1 This was followed by another Commission of Inquiry, the Sorjee Prasad Commission. 2

The non-Congress coalition was a great success in the State and it became a model for other provinces in the Country.

However, the coalition could not continue upto the end of the term, i.e., till 1972, because of ideological differences, lack of cohesion and coherence in the pivot party, often leading to sizable defections, and continuous fission and fusion among the parties.

1. The three Chief Ministers were, Biju Patnaik, Biren Mitra, and Sadanid Tripathi. Other Ministers included Nilomeni Routray, Satyapriya Mohanty, G.V. Jagannath Bae, Harikar Singh Narsaraj, Naiprasad Mishra, Drundaram Tripathi, Prabatad Mallik and others.

2. The second Commission of Inquiry was set up to probe charges of corruption against the Ministers who held office between 1961 and 1967. The allegations were made by Sadanid Tripathi, and 26 other MLA's (26 allegations). The charges were levelled against Ministers like Nahtab, Singh Dee, N.K. Choudhary, S.K. Patnaik, and others.
Utkal Congress

The second exclusively regional party which emerged in the post-67 period, due to group fighting within the Congress was the Utkal Congress under the leadership of Shri Bijoyanand Patnaik. Patnaik who had once been a top Congress leader in Orissa stepped down from Chief Ministership in 1961 according to the Kaaraj Plan.

The Utkal Pradesh Congress Committee had recommended the name of Patnaik to the Rajya Sabha election in 1970. But the High Command refused to accept his name. Conflict ensued between the Patnaik faction and the High Command, resulting in the suspension of Shri Patnaik, Nilotani Bautray and Prafulla Chandra Gharori from the Congress on May 17, 1970.

On May 22, 1970, Patnaik spoke in New Delhi that he would build up a "massoth and mass based party" to awaken the people and to make Orissa a strong State. Although the name he originally conceived for the Party was "Socialist Congress", yet, it formally emerged as the "Utkal Congress" in the same year.
On 16th September, 1970, eighteen members of the Congress Legislature Party in the Oriya Legislative Assembly intimated to the Speaker that they disowned Shri Binayak Acharya as their leader and they had formed a new political party styled as "Utkal Congress" under the leadership of Shri Gangadhar Mahapatra.¹ Shri Gangadhar Nandi, one of the 18 defecting members, again defected back to the Congress a few days later. However, this defection had no adverse impact on the political stability of the state, as the Congress was not in power then. With the departure of Diju Patnaik from the Congress,

1. They were:
   1. Gangadhar Mahapatra;
   2. Bagnunath Mishra;
   3. Santosh Kumar Sahi;
   4. Dibakarnath Sharma;
   5. Dinabandhu Dehura;
   6. Dinabandhu Patnaik;
   7. Udayanath Nait;
   8. Gaya Singh;
   9. Girindranath Nait;
   10. Tarini Sardar;
   11. Rabi Singh Majhi;
   12. Gangadhar Nandi;
   13. Bharat Chandra Bota;
   14. N. Karna Naikula;
   15. Mohan Naga;
   16. Mantran Majhi;
   17. Chintanani Jena; and

Collected from the files of O.L.A. (Bhubaneswar).
Mahatab wanted to rejoin the Congress. Accordingly in January, 1971, on the question of granting licence to some Hindu leaf traders, the Jan Congress withdrew its support from the Coalition, and once again the political uncertainty engulfed the state.


2. During this period, there came into existence the "Progressive Party" in Orissa Legislative Assembly. Some members of the Jan Congress and Swatantra, withdrew their support from the coalition and formed a new party. The members of the Party were (15th March, 1970):
   1. Sukadob Jena
   2. Sonara Soren
   3. Pratap Chandra Patnaik
   4. Harihar Bahoi defect from JC.
   5. Kumar Chandana Bohora
   6. Nabagourna Naik
   7. Bidita Malana and
   8. S. Bhagwati Naik defect from Swatantra Party.

Within a period of one month, except Shic Jena and Shov Naik, rest defected back to their original parties. However, the existence of the Progressive Party came to an end, when the two above mentioned legislators decided to defect to the newly formed Utkal Congress.

3. Rift between the two constituents, JC and the Swatantra began to show with the publication of the Madhulal and Sarjoe Prasad Commission's Report which made Mahatab and others responsible for corruption and financial impropriety.
The Utkal Congress fought the 1971 mid-term election of its own, and became a partner in the Swatantra-Jharkhand coalition government in the State. As was obvious, the inherent contradictions and tensions among the coalition partners over various issues including the renewal of licenses to Konda Leaf contractors etc. led to a political stalemate in the State. This became still more uncertain because of

1) the merger of the PSP with Orissa Congress in 1972;

2) 16 members of the united front government, under the leadership of Gangadhar Mohapatra, defected to Congress; and

3) some members of the Utkal Congress on 9th June, 1972, decided to rejoin the Congress, following a serious dialogue between Shri Nilomani Routray and the Congress High Command. The Congress High Command admitted only 28 members out of the 30.¹

¹. Those who were not admitted into the Congress were:
1. Bijuoyanand Patnaik;
2. Pratap Chandra Mohanty;
3. Pranabuddha Hallick;
4. Sananda Patnaik;
5. Suresh Kumar, and
At its state level meeting, the Utkal Congress did not approve of the decision of the Legislative group to rejoin the Congress. Thus, the Utkal Congress was once again revived in Orissa.

With the large scale defections from Utkal Congress, Swatantra, Jan Congress and the merger of the PSP unit of Orissa, the strength of the Congress Legislative Party rose considerably in the Orissa Legislative Assembly. Smt. Satpathy, then a deputy minister in the Union Cabinet, was sent to Orissa to lead the Congress Party in the State. The defection politics in the State once again took a new turn. 11 members of the UC, who had joined the Congress previously, once again defected back to the Utkal Congress. When the Pragati Legislative Party was formed, the Utkal Congress became a constituent unit of it.

1. They were, Jagannath Mallik, Bata Krishna Jena, Raj Kishore Naik, Man Govind Sarai, Hordanand Mallik, Birbhadra Singh, Niladri Naik, Achyutanand Mohanty, Patri Singh Rajhi, Purna Chandra Mistry and Dinabandhu Patnaik.

Another independent member, Chandra Madhav Mishra, also defected to Utkal Congress, thereby raising the strength to 10 in the O.L.A.
In a meeting, on 17th August, 1974, the founder President of the UC party announced the decision of the party to merge with the B.L.D. Hailing the formation of the B.L.D. by the amalgamation of 7 parties, the UC resolution offered its recognised election symbol for adoption by the All-India Party. The resolution was backed by Nahtab and SSP leader, Ganamoth Pradhan (SSP was a constituent unit of UC). Patnaik said, after the merger is affected, the State unit of the B.L.D. will offer a mass movement against the Nandini Satpathy government, whose "mal-administration" was responsible for the pitiable conditions in the province. He asked the students and the youth to rally around the B.L.D.2

Therefore, the Utkal Congress and the Jan Congress have very short existence as separate units in Orissa politics. Nevertheless, they played an important role in Orissa's/ political development by coalescing with Swatantra and providing an alternative to the Congress in the State.

1. Times of India (New Delhi), 19th August, 1974.
Section E: Alliances and Opposition:

Pragati Party and Bharatiya Lok Dal:

Thus, the emergence of these two parties, their alliance with the Swatantra, served as the background to the emergence of the Pragati Party, another regional party in Orissa politics. Therefore, the main challenge to Congress came from a local party, which emerged from the alliances between the UC, Swatantra and the Swadhin Congress group of Mahtab.

The appointment of Sat Satpathy as the Chief Minister of the State by the Congress High Command was not acceptable to the Patnaik faction. Moreover, the refusal by the Congress to admit Patnaik and five other UC members to the Congress, was a sort of insult for them. Mahtab, by this time, realising that he did not have any future in Congress Party, left the party on January 1973, along with four others and formed the "Independent Swadhin Bloc" or the "Swadhin Congress Group" in the legislature.¹

¹. The few other members were Shri Gopabandhu Patra, Manoharan Tudu, H. Kumanor and Anup Singh Doo.
The Swatantra Party had also lost its grip over the politics of the State, when 9 of its members defected to the Congress in June, 1972. In January, two other members of the Party, Shri G.N. Singh Dee and Shri Lakhana Naidu Darpana, defected to Congress.

With the defection of these 11 members, the strength of the Swatantra Party was reduced in the Assembly to 25.

The increasing strength of the Congress with the growing rate of defections to the Congress from the Opposition parties in the Legislative Assembly, made their leaders to provide a viable alternative to the Congress in Orissa. Thus, the three stalwarts of Orissa politics, Kanta, Patnaik and Singh Dee, came together to create a new party, which can combat Congress influence in the State. This served as the basis to the emergence of the Pragati Party in Orissa.

On 28th January, 1973, the Swadhin Congress of Kanta, the Utkal Congress of Patnaik and the Swatantra Party Singh Dee, formed a united front with 26 members and

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1. They were Gangadhar Pradhan (who was a minister in the Swatantra-UC-Jharkhand coalition); Badamra Prasad Mohapatra, Radhakaran Nair, Kamdeo Najbi, Achutanand Mahanand, Ramchandra Singh Dhan, Dambaru Najbi, Dhanai Bandhavi and Copal Pradhan.
naced as "Pragati Legislature Party" in Orissa Legislative Assembly.¹ On 8th February 1973, in a joint meeting, it was decided that the above three parties would function in the Legislative Assembly as one party under the leadership of Shri Diju Patmik and draw up a common programme of action. Necessary communications were sent to the Speaker.

On 1 March, 1973, when the Assembly was going through the Budget session, 23 members of the Congress Party, along with two Cabinet ministers² defected from the Congress to the PLP. On 2nd March, another member, Sari Tribhram Mallik joined the PLP.³ This reduced the Congress majority in the Orissa Assembly. Thus, President's rule was imposed in the State for the third time on 3rd March, 1973.⁴

¹ There were 25 members of the Swatantra, 10 members of the Utkal Congress and 5 members of the Swadhin Congress.

² See the previous Chapter.

³ The Orissa unit of the SSP also joined the Pragati Party. This was, however, not one party in the sense that it had different flags and election symbols.

⁴ Shri Diju Patmik, leader of the Opposition, and the PLP, along with 76 legislators filed a writ petition before the Orissa High Court challenging the Governor's conduct and the issue of Proclamation in the State. However, in its verdict on October 22nd, 1973, the Court dismissed the writ on the ground that contd.......

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From the organizational point of view, it can be said that the Pragati Party along with its constituents to the Swatantra and Utkal Congress (except Swatantra), was a very weak alliance. It was partly because of this, the party could not perform well in the 1975 elections in comparison to the Congress. For the first time, the leaders of Orissa politics like Hare Krishna Mahtab, Bijoyamand Patnaik, R.N. Singh Doo, Nilmoti Bantpy etc. could come together, to challenge Congress legitimacy in the State.

The Pragati Party constituted the main Opposition to the Congress in 1975 elections. It planned to act as an effective Opposition against the increasingly immoral, undemocratic and totalitarian actions of the Ruling Party, which was posing as an immediate threat to the proper and smooth functioning of healthy democratic constitution and was taking the country fast towards dictatorship.

P.U. 6 from the previous page contd....

the issue of Proclamation is outside the Judicial preview of the Court, but it decided on the fact that the "Governor did not honour the well-established constitutional convention", in not calling upon the leader of the Pragati Party to form the government.
The Party appealed to the electorate that it would work for:

the preservation of individual liberty, basic fundamental rights and parliamentarianism; restore the federation and status autonomy provided by the Constitution and also to strive for further devolution by financial, legislative and administrative authority to enable the states to develop their natural resources fully, so that a truly strong and prosperous India could be built within the shortest possible time; strive for removal of regional imbalances and for greater weightage to underdeveloped States and to accelerate economic and technological development of the states up to the level of other advanced and developed states; to promote social justice for all and particularly for Bihar and Assam and other backward classes for the establishment of a society based on equality and ensure a prosperous welfare community.

1. The new party opted for a 17 point programme which included provisions like safeguarding interests of Oriyans in every sphere, establishing efficient, progressive, impartial administrations, fight for more central aid to the State; balance development of various regions of the State; provide adequate employment opportunities; increase of production in industrial and agricultural sections, development of Pradep port, establishment of oil refinery, ship-building yards, fertilizer plants, jute mills, development of ports at Chandbali and Copalpur; establishment of Naval training Schools; development of Chilka lake, improving railway and roadways, taking up the multi-purpose river projects to check flood and utilise the river resources in a right manner, early implementation of Lakh
Thus, the Pragati Party in Orissa, emerging as a regional Party, declared itself as:

"an intellectual and psychological amalgamation of all the forces, who are determined to lead the youth and the people of Orissa into these forces, which have condemned its people to a status of abysmal poverty and virtual slavery. Pragati Party is determined to free Orissa from economic bondage and convert it into the most advanced state of India with in the next 15 years." 

Thus, the "Orissa Progressive Party" under the leadership of the three stalwart leaders, was the beginning of the union of partisans and individuals believing in democracy, parlimentarianism and social justice, to fight against any democratic and totalitarian trend towards dictatorship, and to strive to bringing about a National Democratic Front as a viable alternative to the totalitarian ruling Congress clique."

F.N. From previous page contd....

Reforms Act, distribution of minimum of 5 acres of land to every landless family; improve and introduce mechanised farming, implementing the Orissa Lokpal and Lokayukt Act of 1971, establishing a second steel plant and other plants for speedy industrial development; reorganized district administrative system; implement Panchayati Raj institution; proper educational systems; control price-rise; and to undertake necessary measures which can bring about a socio-economic transformation in the society".

1. Ibid, p. 3
After discussing the genesis and appeal of the Pragati Party, we move to the performance of the Party in the 1974 General Election. The Party, undoubtedly, proved as the major Opposition to the Congress. In the election, both the constituent units of the Pragati Party - the Swatantra and the Utkal Congress - won 50 seats in a total of 147. The following reasons, in brief, can be attributed to the failure of the Pragati Party in the 1974 elections:

1) It lacked the resources - both financial and organisational - in comparison to the ruling Congress in Orissa. Being a new Party, the party literature and ideology had not reached the common men. The Ruling Congress, on the other hand, being in power was in a much advantageous position.

2) The frequent flying visits of Smt. Indira Gandhi, also served another factor for Congress popularity among the masses;

3) the merger of the PSP unit in the Congress-R strengthened the rank and file of Congress Party in

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Orissa. It could bring the peasants in the coastal areas under its influence.

The women folk in Orissa voted for neither the Congress nor Pragati but for Indira Gandhi and Nandini Satpathy.

Whatever may be the reasons of Congress victory and the Pragati Party's defeat, the politics of Orissa had been constantly a politics of instability since its inception.

When the Pragati Party failed to provide the necessary polarisation of Opposition parties in Orissa, a fresh attempt was once again made by its leading members, along with the leaders of other provinces of India, to form an Opposition, which will be a viable national alternative to the Ruling Congress at the Centre. When the "Bharatiya Lok Dal" was formed in October 1974, with the merger of seven Opposition parties in Orissa, the BLD came into

1. During the months of April-August, 1974, attempts to form a democratic opposition to the Ruling Party were continued. Talks were held with the leaders of Cong-O, Jan Sangh, D.H.K. and others. These attempts met with a partial success and resulted in the formation of B.L.D. The new party was formally materialised on 29th August, 1974, and the parties which merged into it were B.K.D., S.S.P., Swatantra, Utkal

contd........
existence. Necessary communication was sent to the Speaker about the formation of BLD in Orissa Legislative Assembly, which started operating as the main Opposition party.¹ The leadership of the BLD Legislature Party went to Shri Bijoyanand Patnaik.

Constitution of the 31 member Executive Committee of the Orissa branch of the B.L.D. with Mr. N. Routray, former deputy chief minister of the State, as its President was organised in September 1974. Shri H.K. Mahtab, R.N. Singh Deo and Biju Patnaik — all former Chief Ministers of the province — were among the 23 permanent invitees to the Committee.²

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F.N. from previous page contd....


1. The speaker, announced in the OLA about the formation of the Bharatiya Lok Dal Legislative Party, said: "I have to inform the House that Shri Patnaik, leader of Opposition has intimated that the Pragati Legislative Party and its meeting held on the 8th December, 1974, has unanimously resolved that the Party shall hereafter be renamed as the Bharatiya Lok Dal Legislative Party and the leader and office bearers of the Pragati Legislative Party shall continue as the leader and office bearer of the B.L.D. Legislative Party.
OLA Debates, 10th December, 1974.

The primary objective of the party as enunciated in its Constitution, was -

"to further endeavour to put Workers' Party of Maharashtra remained out of it into effect of the principles enunciated in the statement of policy of the Party, and such policies, programs as the Party may from time to time adopt in furtherance of those principles. To this end, the Party may also accept the merger of other portion into the Dharatiya Lok Dal." 1

The party propagated that any Indian national above the age of 18 may become a primary member of the Party on acceptancy of its objective as stated in Art. 2 and paying a membership fee of one rupee for every term of two years. During that term, he shall continue to be a member so long as he does not resign or is not removed from membership of the Party. 2

The basic units of the Party constituted of:

(a) a primary council for each polling control;
(b) a Constituency/Dharatiya Council for each Assembly constituency;
(c) a District Council for each Administrative district

2. Ibid.
(excepting the area of any city with a population exceeding two lakhs within a district, covering with a separate city council shall be constituted);

(d) A Pradesh/State Council for each state or union territory;

(e) An national council; and

(f) Fronts affiliated to or organised by the National Council or the National Working Committee.

Section P: Janta Party in Orissa: 1977-1980;

The Bharatiya Lok Dal continued to function as the main Opposition party in O.L.A. after the 1976 elections. Its role, however, as an Opposition was restricted because of the Emergency in the country. Many of its senior leaders, like Sahab, Patnaik, Routray etc. were arrested. However, in early part of 1977, new political development took place at the national level when Smt. Indira Gandhi announced the election to the Lok Sabha for March 1977. Some Opposition parties came together to form a viable alternative to the Congress in the coming election. Of course, an attempt at "unifying" the Opposition partition against the Congress Party had been made several times after the independence of the country.
In Orissa, the 1967 electoral defeat of Congress and the party split in 1969 had united the Opposition parties to a certain extent.1

The first attempt to organise and strengthen the Opposition at the national level was made during the 'movement' to dissolve the state assemblies in Gujarat and Bihar in 1970 and 1975 respectively.2 The idea was first mooted by Shri Jaya Prakash Narayan.3

With the announcement of the election to the Lok Sabha on 18th January 1977, a fresh attempt was made to build up a national Opposition Party in the

1. For example, in 1967 Assembly elections, the Congress fared very poorly as a result of which a non-Congress government (coalition) was formed in the State. The JC and the Swatantra had fought the election on the basis of a 21-point electoral alliance. Similarly, after the 1969 split took place, a new regional party was formed - the Utkal Congress. After the 1971 mid-term election, the UC-Swatantra-Jharkhand came together to form the coalition government in Orissa.


country. On January 20, 1977, the four 'non-Communist' parties, i.e., the Congress-O, the Jan Sangh, the Bharatiya Lok Dal and the Socialists agreed to "work as one party" to face the elections. The new party was named as the Janta Party.

Jaya Prakash Narayan, while bemoaning the formation of the new Party, observed:

"the main aim of the Janta Party would be to decentralize power, so that people even in the remotest villages could participate in making of decisions and plans that concern them. And of course, the Party will revive the strength of independent institutions like the judiciary and the Press that act as a check against authoritarian rule."

On February 2nd, 1977, Jagjivan Ram resigned from the Congress followed by Shri H.N. Bahuguna and Nandini Satpathy, the former Chief Minister of UP and Orissa respectively and Shri K.R. Gana, a former Union Minister. Sat. Satpathy resigned from the Congress after he resigned from the Chief Ministership of the State. The new Party was named as the Congress for Democracy.

In May 1977, the Congress-O, the Bharatiya Lok Dal, the Bharatiya Jan Sangh, the Socialist Party,
the Congress for Democracy and a few Independents, belonging to the Congress united together to form the Janta Party. The formation of the Janta Party evoked criticism from its opponents who commented that the new party was "nothing but the Jan Sangh into which the other parties have merged". However, the supporters of the Janta Party hailed it as a new step towards the emergence of a "two Party" system in the country.

Thus, India's emergent two-party system is polarised around two historic forces, one that emerged out of the nationalist struggle and the other that emerged out of a democratic struggle. Of course, the Janta Party may also be branded as a nationalist as the Congress, but the latter gave priority to human rights and stood for an open political and economic market place.

The objective of the new party as enshrined in its Constitution was:

"Jaya Prakash Narayan is dedicated to the task of building up a democratic, secular and socialist state in India, an Gandhian principles drawing inspiration from a rich heritage and the noble tradition of our struggle for national independence and individual liberty. The Party believes in a
policy that ensures decentralization of economic and political powers. It affirms the right of peaceful and democratic dissent which includes Satyagraha or non-violent resistance.1

With the establishment of the Janta Party at the national level, the Orissa unit of the Janta Party came into existence. The Orissa unit of the B.L.D. merged into the Janta Party before the Lok Sabha elections. The C.F.D. headed by Sat. Satpathy also became a constituent unit of the Janta Party in Orissa. In the legislative wing, the leadership was headed by Shri Dijua Patnaik. On the organisational wing, the party President was Shri Biswanath Pandit. Three members from Orissa were represented in the National Executive Committee of Janta Party. They were Shri Bhuba Day (General Secretary), Sat. Satpathy and Shri Patnaik (members).

Parliamentary elections were held in March 1977 and the Janta Party fought the election in the alliance with the C.F.D. and C.P.I.I. The Janta Party began its election campaign by focussing attention on democracy vis-a-vis authoritarianism of Sat. Indira

Gandhi.\(^1\) Several other prominent leaders of the Janta Party, while launching the election campaign justified the establishment of Janta Party as an national alternative.\(^2\) To be an alternative to the Congress, the Party in its long 24-page Election Manifesto promised the people to restore democracy.

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1. In reply to Mrs. Gandhi's criticism of Janta Party as a "conglomerate of groups", the Janta Party stated:
   "She knows that the Janta Party has been forged in a struggle for a clean government and a true democracy and those who are leading it are bound in fellowship, determination and ideals shared in here prisons during the past 19 months. Thus, the Janta is certain to provide dynamic stability".

2. Jaya Prakash Narayan, while launching the Janta Party Election campaign under the auspices of Bihar Chatra Sangharsh Samiti, said:
   ".... the Opposition was no longer a house divided against itself. The Janta Party was strong in the sense that it combined the views of parties and was for acquiring the strength to face the challenge posed by the Congress."
   *Indian Express* (Delhi), January 31, 1977.

Moorarji Desai, the President of the Party, commented that
   "If the Janta Party was voted to power, it would bring in suitable legislation to prevent anyone at the apex of the government from assuming 'dictatorial powers' or acting arbitrarily against the wishes of the people".
   *Indian Express* (Delhi), March 2, 1977.
individual liberty, independence of judiciary, freedom of Press, supremacy of law etc. ²

For electoral purposes, the Party appointed regional leaders to supervise its election activities and coordinate multiple jobs involved in Lok Sabha elections. For Orissa, Shri P.C. Som was appointed as the observer ², and Patnaik was appointed as the Convenor for State Party unit for the collection of party candidates for the fourth-coming election. In the election, the Janta Party won 16 seats, C.F.D. 1, C.P.I. 1 and the Congress only 2 seats. ³

The next step of the Party was to attempt for political consolidation at the State level. In a very swift action, the Janta Party dissolved the

2. Along with Orissa, P.C. Som was appointed as observer to other states like, West Bengal, Assam, Manipur, Tripura, Nagaland, Mizoram, and Arunachal Pradesh.
legislative assemblies of nine states.¹ This, the party did to utilize the government authority for party-building. When the Congress party dominated the national and state governments, it used political patronage for strengthening the party organisation. A party, which wields political power attracts a large number of supporters and active workers. Many tasks associated with the process of party-building are more easily achieved because of political patronage of the government functionaries.

The party guidelines for the elections were that those who defected to the Indira Congress during the Emergency, would not be considered for allotment of party ticket.

In the elections, the Party in alliance with the CPM, won 110 out of 147 seats in the O.L.A. But, soon the party became a victim of factionalism and pressure politics. In the 1980 elections, the Congress once again swept the polls and won 2/3 majority both in the parliamentary elections and in the Assembly elections.

¹. The 9 states were - Orissa, West Bengal, Bihar, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi.
Summing Up

Therefore, what is the character of the "Opposition" in Orissa? The genesis or the emergence of the political parties may be either phoney, spurious or real. After making a sequential and analytical study of the various Opposition parties in Orissa from 1952-1980, we attempt to deal with several theoretical issues with regard to the characteristics of the "Opposition" in Orissa.

1) Opposition parties in Orissa, beginning from the GP, Swatantra, Jan Congress, Utkal Congress, Pragati Party, B.L.D. and even the Janta Party in 1977, were formed just prior to the General Elections. Factions within the party walk-out either for election purposes or on personal grounds. They organise a new party and fight the elections. Such parties could not exist for a longer period of time. They are either dissolved or they merge with other political parties. In Orissa, Swatantra Parishad was the main Opposition party and came into existence prior to the 1952 elections. It continued to be a major challenge to the Congress till 1961. It was then, that the leaders of GP considered for its merger with the
Swarantra Party at the All-India level.

The Jan Congress (1966) and the United Congress were formed, just before the elections of 1967 and 1971. Both the parties had brief existence.

2) The pattern of leadership of the Opposition shows that the same leadership has continued in Orissa. From 1952 till 1971, Shri N.N. Singh Deo was the leader of the Swarantra Party in Orissa. But, the majority of the leaders in Orissa consist of disgruntled politicians who were at one time or another prominent Congressmen. They are, like Mahatab, Patnaik, Pradhan, Routray, Mitra, S.N. Patnaik, Santanu Kumar Das, Badamb Nath and others having multi-ferous experience in state politics.

Thus, with the defection of many Congress leaders to the Opposition benches, the Congress in Orissa is forced to recruit members from new cadre. It is a party of younger generation and with lesser experience. Thus, the Opposition leaders belong to older generation, who were likely to be less militant and more reactionary.

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1. The two Congress Chief Ministers were exception. They were, B.K. Choudhary and Sadasib Tripathi. Choudhary left politics to join Sarvodaya movement and Tripathy left politics because of poor health.
The similarity of the ruling and opposition elites can further be explained to the historical factor of its emergence. It was from a very small and homogeneous educated upper class elite that the ruling class in Orissa (also in India) was formed. It was from this ruling class that the Opposition elements also emerged.

3) Organizationally, the Opposition parties are less coherent than that of the Congress. The organizational base of GP was stronger in the Western districts as compared to the Coastal one(s). This was true of Swatantra Party too. The JC and the UC had their organizational base in the Coastal areas. The other parties like the Pragati Party, the B.L.D., the Janta Party could not build up strong organisations and this was one of the important reasons as to why these parties failed to remain in power for a longer period of time.

4) Lack of ideological honesty among the leaders is another important characteristic of the Opposition in Orissa. Mahatab Patnaik, Satpathy, Singh Dee, Pradhan etc. at one time had been strong critics of one another.
5) An analysis of electoral pattern will show that in 1967, 1971 and 1977, non-Congress governments were formed in the State. On each occasion, the ministry could not continue for full term, because of internal bickering among the coalitional partners.

Thus, Opposition in Orissa cannot be categorized on the same model as that of Democratic and Republicans of USA or Conservative and Labour of the UK. Instead, they are ideologically ships of the same bloc, with minor differences. The GP and the Swatantra were rightist parties. The JC and the UC were parties with contrasting character, with a slight bent to the right. The Pragati, the B.L.D. and the JP are all combination of GP, Swatantra, UC, JC, Congress-O and the Socialists. This proves that they are ideologically disorganized and lose cohesive. The Opposition reflects a conflict between tradition and modernity in Orissa.