

# SPEECHES & REMARKS

OF

PANDIT

NILAKANTHA DAS

Vol. I

1959

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OF

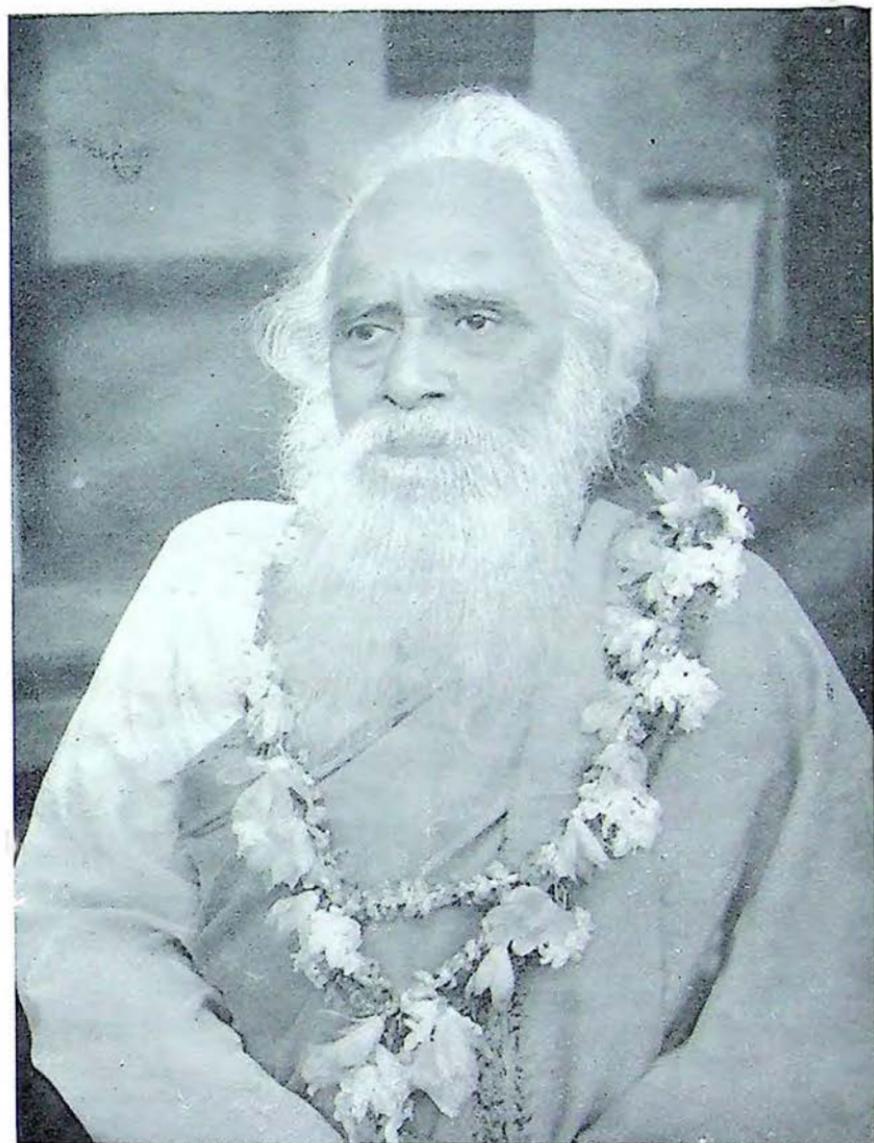
PANDIT

NILAKANTHA DAS

VOL - I

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PANDIT NILAKANTHA DAS, ON HIS 76th BIRTH DAY  
5th AUGUST 1959.



RASHTRAPATI PALAVAN,  
NEW DELHI.

July 10, 1959  
Asadha 19, 1881(Saka).

I am glad to know that there is a proposal afoot to present an Abhinandan Granth by way of honouring Pandit Nilkantha Das who is perhaps the oldest public worker and leader living in Orissa now. I have known him for a long time and all these years our contacts and occasional meetings have gone to enhance my appreciation for his public-spiritedness, his devotion to work and his other qualities of head and heart. I am glad that through my friend, Shri Harekrushna Mahtab's courtesy I have got this opportunity of offering my tribute of praise and friendly appreciation for Shri Nilkantha Das. May Shri Das live long in the service of Orissa and the country!

*Rayananda Das*

PRIME MINISTERS HOUSE  
NEW DELHI

June 8, 1959

For half a century, Pandit Nilkantha Das has played a dominant role in Orissa in the field of politics as well as that of literature. It has been my privilege to know him for many years. Now that a tribute is being prepared for him, I gladly join in it and wish him many more years of service to the country.

*Jawahar Lal Nehru*



HOME MINISTER,  
INDIA,

New Delhi,  
June 18, 1959.

I am glad to have this opportunity of associating myself in paying tribute to Pandit Nilakantha Das. His life of long and distinguished public service covers a significant period of our recent history. As a valiant comrade in the Freedom Movement he had his full share of the trials and tribulations of the struggle. After Independence, he has given his counsel and constructive effort in the building up of the democratic institutions in the State. His thoughts and actions have, however, not been confined to political work only. His writings and profound scholarship have won him a place of eminence in Oriya literature and his influence on the cultural life and contributions to philosophical thought are bound to be abiding. In presenting the Abhinandan Granth to him we pay tribute to a dedicated public worker, a savant and a humanist.

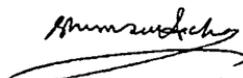
*g. B. Pant*



RAJ BHAVAN  
HYDERABAD.  
14th June 1959.

I am glad to know that it is proposed to publish an 'Abhinandan Granth' on the occasion of the next birthday anniversary of Pandit Nilakantha Das. In honouring Pandit Nilakantha Das, we honour ourselves. Pandit Nilakantha Das combines in himself outstanding qualities of head and heart. He worships not only in the temple of Learning but has distinguished himself for social service of a high order and in the battle-field of the country's freedom from the foreign yoke. He is a fine specimen of simple living and high thinking. His scholarship and width of vision are simply refreshing.

These are some of the first-hand impressions I formed during my contact with the great patriot-scholar when I was privileged to serve Orissa as its Governor from September 1956 to July 1957. I join the host of his friends and admirers in wishing Pandit Nilakantha Das many more years of useful service to the country.

  
(Bhimsen Sachar)



AGARWALLA MANSIONS,  
370, UPPER CHITPORE ROAD,  
CALCUTTA.

21st July, 1959.

It is the greatest pleasure of my life to find that one of our National Leaders and a real patriot like my friend and well-wisher Pundit Nilkantha Das is being given an "AVINANDAN" on the occasion of his next birth day.

It is in the fitness of things that Pundit Nilkantha Das deserves the highest praise and appreciation for his services in the cause of the country and its industries as well. Very few people knew him and his works so intimately as I had had the occasion to do. About his services in the national cause every man in the street knows what immense sacrifices he made in fighting the cause of Indian freedom. He is also one of the greatest literateurs and a Journalist all throughout his life, but whenever the country needed he gave up everything even sacrificing his own family to line up with the front rank of patriots and leaders of India. With all the emphasis at my command I say that Pundit Nilkantha Das is not a leader of Orissa, or Bengal, or Bihar, but he is really an Indian and National Leader.

I quote an instance which will show the depth of his national feeling. As far back as February-March/1930 when the Steel Protection Bill was being discussed in the Central Assembly it was Pundit Nilkantha Das who, in his memorable speech on that occasion, brought to the fore-front of the Indian public the name of Sri P.W. Bose, an officer of the then Geological Research Service of the Mayurbhanj State of Orissa, as the first and foremost Geologist to hit upon the selection of the site of Sakchi, now known as Jamshedpur, for the establishment of our first and famous Steel Industry, viz. Tata Iron & Steel Industry. I feel proud about my friend to say that had Pundit Nilkantha Das in that epoch-making speech not laid bare the conspiracy to kill our only National Steel Industry of the time hatched by some of the foreigners connected with the Tata Iron & Steel Industry, presumably the National feeling favour of our only National Steel Industry would not have been focussed on it to make it one of the premier Steel Industries in India. I am to suppress my intense feeling in writing multifarious incidents where Pundit Nilkantha Das proved himself a stalwart not only for the freedom of the country but also for the protection of National Industries.

May god bless him with long life and further prosperity for the services he has rendered to our country and people being fearless of the consequences that did befall on him at times. He is one of the bravest amongst the national fighters for the cause of the Indian freedom in all its spheres and this 'AVINANDAN' is the minimum that the people could offer even at this late hour of his life.

## LIFE SKETCH OF

PANDIT NILAKANTHA DAS

Pandit Nilakantha Das is one of the most striking figures in Indian politics. He is amongst the earliest champions of Indian Independence to which he dedicated his whole life. Very early in 1921 he joined the Independence Movement under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. He is held in great esteem by his contemporaries for his political achievements as well as for his erudition. He is not only an erudite scholar but also a great educationist, a social reformer as well as a patriot.

Born in the 5th August, 1884 in a respectable Brahmin family of Puri, he progressed brilliantly well in his academic career till he became an M. A. in Philosophy from the Calcutta University. It would have been then very easy for him to obtain a lucrative post in some department of the Government. But his ambition was to be a servant of the nation and try for its emancipation and upliftment. With this end in view, he chose to be a teacher in the National School at Satyabadi in the district of Puri—a School which he was mainly instrumental in starting in 1909 in collaboration with the late Pandit Gopabandhu Das, who died in 1928 and was older by 6 years. He was the main spring of the spirit of inspiration of the self-sacrifice not only for Pandit Das but also for his contemporaries and associates. This School was a unique national institution in those days. It refused alluring Government grants-in-aid and got recognition from the then Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University, Sir Dev Prasad Sarbadhikari and not by the Bihar and Orissa's Education Department which was then a parallel institution in this respect. The classes of the school were being held under the shades of trees in a garden with a simple shed for the rainy season. It was a big residential High School with more than 500 boarders who were living in thatched boarding houses just fit for the living of the village—folk. Pandit Nilakantha was throughout the residential Head of the institution and under him the educational system of the school was organised with a basically new outlook.

From the beginning Pandit Nilakantha had a remarkable zeal for social reform and he had no love for any distinction of caste or creed. He actually joined the school in 1911 and since then he openly revolted against 'untouchability' and similar other undesirable social relations and he inspired both the school and its hostel with a community feeding of students who belonged to all castes and creeds. This created a situation saturated with a sense of suspicion and distrust as Satyabadi was the most orthodox Brahmin centre of Orissa. The Pandit's,

social ideals and activities were too much for such orthodox people. They warned and even alarmed the community as best as they could and engaged themselves in organised attempts to excommunicate the Pandit for such 'wild' actions, and went even to the extent of setting fire to the thatched bungalow in which the big library of the school as well as the classes were housed. But Panditji, alone as he was then in the midst of this conflict, remained undaunted. He was consequently known and recognised as a great social reformer and Educationist among the Oriya-speaking people. A new house was immediately put up and the valuable and authentic books were again collected to lay the foundation of the then famous 'Harihar Library' of the Satyabadi School. The Pandit was in those days so studiously absorbed in the study of those books that famous pilgrims from other parts of India and visitors from outside India who saw him there in the Garden School and library wrote in papers and magazines not only highly about his educational activities and outlook but his deep habits of studies and his erudition. It may be mentioned, however, in this connection that from about 1912 he began a movement for the scientific remodelling of the Oriya script called 'Lipisamskara' which created a literary commotion throughout Orissa. In the beginning orthodox Oriya literary men were vehemently against it in their criticisms in papers and magazines. It is to be regretted, however, that since then no more reform has been taken up by the Education Department of Orissa though the Pandit as the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly is now out to seriously take up the subject and specially to make Oriya typewriter quite in line with the reform.

Next to Pandit Gopabandhu Das, he was the person who made the Satyabadi School famous all over India and he received praises of such high personages as Sir Dev Prasad Sarbadhikari, Sir Asutosh Mukherjee, Sir Krishna Gobind Gupta, Sir Edward Gait, Mahatma Gandhi himself and others.

After getting his M. A. Degree from the Calcutta University, Pandit Das worked for 9 years until 1920 as the Head of the National High School. His brilliance attracted the late Sir Asutosh Mukherjee who invited Pandit Das to Calcutta University in 1920 where he worked as a Professor of post-Graduate Studies in Modern Indian Languages. But he was there only for three months when the national call for non-co-operation came to him as a directive from within and he joined the movement early in January, 1921. He was elected to the then Central Legislative Assembly from Orissa towards the end of 1923. He was elected more than once to the Delhi University Court where he served until 1930. His illuminating thesis on

“The Ideal and Outlook in Education” (In India and the East) sent from prison to be read in the Benaras Session of the All Asia Educational Conference in 1930, and there read by him in person, brought his reputation and recognition from all over the country. As an old associate of Pandit Motilal Nehru, Vithalbhair Patel, Bullabhai Desai and Mohammad Ali Jinnah in the old Central Legislative Assembly, Panditji earned a good deal of popularity not only in the Parliamentary politics but also in his home province which elected him as the Chief of the Utkal Provincial Congress Committee. He held this office for many years. He was the first to visualise that the formation of a separate Province for all Oriya-speaking tracts and not their amalgamation to be tagged to some neighbouring province, was the real goal of Orissa. He distinctly demanded it in the Central Assembly on 8th February, 1928. This demand ultimately culminated in the formation of the present State of Orissa in 1936. He was elected President of the All-Party Conference of Orissa in 1930 for the promotion of this cause. He was also elected Chairman of the Reception Committee of the proposed Puri Session of the Indian National Congress of 1932 which was declared unlawful just before the session. The success of the Congress in 1936 elections was almost entirely due to his single-handed effort and to his dynamic personality which moved like a whirlwind all over Orissa leading to the formation of the first Congress Ministry of Sri Biswanath Das in 1937.

Panditji, during the course of his non-co-operation struggle, went to Jail for 5 times during the period from 1922 to 1934. First he joined the Swaraj Party of late Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das as a ‘pre-changer’ after coming out from his first jail life. Then in 1927 he was elected as a Congress M. L. A. which he gave up in 1930 under the mandate of Lahore Congress and then in 1930 he joined Sri Madan Mohan Malaviya’s independent Party and got elected only to resign and come out from the Assembly after only 12 days in April the same year along with Madan Mohan Malaviya, Vithalbhair Patel, T. Prakasham and others in response to the Dandi Salt March of Mahatma Gandhi.

In about 1939 Subhas Bose came to Orissa and Panditji as the president of the Utkal Congress made a tour with him throughout the province during which he got convinced that the then Congress policy of giving up Councils and Assemblies would end in division of India into Hindu India and Pakistan. Subhas Bose had come out of Assam after establishing there a coalition ministry between Sir Saddullah and Baradolai. In Bengal he made all arrangements for a similar coalition between Fazlul-Haque and Sarat Chandra Bose. From Orissa

with the same purpose he left for Bihar and Panditji was practically ordained so to say, to have a coalition at any cost in Orissa in view of the future of the country which would otherwise be communally rifted as-under. The result was the then coalition Ministry of Sri Sobhan Khan, the then Secretary of the Muslim League of Orissa and the Maharaja of Parlakimedi.

Of course Panditji was not connected with any office in the Ministry. But as a Central M. L. A. he made serious attempts time after time to make the Federal part of the then Constitution of 1935 a success. He gave several resolutions to the effect, but the Congress Party even outside the Assembly vehemently opposed it from time to time with the expressed theory that such a step would alienate the Muhammadans, so essential, in their opinion, for Indian independence. The attempt was consequently frustrated. It may be mentioned in this connection that during the time the Pandit was in communication with Sri Rajagopalachari, who, by the bye, for fear of this communal division of India, did not like to boycott the Assembly and made serious attempts in his own way for coalition.

After the disappearance of Subhas Bose, during the Provincial election of 1946, Panditji was not accepted by Congress in Orissa and on account of his activities for coalition described above. He remained silent for 5 years during which period, however, his political activities included his intimate association with the movement of the people of the Indian States called Eastern Gadajats. During the 1951 elections he started a party called "Independent Janasangha" and got elected himself as the leader of it with some followers into the Orissa Legislative Assembly where he proved a very outstanding member in the opposition. He was sounded whether he should again like to come and join Congress and he agreed. Upon this, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru wrote to the Pandit on March 25, 1955 as follows :

"My dear friend,

I am happy to learn that you have expressed a wish to come back to the Congress. You were in the old days a pillar of the Congress in Orissa and it was a matter of sorrow to me, as to others, that you should have left it fifteen years ago. I shall be happy indeed if you come back and help us with your wise counsel.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru"

In response to this Panditji joined Congress.

As a journalist, critic and editor, he has earned a wide reputation by editing one of the most popular and cultural magazines, the "Naba Bharat" for 8 years to which he added later a weekly and a daily Naba Bharat which he edited for a few years.

A prolific writer of Oriya, Pandit Das has to his credit the monumental gloss and commentary on the Bhagabat Geeta. His recent book "Ordia Sahityara Krama Bārināna" (two volumes of which have already been published) is a critical study on the Development of Oriya Literature and Culture in a very unique and outstanding manner. So also is his paper on the "Cult of Jagannatha" read in the Viswa Bharati University of Santiniketan, and recently published in the Orissa Historical Research Journal, Vol. VII, No. 1 under the name, "Hints on the Significance and History of Jagannatha". It is an erudite discourse on the history, philosophy and religion connected with that ancient institution. This is also considered to be an authoritative writing of reference on the subject. He is known to be an outstanding poet too. His well-known works on poetry are "Konark", "Kharavela", "Pranayini" and "Dasanayak". His contributions on children's literature are also worth-mentioning. His "Bhaktigatha" is a book of great value for recitation of children in Schools and Colleges.

Since 1935 Pandit Das had been working ceaselessly for the establishment of Utkal University having contributed his services as the Chairman of the Berhampur Convention called for the purpose in 1935 as well as the Chairman of the Committee (appointed in the year 1938 by the State Government) the report of which led to the establishment of the Utkal University. He has been made an Honorary Doctor and has also been appointed the Pro-Chancellor of the University.

In the present democratic politics, he was in 1957 elected uncontested to the Orissa Legislative Assembly where he has been elected the Speaker and as such practically been dragged out of his calm and incessant studies. As the Speaker, it is very gratifying to note, he is just to all parties and opinions and is loved and respected by all sections and interests both inside the House and in the State at large. Thus he has been the most respected man in politics in the State of Orissa. Yet, he is keeping himself engaged in his special studies and writings on the Vedic and Pre-Vedic philosophy and culture, which mainly centre on his mature philosphic theory of Maitri, i. e., universal kinship, so inherently associated with the conception of Jagannathā and the only panacea for all national and international maladies besetting the world of humanity to-day.

RAJA BALLAV MISRA

CHIEF MINISTER  
ORISSA

Bhubaneswar,  
The 30th July, 1959.

*The History of a period in a country is bound up so intimately with the lives of a few persons that it cannot be properly studied without studying the lives of these persons. From the point of view of history, it is essential to know how ideas are developing and how various changes are taking place in the society. So far as the modern history of Orissa is concerned, to study it from all angles, it is necessary to study the lives of persons who played important roles, in making it what it is today.*

*Pandit Nilakantha Das is one of those important persons who has played a great role in the formation of the current history of Orissa. The study of his life therefore is of great importance.*

*Pandit Nilakantha Das is a great thinker having his own line of thought which could be distinguished from that of many others, who worked with him. Pandit Nilakantha Das is a great social reformer, but the reforms for which he fought with the society and suffered may today be treated as trivial because so many waves of more radical reforms have been passing over the society since the youthful days of Pandit Das. But as a pioneer in the field Pandit Nilakantha Das had to face tremendous odds which cannot be conceived today. Pandit Nilakantha Das is a great parliamentarian. Parliamentary politics of his days was more difficult than those now, because that was the formation period. Pandit Nilakantha Das is a great literateur. Today the modern writer perhaps will look upon him as out of date. But it should be remembered, that whatever is happening today not only in Orissa but in the whole of India is the outer portion of the magnificent edifice, the foundation of which was laid by many patriots like Pandit Nilakantha Das. When we see the electric bulb emitting powerful light all round, let us not forget the*

*beautiful and bright oil lamps which were the precursors of the electric light.*

*It is our singular good fortune that Pandit Nilakantha Das is still active, with the heavy load of his experience of various activities on his back, to tell us the story of development of the last about fifty years. The pages which follow in this book will tell the readers what the current of thought was and how the struggle for development was carried on when Pandit Nilakantha Das was near about fifty years of age. But his activities in his earlier life have not yet been recorded and I am sure the complete story of his life will not only be an interesting reading but will be a guide to youths for many generations to come.*

*I pay my respectful homage to the Grand Old Man who has dedicated his life to the service of the Society from the very beginning of his youth.*

**( H. Mahatab. )**



## I

### Opposing the Reference of the Public Safety Bill to Select Committee.

*4th Feb. 1929.*

**Pandit Nilakantha Das** (Orissa Division : Non-Muhammadan) : Sir, my friend Mr. Ranga lyer, who is not here now, spoke just before me and it is to be regretted that he brought into this question many extraneous matters with which Members of this House are not concerned. I wish he had only concentrated his observations on the motion for circulation of this Bill or its reference to a Select Committee. As for myself, I am not much enamoured of this motion for circulation. It is evidently a dilatory motion, and it has its use only to that extent. And I must make it clear that I shall have perhaps, if need be, to go to the lobby with my Leader for obvious reasons.

The debate on this question is not new to-day in this House. We had long discussions on this self-same question in Simla, and there I was not all the time present ; but what I gathered afterwards was that the main burden of the argument was that Government have already so many weapons in their armoury, that no new weapon is necessary for this purpose. From the speeches of many of my friends on this side, it would appear as if, to avoid this measure, they were going, perhaps unwillingly, to give sanction to all other repressive measures and measures for excluding Europeans or Englishmen who are considered undesirable. I am here to give sanction to none of them.

But I am simply wondering how long this kind of thing would go on ; how long imperialism and capitalism would be nursed in glass houses.

**Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer :** Without capitalism, how can there be labour ?

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** Is labour a counterpart of capitalism ? This is a new idea. Labour has nothing to do with capitalism, as such.

**Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer :** Has labour anything to do with capital ? Can labour exist in the absence of capital ?

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** But in modern political philosophy capitalism has a special significance. I have heard the argument particularly of Mr. Ranga Iyer on the evidence adduced by the Honourable the Home Member to justify the Bill. To my friend Mr. Gaya Prasad the evidence was not sufficient, but to Mr. Ranga Iyer strangely that evidence was more than sufficient. Even for arguments' sake, admitting that it is sufficient, I say communism is there. It is a menace and a terror I know, to the world's imperialism and capitalism which are trembling to fall at the very thought of it. Communism is there, a new ideal of world civilization. It is dawning on the horizon ; it has already come up, and in ordinary course, it must affect the destiny of all the previous new ideals of the world. What doubt is there about it ?

There was always an existing order of things which was threatened by any new ideals that came up, and again those that profited by the things existing have always opposed, in the course of history, in this particular manner, all such new ideals. We have had experience in history of fires at Smith Field during the reign of Bloody Mary. There was also the extreme penalty of the Inquisition. But Protestantism could never be killed. It triumphed on the other hand. Galileo died in jail for something which he said, which appeared as communism to men who were interested in things or orders existing then. But who has lived ? Galileo or the Pope who imprisoned him.

It is a fact that communism has dawned. How ? Who preached it in Russia ? What number were exiled in Siberia and how long ? Do you remember ? Was communism shut out in the snow of Siberia ? You cannot now make this Indian Empire a harem, a Zenana of the British Imperialists, to be exploited in the dark. I say communism has come in. Let it come, and we are here to face it. If you are so very suspicious of your own position here, if the Government is

not broadbased on the very will of the people, if you have not convinced our people that your Government is good and that the administration is quite stable, how can you protect all your existing orders in this manner? Can you ward off all the ideas of communism and other such ideas from the shores of Bombay? You may deport half a dozen or a dozen Europeans or Englishmen for reasons you know best; you may suppress the beautiful youth movement for you have power, but will communism be warded off? Will not the communist principle come into India? As it is a new idea, it will, as it is already doing, pervade the atmosphere of the world, and it must come to India as it has come to England or to any other country.

You call it a revolutionary something. What is revolution? Ah, a student of philosophy, I do not understand the meaning of revolution. I do not understand it even in the dictionary. In the order of progress, I know everything new is a stage in evolution. The idea of revolution is a creation of unscientific understanding, or of the people interested. Take the case of a plant, and its flower, which, any botanist will tell you is a variation of the leaf. A common ordinary man goes to a plant and looks at its flower. He finds something new and calls it perhaps a revolution in the life of the plant. But to a scientist it is clearly a stage in evolution. It is nothing new. So you may call it a revolution whenever you find something new. Strange it is, that a new leaf, so long as it looks like its predecessor, is an indication of evolution, and not the flower which is perhaps the *summum bonum* of the plant; perhaps the best stage in its evolution—the object or the purpose for which the plant exists! Who knows that this new ideal that is coming is not the best stage in the evolution of human culture—an indication of the purpose for which humanity exists? Let it have a trial all over the world; let it have a trial in India. We are here to face it as I have told you.

You say you try to protect us from ideals and ideas which some people are coming to preach here. In this connection you dare to speak of our culture. What is our culture? Indian culture is always open to all sorts of ideas and movements and all sorts of thoughts. No ideas or ideals have ever been shut out of our doors. Even in the days of Brahminism we had our Charvaka philosophy which preached.

यावज्जीवेत् सुखं जीवेत् ऋणं कृत्वा घृतं पिबेत् ।  
भस्मीभूतस्य देहस्य पुनरागमनं कुन् ॥

That is, "enjoy as long as you live; borrow money, drink ghee (with that money), (for) after your body is

done to ashes, you are not coming again". That was the Charvaka system of philosophy preached by Brihaspati. It was not only tolerated in India, but was given as free a scope as any other philosophy in the land. Culture was not damaged. The then existing order of things did not come down like a house of cards. Rather our culture was synthetically supplemented by this aspect of human life. You speak of preserving culture against ideas which are foreign to the Indian. I do not understand how you can preserve culture by wording off aspects of culture from the shores of India. It is impossible. So I say, the very principle of the Bill is wrong and vicious.

Don't, therefore take to these means, proved ineffective during ages, to tighten your grip for a time and then to justify your existence. You must take to other means of convincing people that you ought to be here, that the order of things you have established and have carried on for these 150 years, the economic order, the administrative order—or whatever you like to call it—that all your orders of things are stable and are not to be thrown as under at the whisper of a new idea. In plain words, convince people that you should stay on here you should adopt other means and not the means you are adopting. These means are against our culture, our tradition, our temperament. We cannot agree that people coming to preach certain new ideas in India should be shut out. This is unthinkable. No Indians care for new ideas being preached among them. If you go for public opinion, if you go on this issue for any election, you will find that even the masses you want to protect against this new economic order of things will be against you. You are here for your own purposes. You interpret the opinion of the masses for your own convenience ; but have you gauged what that opinion really is ? Have you understood it carefully ? Had you understood it even partially, your opinion would be otherwise. But here we are to reply to a body of irresponsible people who work for their own purposes and have not even the foresight to listen to reason and that is how such a measure came to be discussed in this House. I oppose it ; I oppose the principle of the Bill.

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## II

### General Criticism of the Railway Budget.

*21st Feb. 1929.*

**Pandit Nilakantha Das** ( Orissa Division : Non Muhammadan ) : Sir, it is not for me to curse or congratulate the

Railway Board on this occasion. They are above both. But this much I can say that the Honourable Sir George Rainy and his colleague have played their part cleverly so far as the budget is concerned as well as the speech. Language and statements have a function in State craft, and in my opinion, such a function has been well discharged.

I was also glad to note that our Honourable friend Sir George Rainy almost began his speech with a straight confession that a reduction of fares and rates ended in an increase of receipts of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  crores of rupees, for it afforded an incentive to activity in the general trade. But he recoils at once to the traditional timidity of a Departmental Head and says that it is yet too early to say whether the increase is due to reduction, though even in passenger traffic, he admits, the income is down by 7 instead of 21 lakhs in this age of motors and buses. Commerce is not ordinarily expected to be imaginative, and I am therefore not inclined to blame the Honourable Member on that score.

Now I shall turn to the main criticism of the budget. Such a criticism from a Member of the Opposition, as I am, is oftener than not generally looked upon as destructive, and I am afraid, nothing better than the ordinary can, I give so long as the basic policy of the administration remains as it is. Railways ought to be a national industry, but there is nothing national in our administration. So long as the industry does not become at least Indian in spirit as well as in form, the suggestions I am going to offer are in danger of losing their constructive character. But let us hope against hope so long as we are here.

A good portion of the speech of the Honourable Member for Commerce appears to be a pleading for a new Member on the Board. A case is attempted to be made out for him on the ground that he will take almost exclusive charge of labour. He may perhaps be an Indian by caste. Thus, our Honourable friend seems to aim at killing two birds with one stone. Both the cry for Indianisation in the highest place as well as that against merciless exploitation of labour are attempted to be gagged in this one stroke of policy. An Indian Member in charge of labour too may be used, not only as an apparent argument, but as a seeming moral antidote even against real labour unrest.

I have got little to do with Indianisation of high offices, as it is being often demanded and tardily and unwillingly conceded in these days of job-hunting in many quarters. I have always held with but a few of my friends on this side, and I hold to-day, that Indianisation in higher service means

a complete remodelling and even overhauling, as well as possible, of the pay and other service conditions on the basis of Indian standard of living and requirements.

We may invite experts on their terms when and so long as we cannot but do without them. But there is no reason why our ordinary service should be paid according to the time-honoured English standard, and be supplemented from time to time by "Lee-Loots" and other like devices to keep it perpetually attractive to the Englishmen coming to India. I have often uttered the warning that, by putting Indians in high services under the present foreign service conditions, our national future is being almost irretrievably jeopardised. I shall not therefore repeat my arguments here on this subject.

But what about labour, for which is necessary the additional Member on the Board? If the Honourable Member honestly feels that radical and far-reaching measures are needed for permanently pacifying discontented labour, then he will not convince the House by forcing suddenly a new Member upon their vote. An oblique look towards Geneva conventions or a tardy and suspicious effect given to those conventions will neither bring permanent satisfaction to labour, nor will justify the addition of a new Member to the Railway Board.

Labour is a big problem, and that specially on our railways. The discontent there has been just and chronic. The Board has a distinct and most imperative duty here. But the appointment of a Member in this fashion appears to be shelving rather than doing the duty properly. This way of avoiding solution of problems has been a custom of this administration in other spheres. If a real solution of the labour unrest is intended, then a properly thought-out plan and programme of work based on a careful study and sympathetic appreciation of labour grievances is the primary necessity. A Member on the Board, or a like device to put such a programme in action may then be considered by the House in a more congenial and convenient atmosphere.

Labour grievances are many and varied. First and foremost among them is providing for the education of labourers themselves and particularly their children. Sir George Rainy says that there are 8,00,000 employees working on the Indian Railways. At the most modest calculation, the number of the children must be 16,00,000. But how many high schools or colleges have been arranged for this vast number? How many more does Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas hope ... (A pause.)

**Mr. President :** Hope what? (Laughter.)

**Pandit Nilakantha Das** : For out of the information he gave out to-day ?

Suppression of the labourers and depriving their children of education has long been a recognised curse of Western Industrialism. It kills the culture and the manhood of the individual. Who knows what genius remains hidden in the child of the labourer and the poor employee ? Besides, in India education is a tradition among many classes of people toiling as employees under the railways. I can here put it mind of a poor mofussil stationmaster who retired actually a pauper as he had to educate his only son. The son subsequently died of heart troubles and the father died of starvation. Under conditions like this, how can it expect responsible co-operation from the employees by foisting a new Member on them, God only knows.

The circumstances of discontent on this score are all the more accentuated when we find that much better provision is made for white children to the exclusion of the real sons of the soil. It is an open secret that on many railways, if not on all, besides the official provisions, about 90 per cent. of the fines realised from the employees goes to the education of the children of the white servants. But what of the children of those that pay the fine ?

Technical education, enough to man the national industry, should also be thoroughly and liberally provided for. Arrangements should be made for training skilled hands extensively to ensure efficiency beyond doubt in a scheme for radical Indianisation. Intellectual genius and proper adaptability are not wanting in the Indian. In learning capacity Indians yield to know other race in the world. But adequate and proper facilities for training are wanting.

In para 101 of the Report of the Railway Board for 1926-27, for instance, a training for only 17 students is provided for. The attempt may appear to have been in the right direction, but considering the hugeness of the industry the meagre character of the provision only makes the darkness palpable, so to say.

The modern industrialism is a man-killing engine, and its inherent spirit refuses to be reasonably considerate to the labour it exploits. The sturdy and solid middle class, which is the backbone of a nation, gets dismantled and disorganised under its influence. Added to this we have got to work under foreign conditions and foreign ideas. All this should be carefully realised by our Railway Board.

Preference given to the children of the employees in recruitment for service is another safeguard which must not be lost sight of. Much is heard of rank corruption in recruitment of lower services. Company-managed railways are notorious for this vice. Open recruitment and that as far as practicable through school and college authorities and means of public examinations and competitions should immediately be thought of.

Measures like these surely will go a great way to kill the present germs of strike which are otherwise inevitable. A new Member as such will be of little help if old ways are not changed.

Sanitary arrangements and housing are also of immediate importance. The design of houses for Indian employees has never changed perhaps from the time of Marco Polo, so to say, though bullock carts have since been replaced by aeroplanes. It is a strange sight to see the Indian quarters in a railway settlement. Kitchen and privy, if any, are built together. With an apology for a window provided, if at all, the cubic space allowed reminds one of the ancient Buddhist caves of Udayagir, near Puri. Still Indians who are to use the houses have never been nor are being consulted in designing them.

I have seen quarters for employees in Jamshedpur. They are much better though still considered to be inadequate. Other industrial centres might similarly be advancing with the times. But our Railway authorities seem to walk about with their eyes and ears in their pockets, and here attempt to create the belief that a new Member appointed will bring the millennium to the workers.

There is much room for improvement in providing medical aid to the workers and employees who are being sent with their families to all sorts of places: lonely and unhealthy. Provident Fund and death benefit for all classes of labourers, including daily rated workmen working for years at daily rates, is also a necessity. Water supply should go hand in hand with housing. Various other like facilities for the welfare of labour are awaiting solution. All this should be properly investigated, and remedies planned before the appointment of a new Member is brought up for consideration in the House.

Coming to freights and fares one is mortified to find the scant courtesy with which the lower class passengers are treated. The little relief in the Eastern Bengal Railway in this budget is much less than what was long overdue and is in actuality more formal and apparent than real. The sacred preserve of the first 50 miles has nowhere been violated, though

the intending competitor, namely, the rise of road motor and buses, has a special fascination for this particular sphere of our Railway activities. The telescopic logic of this system of reduction, I am afraid, is not perhaps to be discernible to the naked eye of the lay enquirer.

The reduction of coal freight is news after many years of whining appeals from the dying coalfields of Jharia and other places. I hesitate to call it even overdue. Many of our coalfields have actually lost all use for this measure and we are not told whether this measure will at all help the few living fields in standing competition, with the fields of distant South Africa. Probably this telescopic method of microscopic reduction will be adequately magnified when all the Indian-owned collieries will have been completely killed. Non-Indian coal interests like those of Talcher have, however, received protection and help from our Railway by other means and such interests need no fear.

As to new constructions, Members in this House as well as of the public, suggest new lines from time to time on various occasions in various ways for the convenience of the general taxpayer. They sometimes demand it and give reasons for their demand. During my last budget speech on the Railway Board I myself demanded a line of about 150 miles between Cuttack and Sambalpur in my constituency, which distance is now covered by a railway route of 500 miles from a district town to the headquarters of the division. But such demands are not even refuted or reasonably refused, and new lines still appear in the Budget year by year. Why? What is the ethics of all this? Last year I referred in this connection to the Vizagapatam harbour which I said is a sister of Singapore base. The Talcher new line, I also said, was necessitated for the Talcher coalfields which had already been leased by a European company, on what secret or overt assurance of communication, God alone knows. Thus, I think, our new constructions are proving their creations both as strategic and commercial concerns—strategic for harbours like that of Vizagapatam, and commercial for British coal companies like that of Talcher.

Sir, the Honourable Member for Commerce and Railways seems in his speech to lament over the competition of what is inevitable, I mean of the road motors and buses. As the Commerce Member perhaps he hints at the advantages of those conveyances in carrying passengers and goods to stations, and thus stimulating traffic. But he said nothing of the advantage to be reaped by opening suitable feeder lines to business centres, where road motors and buses may well be utilised in

carrying goods and men to new stations opened. This aspect of the question has not been investigated.

We hear something of damage caused by floods such as those of Orissa and other places. But in repairs no plan or programme appears for remodelling waterways which have been long and criminally neglected by our Railways in their hasty anxiety for ready traffic and business. A general survey of these waterways in our entire railway system with a view to finding out some scientific and permanent remedy is a primary duty of the administration. Stagnant pools by the side of railway lines—a regular bye-product, so to say, of our railways—have been a nuisance and a hotbed of malaria in many parts of India. It is high time for our Railway Board to include the remedy of this evil in their repair works.

The convenience of the travelling public is a common burden of criticism, and much of it will be exposed during the next four days. Some hopes have been held out in the other House yesterday for issuing return tickets and coupon advantages to lower class passengers. Sleeping advantages and such other dainties of life, as my friend Mr. Duraiswamy Aiyangar pointed out, are not for them. But will the Board at least care to instruct their inspectors to see that their seating accommodation is not stuffed beyond the prescribed limit?

Here I feel inclined to cite a very funny instance. Patna is our provincial headquarters. We demanded a direct train from Puri to Patna *via* Cuttack, to be saved the trouble and expense of travelling *via* Howrah. After much consideration the reply was that not many tickets have been in the past purchased direct from Orissa to Patna and hence a direct train is unnecessary. With all my knowledge of the deductive logic of Gotama, I could not find out the relativity of cause and effect in this argument. Perhaps, Sir, logic and self interest are poles apart. But I was a little relieved to learn the other day that our Railway Board is not directly concerned in the appointment of those officers of the Bengal Nagpur Railway who are responsible for the decision. Chronic mismanagement, profiteering and bad capital expenditure in many of our company-managed railways may thus be passed over with hopes that they may, as soon as possible, be taken over by the State, though in the meanwhile a stricter supervision is, however, necessary even now.

A word on the capital expenditure, Sir, and I have done. In the memorandum given to us the capital expenditure in England has gone up from Rs. 13,91,41,893 in 1927-28 to Rs. 17,22,67,000 in the budgeted estimate of 1929-30. The

same in India has come down from Rs. 18,57,00,284 in 1927-28 to Rs. 16,50,00,000 in the budget of 1929-30. With all the sweet and fine language of our Honourable friend, Sir, George Rainy, about the real owner of the money and his pious carefulness in speeding it, this is a strange phenomenon. Are the railways meant only to find a market for industries outside India ?

Two main items in capital expenditure are the workshops and the stores purchase. As regards the workshops the basis of establishing and running them is not given. Nor do we find any relation between the expenditure incurred and the value of production obtained. It is difficult to say whether they are being run on commercial lines or at the expense of the taxpayer as well as other industrial concerns in the land. A full statement on this subject in the Report of the Board is, however, required.

Let us then examine the stores purchase in detail. For instance as well as for future guidance let us take the purchases for 1927-28 published in the Railway Report. The entire store purchase this year is Rs. 35,86,50,000. Of this direct imports represent Rs. 13,94,97,000 and imported stores purchased in India represent Rs. 6,75,83,000 or a total of Rs. 20,70,80,000. Now, Sir, let us analyse these imported stores.

#### *Bridge Work.*

	Rs.
Directly imported	33,37,000
Imported goods purchased	15,35,000
	48,72,000
Total Imported	48,72,000

All these can without difficulty be manufactured in India with materials purchased from Tatas. What attempts were made or facilities given to this effect ? Were Indian firms asked in time to supply these materials ? As far as I know, firms in India, *viz.* Burn & Co., Jessop & Co., John King & Co., all of Calcutta, Richardson & Cruddas of Bombay can handle big bridge works. Many railway bridges have been constructed by them. The Bally Bridge of Calcutta on the East Indian Railway has actually been given to Braithwaite & Co. We are absolutely in the dark as to why these materials have not been purchased in India. An explanation on this item is necessary in the report.

*Engineering plant excluding petty tools.*

	Rs.
Directly imported	26,18,000
Imported goods purchased	17,18,000
	<hr/>
Total Imported	43,36,000
	<hr/>

Why has not the manufacture of these things been tried in India? Factories in Bengal and Bihar & Orissa, *viz.*, Villier's Engineering Works of Calcutta, Fairburn Lawson Combe, India, Ltd. (Sarisatali, Asansol), Monyfith Engineering Works, Tatanagar, P. N. Dutta & Co., Calcutta, F. N. Gupta & Co., Calcutta, and others have either collapsed or are in a moribund condition for want of encouragement. Most of these firms could have manufactured a considerable portion of these materials. The same is the case with workshop machinery and heavy tools. The above firms could have manufacture them also. The total value of these was Rs. 80,33,000.

*Permanent Way Materials.**Steel Sleepers :*

	Rs.
Directly imported	1,57,64,000
Imported goods purchase	8,18,000
	<hr/>
Total Imported	1,65,72,000
	<hr/>

The life these sleepers is 35 years as compared with 50 years for cast iron sleepers, which are made in the Jamalpur workshops and have long been used by the East Indian and North Western Railways. I am quoting from information for which I am thankful to Mr. Parsons. Big private factories in India are starving for want of orders for cast iron sleepers, the price of which was almost equal to steel sleepers. In the coming year, as I can now say, each cast iron sleeper is expected to cost Rs. 10-4-0 and each steel sleeper not less than Rs. 11.

Cast Iron sleepers (purchased in foreign countries) and purchased from imported stores cost :

	Rs.
Directly imported	2,95,000
Imported goods purchased	3,63,000
	<hr/>
Total Imported	6,78,000
	<hr/>

We do not really understand the ethics or logic of this outside purchase when indigenous firms are starving for want of orders.

Wooden sleepers, imported, cost Rs 8,67,000. This is an abnormally strange purchase. Wooden sleeper supplying firms in this country are already hard hit on account of the fact that steel sleepers are being imported. This simply adding insult to injury, and reminds one of the story of the doctor hastening the death of a hopeless patient.

*Rolling Stock* : Locomotive and spare parts :

	Rs.
Directly imported	1,86,02,000
Imported goods purchased	20,36,000
	<hr/>
Total Imported	2,06,38,000
	<hr/>

A similar amount is being spent on these articles outside India year after year. My friend, Mr. Sanmukham Chetty, raised a question last year on the locomotive factory which was first encouraged and then killed by the very hand that nursed it and ultimately purchased by the Government, never perhaps to encourage the industry again in this land. We cannot understand the disqualification for which these articles cannot be made in India. Are there any insurmountable difficulties in the way? Government ought to take steps to manufacturing these in India, which ought not to be forever dependent on foreign countries with regard to these most vital Railway materials. During the last world war, Sir, even Great Britain had to depend on India for some materials. Why not, I ask, prepare India for being self-dependent?

*Coaching Stock.*

	Rs.
Directly imported ...	2,12,93,000
Imported goods purchased ...	18,81,000
	<hr/>
Total Imported	2,31,74,000
	<hr/>

*Goods Stock.*

	Rs.
Directly imported ...	31,18,000
Imported goods purchased ...	25,30,000
	<hr/>
Total Imported	56,48,000
	<hr/>

*Spare Parts for Coaching and Goods.*

	Rs.
Directly imported ...	1,44,18,000
Imported goods purchased...	33,03,000
	<hr/>
Total Imported	1,77,21,000
	<hr/>

In India the self-same articles purchased respectively are Rs. 3,74,000, Rs. 8,63,000 and Rs. 18,66,000. Most of the above materials can well be manufactured in India in parts. So there is no difficulty in assembling them, either in private firms or in our own workshops. We cannot purchase these articles from other countries year after year in enormous quantities. Objections may, however, be generally made that these materials are not available in this country. But the public should never be satisfied without an explanation in detail. Sir, will this excuse be pleaded if India like other countries is a self-governing country ?

Both as regards certain items of permanent way materials and particularly as regards rolling stock, a thorough investigation is necessary with a view to making India self-contained. Means should be devised and schemes prepared to manufacture these articles in India as soon as possible. The Railway Board should seriously think of starting model as well as encouraging commercial workshops for this purpose.

*Building and Station Materials and Fencing.*

	Rs.
Directly imported	29,59,000
Imported goods purchased	55,58,000
	<hr/>
Total Imported	85,17,000
	<hr/>

These figures have not been analysed and therefore it is difficult to say which can be purchased in India and which outside India.

*Electric Materials.*

	Rs.
Directly imported ...	1,45,31,000
Imported goods purchased ...	90,49,000
	<hr/>
Total Imported	2,35,80,000
	<hr/>

The Indian purchase of these materials is only a little over 2 lakhs. Here I may mention that the Indian Cable Co. of Tatanagar is in a position to supply electric wires. Manufacturers of Clyde Fan and those of India Fan and other firms make fans and other similar articles. Have they been afforded a sufficient chance to supply these materials? My information is that they have not. Is it not the duty of the Government to encourage them?

Now, Sir, let us look at the poor purchases from indigenous sources for which purchases there is our pompous show, the Indian Stores Department.

In 1927-28 the total stores purchase increased from the previous year by Rs. 7,85,00,000. But the purchase of indigenous articles shows a decrease of Rs. 33,00,000.

The entire purchase of indigenous articles in 1927-28 is Rs. 15,16,00,000. Out of this Rs. 4,58,00,000 has been spent on coal, coke, bricks, Indian lime, ballast, etc., which probably includes earthen jars, wicker-baskets, broom-sticks and other like articles. Surely it does not require an industrial genius or a commercial expert to find an indigenous source of supply for these articles.

	Rs.
Purchase of Timbers	1,34,64,000
Wooden Sleepers	2,73,15,000
	<hr/>
Total	4,07,79,000
	<hr/>

I am sorry that the Railway Board could not find any benevolent firm or individual in foreign lands to help us with more than Rs. 8,67,000 worth of wooden sleepers and the Board perhaps ultimately felt compelled to fall back upon a process of rude denudation of our Indian forests. However, the rest, that is, a sum of Rs. 5,50,21,000, the Board could not help buying from indigenous markets, though one must feel sure that, had the details been given, barring the purchase from Tatas, one would find that about 90 per cent. of the rest had been supplied by firms owned and managed by people not in any sense indigenous. Tatas, however, have supplied only rails worth Rs. 1,76,72,000. Let no one, however, understand that this purchase is in any way a favour, help or encouragement to Tatas. This is purely a business transaction, and it means a distinct profit to the State of Rs. 25 on every ton of rail. I am thankful to my friend the Honourable Mr. Parsons, who kindly supplied me with the figures I am quoting from. On

the entire supply of 182,400 tons of rail ordered from Tatas, the profit to the Railway Board comes to Rs. 45,60,000 in one year. For Tatas supplied at the rate of Rs. 110 per ton whereas foreign supply was at the rate of Rs. 135 per ton. 80,500 tons ordered from outside would yield to the Railway Board a further profit of Rs. 20,12,500 in the same year, if Tatas had somehow been helped or encouraged to supply it.

Thus it will be found that the protection given to Tatas is being well paid back, and a loss to the tune of Rs. 20,00,000 if not more, in rails alone, could well be prevented and prospectively utilised for promotion of indigenous industry as well as profit to the taxpayer.

The ultra-commercially minded Railway Board, with the Honourable Member for Commerce at their head, might not possess a vision to this end. Let us be charitable to them. But what does the Honourable Member in charge of Industries say to this? Is not this piece of analysis of the capital expenditure of his Honourable colleague interesting to him and specially the lesson of the rial business with Tatas?

Sir, I have done. But before I sit down, I am sadly reminded of that king of whom I read in my schoolboy days. He was probably a King of England. He said: "My subjects and I have a happy contract. They will say whatever they like, and I will do whatever I like."

### III

## Criticism of the Policy of Railways Stores Purchase and Promoting Indian Industry.

a 25th Feb. 1929.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das** : (Orissa Division : Non-Muhammadian) : Sir, I trust I may be allowed to speak on this motion, as I have got a similar amendment regarding capital punishment of the Railway Board.

**Mr. President** : Regarding capital punishment of the Railway Board? (Laughter.)

**Pandit Nilakantha Das** : I am sorry, Sir, capital expenditure is what I mean. It is akin to this store purchase, on which has been moved the amendment by Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru.

**Mr. President :** What number is your amendment ?

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** No. 23, Sir.

**Mr. President :** That is the same thing, isn't it ?

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** Akin, yes, practically the same.

**Mr. President :** The Honourable Member may speak on this amendment.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** My Honourable friend, Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru, has referred to the internal administration of the Stores Department, but as stores purchase is intimately connected with capital expenditure, I shall speak on that aspect of the question alone.

I referred, during the course of my general discussion, to this subject at some length, and there I quoted facts and figures from items of stores purchase to establish that this capital expenditure of the Railway Board practically means gradually increasing the purchase of stores in England and other countries, and gradually reducing the same or keeping it stationary in India, and as the Indian Stores Purchase Department have got to purchase various articles, such as fuel, timber, lime, sand, ballast and all that sort of thing, which count for as much as half—nay much more than half—of the fifteen crores and odd that we have spent on indigenous articles in 1927-28, the policy underlying their action therefore seems to be that our Railway Board is bent upon giving substantial encouragement to industries outside India, encouragement perhaps in quarters where it is to the interest of some people whose claims cannot be overlooked. It was probably to afford this encouragement that the 5 year Railway development programme was launched side by side with the separation of Railway from general finances.

In this connection I may quote from the Imperial Economic Conference proceedings a paragraph, which, though it was quoted in this House some three years ago, may perhaps bear a repetition.

Our Honourable friend Sir George Rainy's predecessor, who attended that Conference on behalf of India, said particularly with regard to stores purchase as well as to the new development scheme :

"Large sums have been set aside for the rehabilitation of her (India's) railways and I hope that we may be able to embark on some new construction. On railway material alone we spent last year, almost entirely in this country, more than 8½ millions sterling. Other development schemes

are in contemplation, and in one way and another the Government estimate that something like 70 millions sterling will be spent on imported stores during the next five years for the railways and other development schemes. As in the past, so in the future, I have no doubt that the skill and enterprise of the British manufacturers will see to it that the vast bulk of their money Indian Railway moneys will be spent in this country."

In another place he said in the same connection :

"The Government of India were required by rule to buy their imported stores through their Stores Department in London, which was under the control of the High Commissioner for India. The High Commissioner had to accept the lowest satisfactory tender; not necessarily the cheapest, for he has been given a wide latitude for selection."

"Not necessarily the cheapest" has its own significance, and I do not know, there may be many things underlying such a latitude for selection. Later on it is said :

"The practical result has been that between 90 and 95 per cent, the value of purchases made through the High Commissioner during the past year had been expended in England on articles produced by British manufacturers."

Sir, this explains the policy of stores purchase and this exemplifies the gradual increase of capital expenditure outside India year by year for at least the last three years, for in India it has come down from 15.48 crores in 1926-27, to 15.15 crores in 1927-28, whereas in England it has gone up during the same period from about 12 crores odd to 19 crores odd, as is clear from the Reports of the Railway Board for those two years. I quote simply from the columns of stores purchase.

When there was a difficulty in supplying work to labourers engaged in English industries, there was this beneficent plan of dividing railway finance from general finance. The scheme of separation appeared quite a nice arrangement, even to the Indian Members of this House, who always expect to derive their initiation from the experienced Benches over there, and many of us are still perhaps enamoured of it and actually think that we have found something very wise in it. Was it not, I suspect, some scheme put forward for separating the railway purchase in England from Home charges, the entire amount of which, English purchases for railway included, would otherwise come as a single visible lump in the budget as it was. But the separation has a particular advantage. It has opened up an unnoticeable back door to introduce certain Home charges which would go unscrutinised to the benefit of the Home industry.

Then, again, my Honourable friend Pandit Hirday Nathi Kunzru objects that the decentralisation of purchase in the policy of stores purchase is a curse. He says it should be

centralised, but where is the tendency to centralisation? Now, this capital expenditure on Railways is inter-dependent on the promotion of Indian industry, for really it is not a small thing. The Railway system itself ought to be a national industry,—had our Government been a national Government,—and the promotion of our indigenous Indian industry even now depends very much on this stores purchase policy regulated to that end. Industry has a very close connection with labour. It is the counterpart of the labour problem which is cropping up every day. If you look to help labour, you must give them a reasonable share of the profits, if you think of profits, you must encourage and strengthen industry. Thus you must promote industry before you can satisfy labour. Now, there is another decentralisation attempted here to frustrate all our pious expectations. Labour is being separated from industry. Our Honourable friend Sir George Rainy, like his predecessor, Sir Charles Innes, will perhaps henceforth exclusively look to the Home industry and the purchase of the High Commissioner not in the cheapest, but in the most convenient market. I need not explain the standard of convenience here. Labour in railways is going to be likewise exclusively entrusted in the hands of a new Member on the Railway Board. That Member will be an Anglo-Indian. Indian, or European—I do not mind or care who he is. But the fact remains that if you want to represent some grievances of labour, if you want to look to labour interests in India, that question will go to that gentleman who is in charge of it. The little chance that there was of the representatives of the Indian taxpayer attempting for the promotion of Indian industry through pressure of labour demands and thus by directing capital expenditure, is all gone, and with that labour too is doomed. Thus our attention is being diverted from time to time whenever there is any little chance or occasion of our entering into the very secret preserves of the Government.

I should not make my speech very long for I have already dwelt at great length upon this self-same subject, though then I discussed only the economic aspect of it so far as our indigenous industry is concerned. Perhaps my Honourable friend Sir George Rainy had not the time nor the inclination to look into my analysis of stores purchase the other day. I hope he will look into it and investigate the matter very carefully. I also hinted there that his colleague, my Honourable friend Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra, the Member in charge of Industries, has got a good deal to do in that matter. In that connection decentralisation of industry and railways will not do. Our Honourable friend is responsible for the national industry, at least I may call it Indian industry for the present. I have

not the heart to call it national, because, as you has just now heard from my Honourable friend, this Government which runs our railways is not just and reasonable. It is not responsible either. So, be it national industry or Indian industry, my Honourable friend for the Industries has certain duties to discharge there, and he must be very intimately watchfully looking into the entire policy of the stores purchase of our railways. I should also expect that henceforth this matter would be investigated thoroughly and in the Report of the Railway Board a distinct chapter should be devoted giving us a complete analysis of the purchases in India and in England, and outside with a view to explain in what way and by what means, and with what amount of sacrifice, if any, impetus and encouragement have been afforded to Indian industry and what actual progress Indian industry has made in consequence of such impetus or encouragement. At a glance one ought to know from the Railway Report, how far Indian industry is being promoted year after year under the nursing care of railway administration. In short all this information of vital economic importance in detail should be given in that Report.

Our attention is, moreover, expected to be diverted to rates and fares, amenities to passengers, or to the grievance that some railway inspectors are not attending to their duties at the Howrah Station and so on. These are all very little things after all. Such things might crop up even under a national Government, and they might be remedied from time to time in the usual way. We should not be expected to be absolutely absorbed in these things, with the result that the main object, so to say, of our railway business is left out of sight. Even all possible convenience to the taxpayer should not be purchased so dearly in this fashion. With these few words, I support the motion of my Honourable friend Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru.

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#### IV

### Employment of Oriyas in B. N. Ry.

*27th Feb. 1929.*

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** (Orissa Division : Non-Muhammadan) : I would like to make one suggestion, Sir. The Bengal Nagpur Railway is a railway which runs almost more than half its distance in Oriya-speaking country ; but it was not a company which began in an Oriya-speaking land. There-

fore in course of time in its service some vested interests have been created, and few Oriyas are in its service. There have been representations very often to put in Oriyas in the Bengal Nagpur Railway for the convenience of the public, as well as for the convenience of the administration of the railway service. But although there have been many circulars—and very pious circulars to that effect, that is, to recruit Oriyas into the service, as is well-known, on company-managed railways—here I cannot vouch for the other railways—there is rank corruption and inequitious discrimination in various matters connected with recruiting for service, and hence no practical effect has yet been given to those circulars which were elicited in response to various public demands and representations. I would therefore draw the attention of the Honourable Member to this fact in this particular connection.

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## V

### Purchase and use of Steel Cast Iron and Wooden Sleepers in Indian Railways and their bearing on Indian Industry.

*27th Feb. 1929.*

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** Sir this is a very important question so far as Indian Industry and economic life in India are concerned, and question is full of complications—and I may say very shabby complications. My friends before me have pleaded for wooden sleepers. Yes, there are many forests in India, and by developing the forests, that source can sufficiently be tapped. But we find on the country, that, year after year, we have got wooden sleepers supplied to our railways from countries other than India. In the year 1927-28 we got Rs. 8,67,000 worth of wooden sleepers imported from outside, and in former years they were even more. I hope the tendency has been not to purchase them in Australia any longer.

Now, apart from the wooden sleepers, iron sleepers are of two kinds. One is of cast iron and the other is of steel. Steel sleepers are supplied mainly from other countries and in India some quantity from the Tata Iron and Steel works alone. The other firms that supply sleepers to the railways, supply cast iron sleepers. These cast iron sleepers consist of two

plates, one tie-bar and some keys and cutters. They, that is, these cast iron sleepers, are manufactured by many private-companies, and they are also manufactured some of our own workshops, particularly at Jamalpur. If my information is correct, of late years, capital in India, as well as English capital in this country, has been so much enamoured of casting these cast iron sleepers, and has been active in this business to such an extent, that, if the Railway Board only make it a point to purchase them, they could get the entire supply of iron sleepers in India. But what are they doing? They must get their quote from abroad. I do not propose to say, from which country or from what source. That may be unpalatable, and even offensive. But the fact is that they will have their quote of metallic sleepers from outside India, and the quantity of it is enormous, and growing year by year. Just as they did in the case of the locomotive company, directly or indirectly they are giving encouragement to Indian firms with Indian capital to set up factories for casting cast iron sleepers. Then, to the dismay of those firms, the Railway Board kills them by starvation for want of orders.

**Mr. B. Das :** Is it not a fact that Tatas are selling pig iron at Rs. 68 ?

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** My friend, I am coming to that. Of course there are the complications of competition. In that competition the Railway Board as such may well appear not to have any hand. I have always been telling my Honourable friends that the Honourable Member in charge of Industries and Labour has got to do much to watch and make the Railway Board see that such competition is fair and equitable. For the competition has been unfair and manipulated.

**An Honourable Member :** By paying more wages to the labourer ?

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** By seeing that there are no combines. There is the Bengal Iron and Steel Co., the Indian Iron and Steel Co., and Tatas have unfortunately joined these, and they have all formed into a combine. They produce pig iron at a very low cost ; and they also supply pig iron outside India at a very low price. But when they come to sell it to manufacturers of cast iron here, they sell it to these manufacturers at a higher price and make that price prohibitive so far as competition goes. What is the effect? You may say that these cast iron firms get pig iron at the self-same price at which they would otherwise get it from the other side of the seas, that is, from foreign countries. It may be so. But

when you order cast iron sleepers the members of the combine quote them at a much lower price, and the firms, who have got to buy pig iron, for which they have to depend on this combine or on foreign countries, cannot possibly supply cast iron sleepers. Under such conditions how can these firms supply them? How can they thrive in this unfair competition?

I will read from a memorandum of the Bihar and Orissa Chamber of Commerce, a copy of which, I suppose, has been supplied to the Honourable Member in charge. The Memorandum says :

"It is against public interest that a combine should be allowed to charge a monopoly price for an important commodity like pig iron."

Again :

"The producers are in a position to give an unfair advantage to the allied firms in the production of iron castings. A case may be cited in support of this contention. In February 1928 the Railway Board gave a contract to Messrs. Martin & Co for the supply of cast iron sleepers at Rs. 84 per ton, *f.o.r.* Kulti. This firm could quote this price on account of, having supplies of pig iron at a price substantially lower than the market price. The cost of manufacture of iron sleepers is about Rs. 20 per ton, and it is impossible for an independent producer, who has to pay Rs 67 per ton for pig iron, to manufacture sleepers at Rs 84 per ton. Messrs. Martin & Co. not only covered their cost at that price, but realised a handsome profit of about Rs. 20 per ton on account of their being in the family group of the producers of pig iron. The danger of creating conditions, which make it possible for some manufactures to enjoy such differential advantages, is too obvious to need any special emphasis."

This is what is said in the memorandum of the Bihar and Orissa Chamber of Commerce. Let me remind the House that in that Province are situated many of our cast iron sleeper foundries.

Then again the Commerce and Railway Department is responsible for some little additional advantage being given to those people, and thus helping this unfair competition. We have got certain freight rates for this pig iron, and Tata's and other producers of pig iron get these concessions. They carry their pig iron at those rates to Calcutta, Patna, Cawnpore and all other places in India. If pig iron imported from other countries is carried from Calcutta to Patna or other places, the freight rate is more. Now let us see, at what price they are selling pig iron at Calcutta? At Calcutta the price is Rs. 67 per ton. This price is the same for both Indian and foreign pig iron. Carried to Patna there must be the difference of freight. If we make this allowance per ton and . . . . .

**Mr. President :** Order, Order.

The House stand adjourned till twenty minutes to three.

The Assembly then adjourned for Lunch till Twenty Minutes to Three of the Clock.

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The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Twenty Minutes to Three of the Clock, Mr. President in the Chair.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** I was saying, before the House adjourned for Lunch, that pig iron was sold at Rs. 67, at Calcutta, the price being Rs. 65-12-0 and the freight, according to the reduced rate, being Rs. 1-4-0. Similarly according to that rate, the price at Patna, including freight, must be Rs. 67-11-0. Instead of that they charge Rs. 78. Similarly Rs. 10 more are charged in every place wherever it is sent for sale. The concession freight affords no advantage to cast iron firms. This is also one of the difficulties which is created on account of the pig iron trust or the combined firm in India. If I may be permitted, I shall say that this trust is practically managed and controlled by concerns in India, which are British in economic status and character ; that is, managed and controlled by what may be called rupee, as well as Sterling British capital. The Trust has actual British capital, as well as *de facto* British capital so to say. The Tatas alone, of firms with Indian capital, have somehow been dragged into and have joined the trust. The pig iron sale of Tata in India is only 10 per cent. of the total Indian consumption. The total pig iron sale in India is 150 thousand tons. Out of that consumption, Tatas supply only 15,000 tons.

(At this stage Mr. President vacated the Chair which was taken by Sir Darcy Lindsay.)

There is no reason why the Tatas should have joined this pig iron trust. That mystery must be investigated and found out either by the Commerce Department or the Industries Department.

I shall not detain the House much longer with these figures and commercial technicalities. The Government, it is found, are directly and indirectly, helping this pig iron trust, with a view to keep out the younger and newer concerns, for whom no concession for supplying cast iron is either allowed, or of avail. Let us take another instance of direct help The

other day I asked a question about cast iron sleepers and the steel part of it called the tie-bar, which joins both the plates. I pointed out that the actual duty realised on these bars was only Rs. 10 per ton, whereas the tariff duty, according to the Schedule, should be Rs. 26 and Rs. 37 per ton. In the 150th item, the import duty for railway steel tract material tie-bars is Rs. 26 per ton British and Rs. 37 per ton non-British. I asked a question in order to be enlightened as to why it is charged Rs. 10 per ton. I was given the reply that "tie-bars for cast iron universal sleepers which cannot be used as tie-bars for rails" the freight charged is Rs. 10 per ton. I could not follow this reply, as it was perhaps not meant to be followed. I have been referred there to item 61. In item 61, we have iron or steel tramway tract material, under which comes the tie-bar for tramways, that is, tie-bar connecting tramway rails and for these the rates are Rs. 100 per ton. How could any one follow this reply then? I asked my Honourable friend, Mr. Parsons for fuller details; he too could not explain it. He said it was given to him by the Commerce Department. I hope perhaps the Honourable the Commerce Member, Sir George Rainy, whom I have already written to, to secure me the help of his Commerce Secretary in the matter, will to-day explain it. Of course, there is bound to be some explanation, for which action of the Government has not? But the intention of the Tariff Board is clear on the point. The Tariff Board say in their Steel Report of 1927, Vol. I, page 92 :

"Spikes and tie-bars require to be dealt with. We recommend that the principle embodied in the present protective scheme should be adhered to, namely, that these articles should be subject to the same duties as bars. The basic duty would thus be Rs. 26 per ton and the additional duty of Rs. 11 per ton."

They have given a schedule to explain this. In this schedule distinct mention is made of tie-bars in railway track material, selected for this protection duty. This schedule has been copied in the Tariff Duty No. 150 in the list. Now the mystery which seems to surround the name 'universal sleepers' would be another interesting piece of research. In a word, the name is something like a patent mark, and the sleeper so named does not materially differ from any ordinary cast iron sleeper of any other type. They want perhaps to purchase steel sleepers from England and other countries for reasons obvious. As the daily output of cast iron sleepers is in danger of growing in India from year to year, a very good device is invented to check this progress. There are experts employed to invent types from time to time. The types of cast-iron sleepers may have little difference from one another, still these experts say, that this type will not do, that type is better and so on, with

the result that our poor firms and young concerns are forced to give up all hope under pressure of types. Types manufactured by favoured firms sometimes are the only articles that count. Thus the 'universal' type which has been supplied for three years by the pig iron combine having *de facto* British capital, is used by the Bengal Nagpur Railway. This "universal" does not mean anything else, but a kind of patent mark. The "universal" cast-iron sleepers is as good as our cast-iron sleepers sanctioned by our own experts in the Railway Board. It may even be worse, who knows? But the Bengal Nagpur Railway has nothing to do with all that. The Bengal Nagpur Railway will only have that "universal" sleeper from that particular company without, as far as I know, even the formality of a public tender. Public tenders are not called for. It is strange that the Railway Department should be sleeping over the matter and the Bengal Nagpur Railway should go and purchase these universal sleepers by secret arrangements and in the dark. In spite of the fact that the experts in the Railway Board have certified to the quality and utility of cast iron sleepers of many other firms and patterns, the Bengal Nagpur Railway would not care for their opinion, but would go in only for this half foreign "universal" sleepers. The other day I was told that the Bengal Nagpur Railway, being a company-managed railway, would not care for the Railway Board in their purchases and in their tenders. Very well, we shall see what is the policy behind this.

When wooden sleepers and cast-iron sleepers are so plentiful in India, why should our railways go in for sleepers from other countries? If you go into the modern industrial basis of human relations, and thus if you go to the modern industrial life of India in its economic aspect, what do you find? You find that the entire demand for sleepers can be met in India alone, and yet no advantage is taken of this by those who have to guide the economic and industrial destiny of India. India is being sacrificed at the altar of vested as well as foreign interests. To illustrate this I crave your indulgence for troubling you with some figures here quoted from our Railway Administration Reports. Cast-iron sleepers, indigenous, in 1925-26 amounted to Rs. 25,21,000. In 1926-27 to Rs. 92,48,000 that is an increase; this is how new firms and enterprises were encouraged and nursed to elicit sanction for big expenditure. In 1927-28 Rs. 76,51,000 *i. e.*, a decrease began here perhaps to continue. These sleepers, it must be remembered, can be purchased in India to the extent of the entire demand. But so many firms have actually been starving for want of orders and some of them have even been killed. As regards the cost of import from foreign countries of cast-iron

sleepers, it was Rs. 2,91,000 in 1926-27 and Rs. 6,58,000 in 1927-28. Mark the increase.

In steel sleepers, what do you find? In 1926-27, it was Rs. 36,15,000, but in 1927-28, it rose by about 450 per cent., *i. e.*, to Rs. 1,65,82,000. In this year's budget, I looked in vain for any enlightenment. In your detailed estimates, you simply put "sleepers". There may be very many varieties, but you do not say if they are wooden or steel or cast-iron sleepers. In the disbursement of the Depreciation Fund in the different books for different Railways is found, say, "Be., B. C. I. sleepers, total 32 lakhs rupees; N. W. R. sleepers, total 54 lakhs rupees. etc." But whether it is wooden, cast-iron or steel cannot be known. So, 186 lakhs go undenominated. You cannot know this much of details which is most vital in a way, yet you have got a pompous array of pink books called a budget. What is the use of this budget? (Laughter). Only a few railways have, however, been kind to us, and they are the careless Bengal Nagpur Railway, the South Indian Railway and the East Indian Railway. They say plainly that these sleepers will have been purchased from England by this time next year. They are honest folk. (Laughter.) At least they are honest in their mismanagement of our national industry.

But I do not want to carry you further into all these details. I shall simply say something about the price, the comparative life or durability of the cast-iron sleepers produced in this country and the steel sleepers imported here. I asked a question and I was given a statement from which I found that generally the prices were equal. In the case of cast-iron sleepers, the price was 2s. or 3s. this way or that way per sleeper. Mr. Parsons, in reply to one of my questions, said that, expert opinion is, that the life of a cast-iron sleeper is 50 years, and that of the steel sleeper, which is being imported, is 35 years. That being the case, and the price also being almost the same, why should you have this gradual increase of imported steel sleepers and the gradual decrease in the purchase of indigenous cast-iron sleepers? Then we have to look to the price prospects. If you look into the *Trade Review*—as good business people do—and I think the Commerce Department also will be well advised to look into the *Trade Review*,—you find that the price of each cast-iron sleeper is about As. 12 or As. 14 less than the steel sleeper in the coming year. There is also the other factor to count—that the life of the indigenous sleeper is 50 years, while that of the imported sleeper is only 35 years. I hope I have explained the point sufficiently to enable the Members on those Benches to understand the position; and if I inflict on the House greater details I am afraid it will be awful.

**An Honourable Member :** It is interesting.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** I thank you, I am glad you think so. But here my Honourable friend the Member for Commerce will say : "We are business men, we have nothing to do with your industries : " or "I am always pressing this matter on the attention of my brother, the Member for Industries and Labour" or "You are setting up firms to manufacture cast-iron sleepers which are not good" ; and such other things. But to him my reply is that, it is you who kill them ; you or your Industry brother, matters little to me. I do not know what interest you have in killing them. Presumably your primary economic interest is elsewhere.

And yet you sometimes speak of labour troubles being fomented either by people from beyond the oceans or their accursed agents here, as if you are not capable enough to fan, foment, nurse, or develop such troubles. You come here with a Safety Bill and a Trade Disputes Bill. What is the use, I ask ? There are these poor labourers ; should I bring them straight into the House so that they may invade you here ? Will that then be evidence enough ? You have simply starved them in big industrial centres, where you were responsible for bringing them from their hearth and home for you wanted to encourage Indian industry for purposes you know best ; and it is on account of what you have done to kill those industries again that they are now out of employment which was rather got up for them with hopes and prospects. You find employment for some people far away for whom you have a soft corner in your heart, though you have come here to serve India—you cannot forget that—and you are asking us to forget those for whom you are daily creating unemployment. How can these things be tolerated and these budget figures be scrutinised with graceful concurrence to find money for your home purposes, I do not know. If I ask you, you simply say that these things are cheaper ; or you give a reply which I do not understand. Or you are even unable to explain in certain cases ; or again you perhaps say, "The Honourable Member will be given a statement" or "the information is not forthcoming and as soon as it is available, it will be duly sent to him", and other such answers. Under these circumstances, Sir, I say this question of steel sleepers has grown to be a regular scandal, and this policy of the Government must be discontinued. (Applause.)

## VI

## On Indian Salt and Particularly on Salt Manufacture in Orissa.

7th. March, 1929

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** I have put down a cut on Orissa salt, and as there has been some reference to it in the reply of Sir George Rainy particularly, I do not know if I may be allowed to speak on this motion.

**Mr. President :** The Honourable Member has every right to speak.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** I have also been particularly invited by my friends on this side to speak on Orissa salt, and I do not propose to go much into into the general questions because it is the desire of my Honourable friends on this side that the debate should end very soon. So, I shall confine myself particularly to two or three points raised on Orissa and Bengal salt by my Honourable friend, Sir George Rainy. He said . . . . .

**Sir Victor Sassoon :** On a point of order, Sir, May I ask whether Members will be allowed to discuss points raised by other cuts, on this cut ?

**Mr. President :** Not at all.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** No. I forego the right to move the other cut ; I know that myself. (Laughter) Low density of the brine on the Orissa coast is one of the reasons ascribed. This subject was discussed in the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council when it was not exactly a central subject, as such, as it is now. In 1918 it was discussed by the late lamented Pandit Gopabandhu Das in the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council, where a *prima facie* case was made out for reviving salt manufacture in Orissa, as well as in regard to the favourable density of the Orissa brine. At that time the brine of the Orissa salt manufacturing area was compared with that of North Madras, and it was found out that the brine of Orissa, even where the river mouths joined the sea, was 3° in density, whereas in the Ganjam area it was 2.75°. (See Bihar and Orissa Gazette, 1911, page 241). As regards season available for manufacture, in the very same debate it was discussed, and in the comparative table given, you will find, in the Madras area, where salt manufacture is still continuing, the date for the commencement of operations is January 1st, and in Chilka January 3 in 1895, and January 7th in 1896. The commencement of scraping in the former

place was February 25th and February 16th in the two years, and in the latter place, March 4th and March 5th. The closing in the former place began on the 18th and 17th June, and in the latter place on the 22nd and 1st June.

As to *panga* salt which was being manufactured in Orissa—it is called *panga*, and it means salt obtained by evaporation by fire of sea water, *i. e.*, salt obtained by artificial evaporation—it was declared by Mr. Sterling in 1822 as the “finest salt of all India”. I have myself seen *panga* salt prepared in times of famine and it is as soon as, if not better than, Liverpool salt. It is white and has small grains and there is no difficulty in connection with magnesium chloride, as in the case of Tuticorin salt.

As regards another argument advanced by my Honourable friend, based on scarcity of fuel, I should like to say that, so long as this salt business is a money-making business of the Government, there may be many difficulties. *Panga* salt was prepared as a cottage industry. When there was famine in Orissa I know people used to take sea water in pans or in pots and prepare a certain amount of salt, which they not merely used in their own homes but also sold it to some outsiders. That was how it was being prepared; it was formerly also more or less a cottage industry sometimes on a rather big scale, and there was no big factory to manufacture *panga*. That *panga* salt, as well as Orissa *Karkach* of Puri used to command markets even up to Raipur and Jabbulpore in those days. A question has been raised with regard to communication. Now, you can carry by rail from Naupada or some other Madras factory to Raipur, and now the new Vizagapatam Harbour Railway will help the business. But what was the means of communication in those days? It was country bullock cart, or the bullock alone carrying loads. These bullocks or bullock carts carried merchandise from inland areas to Orissa coasts. Instead of taking back bullocks or carts empty or unloaded, the merchants carried salt on those bullocks or in those empty carts. This was the ancient ballast system in India—a system by which salt is now carried in ships from Liverpool to India without freight. The same system, however, can be arranged on our Railways, if the Indian coal industry is not compelled to be ruined in competition with South African coal. Indian coal is found in Bihar and Orissa, and it should be enabled to be carried from Calcutta or places near it to command markets in Bombay, Cawnpore and even Lahore. The empty coal wagons may return with salt. Then there will be neither congestion in traffic, nor freight difficulty. Now, this salt industry has

been killed by Government in Orissa. The history of it is long and awful. The Government again, it appears, are determined not to revive it in Orissa. In the 1924-25 budget debates, I raised the question. Government replied that the Bengal Nagpur Railway brings salt more cheaply from Madras to Orissa. The freight across the Chilka Lake was dearer, they said ; it was 6 pies dearer per maund. Then, the next year, I desired to know if the Government were prepared to lease out an area for the manufacture, and encourage the industry if a private individual or firm wanted to take up the business. Government tried to dissuade me by suggesting that no one ought to burn his fingers like that in a losing business of this kind. I pressed further to elicit the reply that they would make arrangements for advertising, to the effect that any private company, individual, or firm desiring to open salt manufacture on the Orissa coasts might apply for it, and Government would give them a lease. The Raja of Parikud was encouraged by this assurance to take up the manufacture of Chilka salt, which was the occupation of his forefathers. He has been applying for the last three years, and he is being, I am informed, asked to go from Provincial to Central and Central to Provincial Government. Nothing has been done in the matter till now. Government are very careful, perhaps even now, to see that their subjects are not allowed to burn their fingers. I say there is some motive behind it. Foreign imports of salt into this country are not being tabooed on the contrary various facilities are afforded to them. Why ?

I am not going into any discussion of the publication of the Central Board of Revenue and the recommendations of the Taxation Committee. I should not enter into details. But the gist of the whole thing is that salt is plentiful in India and able even to compete in quality with foreign salt. It is there in Tuticorin, which has only 16 to 30 lakhs of maunds, which will go for local consumption and the Ceylon supply. It is abundant in Karachi. But there is no labour to manufacture it. It would be more than enough for Bengal supply in Northern India. But there would be Railway congestion, and there is also the freight difficulty. Is the motive far to seek ?

Now, my friend Mr. Duraiswamy Aiyangar has said that 1.6 is the average percentage of magnesium chloride in Madras salt whereas it is 2.005 in nine different salts average in Dr. Ratan's book. It is said that magnesium chloride is the difficulty in Tuticorin in regard to crushing the salt for the Bengal market, for the crushing machines cannot long be worked. They get corroded. It may be a difficulty in Tuticorin but will the Government tell us if, in other factories in Madras,

salt of less magnesium chloride variety can be made and crushed for Bengal purposes? We have no knowledge as to that. But I know, as a matter of fact, that scraping can be regulated, and the first crop of salt in Madras factories can be gathered almost as white as foreign salt without any process of artificial evaporating. I am glad to find some arrangements for regulating scraping in the Report of the Madras Salt Department.

But the secret of the whole thing is that it must be made a source of revenue. That is the main difficulty. I would ask my friend Sir George Rainy how many crores he has got in the railway reserve? It is about 23½ crores. Where did he get money from? Whenever the railways wanted money, was it not taken from salt? If you want money, salt is laid under contribution—salt is taxed. We do not care for your traffic congestion on the railways. We do not care for your high freight. You must give some of the money back to salt. Salt cannot be made for all time a revenue reserve, and a poor scapegoat for fresh taxation. That is the long and short of it. The revenue that is in the reserve should be made worth the salt from which it has been taken.

Now, I was going to say something about *panga* salt. I say it should be revived again as a cottage industry, which it used to be. Salt is the gift of God and nature and so very necessary for man, animal and the fields. We are not able to give salt to our cattle, and our fields are starving. Though I am glad to learn that salt is well supplied to cattle and animals in our Army. In the cultivators' homes cattle have been without salt for these two generations. Big agricultural projects are in the making directly under the Indian Government. 25 lakhs are being set apart for the purpose. But will all this pomp ever bring salt to our agricultural cattle? Will even twice this 25 lakhs buy duty-paid salt for any fraction of the vast number of our useful animals? Will it supply any percentage of the demand for manure in our fields? Salt is such a necessary of life—to man, cattle, and even crops, and it should be made free. There should be no preventive measures against its manufacture. Let the old cottage industry be allowed to go its merry course. You say *panga* salt is costly for there is scarcity of fuel. But in Orissa only a few years ago, when free manufacture was allowed in the famine area, I know how it was cheap to the poor man. But all the same, I understand how you manage to call it costly. You purchase pans in a factory, prepare the oven for which you employ the services of paid coolies, spend on every little preparation accessory to the process, use fuel purchased at a distance of 300 miles and carry it at a freight, calculate all these items, then by a process of

rule of three you find out the rate per maund, and then you say the cost-price is 8 as. 6 ps. whereas otherwise it ought to be perhaps less than 3 as. 6 ps. How can that be, may be the question. A villager in his cottage does not purchase his fuel and the members of his family find occupation in the activity. Thus all over the land people were happy in their cottages with industries like this. Salt making was thus a good industry. Now the whole thing has been stopped. With these few words I support the motion.

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## VII

### The definite Assurance elicited from the finance Member for encouragement of Salt manufacture in Orissa.

*7th March, 1929.*

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** May I ask the Honourable Member if he can definitely assure me of his giving a chance to any private individual or company, if they are prepared to take it up ?

**The Honourable Sir George Schuster :** I was just coming to that. I was going to say, that if the Honourable Pandit himself or anybody else liked to apply for facilities to be given to erect a factory, the Government would give him every encouragement.

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## VIII

### A technical as well as material objections to the expenditure on Railways.

*16th. March, 1929.*

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** (Orissa Division : Non-Muhammadan) : This is only a demand consequential on the capital expenditure which we have got on the list today. During the last Railway Budget, we have, I hope, sufficiently discussed this particular question, which also relates to our stores purchase and the development of Indian industries. Though we have got to pass these as two items, I take it that the whole expenditure is one, which has been incurred in excess of the grant of last year.

**Mr. President :** Is that the position ? I though the Railway Board were going to spend this amount in the next few days. If they have already spent the amount, they cannot make a motion in this form.

**Mr. P. R. Rau :** It is expected that the total amount of expenditure will exceed the amount granted by the Assembly last March by this amount.

**Mr. President :** I am very sorry the position was not made clear earlier. I thought the amount was going to be spent during the course of the next few days. The Honourable Member is I think, not entitled to come before this House and make motions in this form for monies already spent. These are really excess grants. Perhaps Sir George Rainy will explain the position.

**The Honourable Sir George Rainy :** (Member for Commerce and Railways) : I think that the procedure in past years has undoubtedly been that, after the approval of the Standing Finance Committee for Railways has been obtained, the expenditure has proceeded in anticipation of the approval of this House. I understand that has been, in fact, the procedure and undoubtedly much the greater part of this sum of Rs. 50 lakhs represents expenditure already incurred.

**Mr. President :** I think the Honourable Member will agree with me when I say that if money has been spent already in excess of the grant voted by this Assembly, the Government can only come by way of a motion for excess grant. That is, as I understand, the right Parliamentary procedure. However, as the Honourable Member points out that this practice has been in vogue for the last few years. I do not wish to raise any objection at this stage, but will see that the procedure is regularised in future.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** This is exactly what I was going to say. This comes for the vote of the House after the money has been spent. We have only a very few days left of this year. As that point has already been made clear. I am not going to expatiate upon that particular point of technical objection, but the thing remains that this money has been already spent in excess. The whole grant of capital expenditure has a history which has been sufficiently discussed. It was first contemplated that 30 crores every year, for five years, would be spent. The House would not have sanctioned money had it not been under the impression that our Indian industries would get sufficient development by that means. We have seen that some of the Indian industries were first encouraged in order to elicit the grant from this House but that process has been discontinued and purchases have gone to England more and more. Besides company-managed railways are not at all controlled by our Railway Board in matters of purchase.

**Mr. President :** Order, order. The Honourable Member is not in order in discussing questions of policy on this supplementary demand for grant.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** I was simply going to say that this amount should be taken from the grant we have already passed for the coming year. This amount should be appropriated from that and after a full scrutiny of the situation, we shall see if we are in a position to grant anything in excess next year. That is my position.

**Mr. K. Ahmed :** (Rajshahi Division; Muhammadan-Rural) : This is for inspection only.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** This is not for inspection only. This is from the Depreciation Fund, I believe. My point is that this is a consequential Demand arising out of capital expenditure, and should, with all other similar excess demands of today, be appropriated from next year's grants, and we shall see if we can give excess money in next year's capital expenditure, consistently with the spirit and meaning of our programme on that head.

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## IX

### A general criticism of Indian Financial Policy and Indian administration raised in opposing the consideration of the Indian Finance Bill.

*20th March, 1929.*

**Sir Darcy Lindsay (and other Members of the European Group) :** The question may now be put.

**Mr. President :** Pandit Nilakantha Das.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** (Orissa Division Non-Muhammadan) : Sir, I wish to begin by saying. ...

**Mr. President :** I hope the Honourable Member will not be too long. If Honourable Members think that the Chair will postpone the debate till tomorrow, they are entirely mistaken. I am going to sit till midnight if necessary in order to finish the debate. Pandit Nilakantha Das.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** Then I hope the Chair won't mind.

**Mr. Jehangir K. Munshi :** (Burma : Non-European) : On a point of order, Sir, I heard you say that you propose to

sit till midnight. May I suggest taking the vote of the House as to whether the House will sit after 5-30 P. M. It is a tremendous strain on Honourable Members to sit here beyond that.

**Mr. President :** That is no point of order, Mr. Munshi.

**Mr. Jehangir K. Munshi :** It is a point of procedure. Sir.

**Mr. President :-** The Chair is not prepared to give up its power in favour of the House.

**Mr. Jehangir K. Munshi :** I am not trying, Sir, to challenge your power. I am trying to make a submission in view of the convenience of the House.

**Mr. President :** I have decided, in view of the protracted debate on this Bill, to sit as long as it is necessary for the purpose of finishing this debate. Pandit Nilakantha Das.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** Sir, I shall try to be as short as I can be. The introduction of tea has, I am afraid, made the atmosphere of the House a little warm—I may say, hot. I propose first, Sir, to deal with that first. My Honourable friend Diwan Chaman Lall, in his speech yesterday made some observations on the Tea Labour. Today two other speakers, Mr. Chalmers and Mr. Ghuznavi, have both raised the same point by way of reply to Mr. Chaman Lall. Mr. Chalmers simply repudiated the charge that there was something rotten in the state of Denmark, as I may put it. Interested as he is, he should have given some authority for his repudiation. There is a dark corner in Assam and North-East Bengal, where the eye of law or of any public man never penetrates; and it is also a fact that there is a soft corner in the hearts of those that are in charge of our destinies (Hear, hear), for the people who are engaged in profiteering there.

(At this stage Mr. President vacated the Chair which was taken by Sir Darcy Lindsay.)

Mr. Chalmers said there are members of my Party who have knowledge of the facts—if I heard him aright—and that my friend Diwan Chaman Lall had not listened to them before he raised his voice against the oppression of the tea labourers.

**Mr. T. A. Chalmers :** On a point of explanation, Sir; I said that no member of the Swarajist Party in Assam had ever said that tea plantations were slave plantations.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** I am thankful; I stand corrected. But my friend, Mr. Chaman Lall, gave an analysis

of the Members of the Assam Legislative Council, and perhaps he proved that there were no Swarajists or non-Swarajists there who would care to go to the help of those poor workers in the tea plantations. I need not expatiate upon the reasons ; for they are uncanny and perhaps unpalatable especially under the rules of etiquette here. My Honourable friend, Mr. Ghuznavi, thinks that he has rightly hit the point, I am afraid. If I heard him aright, he said there are Indian as well as European planters, I know. But because there are Indian planters there, that is no guarantee that our workers will remain safe in their hands. They are planters for all that ; and in the agricultural arrangements of India these planting operations have been a curse—a fact well exposed since the days when the Rev. Mr. Long of Indigo fame was imprisoned.

**Mr. T. A. Chalmers :** Question.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das .** Ours is an agricultural country ; the population is mainly agricultural ; our people have ancestral plots of land to depend upon, and perhaps it would take a long time if I tried to prove—but it is a self-evident truth and perhaps awaits no proof—that, in this land, we want neither big farming operations nor big plantations like those in Assam. We have got industrial centres which my friend, as well as I know are considered by some as unavoidable—a necessary evil I call it. Though even Mahatma Gandhi, and men of his thinking may differ, I call it a necessary evil ; but it is an evil for all that. But where is the necessity for plantation ? Why should not Government offer this land under plantation, in small holdings to the people ? Any national government in India ought to see that those lands are brought under cultivation by conveniently small holders. If you want to have tea in this land, better set up factories for curing tea or doing the necessary processes after it is brought from the field. Why do you have plantations ? I will not go into the question of profits ; they are there .

**Mr. K. Ahmed :** Otherwise it would have remained jungle ; India could not have been made so fertile and is a great blessing to India that the tea plantations have taken place.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** Small holdings cannot make it fertile ? I do not understand my Honourable friend.

**An Honourable Member :** Can anyone ever understand him ?

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** My friend, Mr. Chalmers, perhaps charged Mr. Chaman Lall that he had no direct knowledge .....

**Mr. K. Ahmed :** Neither, have you.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** I have knowledge which is nothing if it is not direct.

**Mr. K. Ahmed :** Your people have got no plantations.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** My people the Oriya labourers, account for more than 25 per cent. of the tea labour in Assam and North-East Bengal—3 lakhs out of 12 lakhs.

**Mr. K. Ahmed :** How would you maintain them otherwise ?

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** If I were to choose, I would not, of course, maintain them on the five rupees a month that is given to them in the tea gardens, though mine is a poor flooded and famished province.

**Mr. T. A. Chalmers :** Question.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** It is sometimes less than four annas a day, is it not ? I ask my friend Mr. Chalmers.

**Mr. T. A. Chalmers :** Question.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** Very well, I have not got the book with me now to quote it from, but I shall make a present of it to my Honourable friend, if he is so sticky in his interested opinion.

**Mr. T. A. Chalmers :** Sir, I pay them personally ; never mind the book.

**An Honourable Member :** How much do you pay ?

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** Personally my friend, Mr. Chalmers, is a very good man and hospitable gentleman ; I am coming to that. I shall have very good tea if I happen to go there. Never mind, I shall quote a single instance of my personal experience ; I had a barber servant of mine.....

**Mr. K. Ahmed :** And still you have not got your hair cut ?

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** He was fond of tea labour. How could he shave me ? He went to Puri, and there got into the trap of one of the recruiting *sardars* who have been called by some of our papers as "the very reptiles of humanity"

the *sardar* gave him opium to smoke and taught him for about two weeks how to smoke opium .....

**Mr. K. Ahmed :** No, no ; it was *ganja* probably.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** In Assam they have very little of your *ganja* Mr. Kabeer. It is a place where the opium consumption is perhaps the highest in the world. He was going to be transported to that Assam, where he would have little or nothing to do with *ganja* ; and under the influence of intoxication some hopes and prospects were held out to him, and he was spirited away. We could not find out where he was for a full year and more after which he returned—ugly, emaciated, and perhaps suffering from dysentery if I remember aright, a mere skeleton ; a complete wreck of himself ; and in that condition he was found in our village. He gave a description of his life there in the gardens, and said he had to walk to some steamer station through a jungle for three days for fear of.....

**Mr. T. A. Chalmers :** How long ago was this ?

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** Some four or five years ago ; I do not exactly remember.

**Mr. K. Ahmed :** Things are better now. I move, Sir, that the question be now put.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** I speak from memory ; my friend invites me or some of us so that he will be able to show us the real state of affairs there. I have already said that my friend is a very hospitable gentleman ; but I know there are traps everywhere ; otherwise a new comer would be tabooed as a trespasser—there are labyrinths of arrangements for that. Will you deny that ?

**Mr. T. A. Chalmers :** Certainly.

**Mr. K. Ahmed :** The question may be now put.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** If my friend is so very confident of his position, I should ask him to invite the ex-President of the Trade Union Congress, my friend Mr. Chaman Lal to send out his men, and I shall be willing to be a worker there, to establish trade unions in the gardens. Is he willing ?

**Mr. T. A. Chalmers :** We certainly have no objection.

**Mr. K. Ahmed :** Here is an invitation for you.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** I am so glad.

**Mr. K. Ahmed :** It is not Rs. 20 a day.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das** : I shall take advantage of such an invitation : I hope it is a genuine invitation, and that the Honourable Member speaks in his representative capacity.

Now, Sir, there are labour rules. They are secret rules. I put some questions the other day to my Honourable friend Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra over there. I was told, in reply, that those private rules were not published and the Government of India had no knowledge of them. Now, what are those rules, Sir ? As far as I could find out from my neighbours and servants, some of whom have fortunately come back, they told me that, if a man is discharged after his contract terminates,—I do not know if it is called a civil contract, but it is criminal,—if a man can somehow manage to secure discharge after the termination of his contract, and if he wants to join another garden, there are difficulties in his way. It appears, Sir, there is some secret understanding among the planters themselves not to admit such a man for two years.....

**Mr. T. A. Chalmers** : Nonsense. He can go and work in any garden.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das** : I hope that my Honourable friend will quote from the confidential rules. It may be his opinion that such a man can go and work in any garden ; it may be his feeling, and I have all respect for his feeling. Then, Sir, if a male coolie happens to marry a female coolie in another garden, then the female will only be allowed to live with her husband on condition that either the mother, sister or some other female relative would be brought from somewhere to take the place of this woman to work in her place in the garden .....

**Mr. T. A. Chalmers** : That is not true, Sir.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das** : I should like to have a copy of these rules from my Honourable friend as a present.

**Mr. T. A. Chalmers** : That is not true.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das** : It may be your personal opinion and I have nothing to do with such opinions here.

Then, Sir, there are the *Sardars* who are sent out on a recruiting campaign. They generally find the inhabitants of our small native states very convenient victims. I know, as well as many of my friends here know, what these native states are. There are no councils or constitutions. Doubly enslaved as the tiny chiefs of these states are, they are tyrants in their states. Nobody can raise a voice against oppression,

for the rulers are all in all. It is these rulers, who are paid Rs. 15 for supplying each single coolie, and that payment is made through our Provincial Governments. For each man recruited, the Raja of the State is paid Rs. 15. Can you imagine, Sir, what is happening there under circumstances like these? I said that things are not all right in the State of Denmark. Was I not right, Sir?

And there is what is called the Labour Board to look after all this. My Honourable friend Diwan Chaman Lall, I think, has sufficiently dwelt on this aspect of the matter. Now, what is this Labour Board? It is a Board which consists of members of the Planters' Associations in Calcutta and in Assam. Is it not so? There is no Indian on that Board who can be trusted to represent the interests of labour. I hope, Sir, that the new Bill, which is going to be framed on the subject, will perhaps introduce provisions for proper supervision. Now, Sir, these poor coolies should not be left entirely in the hands of people who have vested interests.....

**Mr. K. Ahmed :** Why don't they trust you and remain loyal to their masters?

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** I find, Sir, that the Honourable Member in charge of Industries and Labour is not here. He refused the other day to publish the correspondence or to publish any information about the new Bill which is being attached and which will perhaps come into this House in Simla, the next session of the Assembly, as an amendment to the so called existing Assam labour laws. I submit, Sir, that all matters relevant to that correspondence should be published from time to time, and particularly before the Bill is circulated for eliciting public opinion in India, so that we may be in possession of certain facts, figures and informations to arrive at a correct conclusion as to the exact state of affairs.

Then, Sir, my friend Mr. Ghuznavi said that there are Indians who will protect the interests of the labourers.

**Mr. K. Ahmed :** He did not say that.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** Here is a bigger and a far more comprehensive question that arises. The name "India" perhaps looks like a panacea to most of my Indian friends. For the last three or four years that I have been in this House, I have been fighting, almost single handed, perhaps with the help of my friend Mr. Duraiswamy Ayangar alone, for Indianisation in spirit, I said so in connection with my speech last year on the Railway Board, and my Honourable friend Sir George Rainy made a fun of my remarks and told me that he would think

of such an Indianisation, when there was a one-rupee Railway Board. Yes, I wanted to have a one-rupee Railway Board in my motion. That does not matter ; that does not take away anything from the spirit of Indianisation, for which I was fighting, and for which I shall continue to fight as long as there is life in me. (Loud Applause *from the Swarajist Benches.*)

**Mr. K. Ahmed :** The question may be now put, Sir.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** My friend has already put so many questions during the last three days that it will be awful if he puts any more. Whether a Member or a servant of the Government be Indian or European I do not mind. Even if all those benches be manned by Indians in personal I do not call it Indianisation. When I was listening to the speech of my Honourable friend Mr. Abdul Aziz the other day on the army cut, I was painfully reminded of those eternal lines of Sir Walter Scott, "Breathes there the man with soul so dead ?" And is this then the Indianisation in which you rob the soul, the spirit out of the Indian ? What is the meaning of the Indianisation with Indians like this on your benches—with a foreign soul in an Indian body ? With white face, with white skin, there may still be Indianisation in India if the standard of pay and conditions of service be adapted to the living of Indians, to the Indian ways of living. What are you doing here ?

**Mr. K. Ahmed :** Why have you got such a prejudiced mind ? Don't be afraid of them.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** From the very beginning, what did the East India Company do ? There was practically no remuneration paid to the servants of the Company. What did the Company do ? They would give them a share of the profit, they would allow them to be engaged in some business. We shall perhaps come to salt in the course of the debate on this Bill, and we shall then see how the salt business was in the hands of the servants of the Company for their remuneration and profits. Time after time, there were Resolutions not to give them any hand in the business, and objection was taken that they ought to be properly remunerated. That was the beginning of service in this country. The Cheshire people actually made a representation to Parliament, to the effect that people of the East India Company should not have all the benefits of the Indian market. The Cheshire people must have a share, as a matter of right,—“natural and paramount”. That was there plea, and that was the plea for raising or abolishing the salt tax. This happened about a hundred years ago.

**Mr. K. Ahmed :** Let the question be now put.

**Mr. Chairman** ( Sir Darcy Lindsay ) : Will the Honourable Member proceed ?

**Pandit Nilakantha Das** : I bow to you, Sir. That was the beginning of British service in this land. It was created long ago during the time of Lord William Bentinck I think .

**Mr. K. Ahmed** : In which year ? .

**Pandit Nilakanta Das** : Let my Honourable friend go to school. It was adapted to a standard which would attract people from England under conditions which were very different from those obtaining to-day. There were no steamships in those days. There were no aeroplanes ; and the servants were to be practically segregated and banished, practically sent to the Andamans so to say. The pay of the servants of the Company was fixed to attract such people, as it were, into panishment. Has there been any move on the part of the Government of India to go into those circumstances, and is there any proposal to cut down to pay of the services to the Indian standard ?

(At this stage Mr. President resumed the Chair.)

Has there been any attempt ? On the other hand, only the other day the so-called Lee Loot came to crown the gradual allurements held out to the service during the ages. The Lee Commission came and put some more money into the pockets of the so-called public servants and it was put in such a way that there might not be even an apology of voting on these amounts. It is not Indianisation. I do not know, what else you mean by Europeanisation or Anglicisation. It is an engine to undermine India's soul, its spirit, its life, its culture. It is the conquest of culture which is the worst conquest in the human world. (*Cries of 'Hear, hear, from the Congress Benches'*). This is a country which has lived through 6,000 years and more. It has a history, a continuous history, a tradition, a civilisation, a living civilisation, and even to-day, in our daily ablutions we say "*Somapa pitaras strpyantam*". That means that those who were offering *soma* on the banks of the Drsadvati—those forefathers are propitiated even now by us.

**Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar** : On the banks of the Thames.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das** : That attempt is now being made, so that we may pour it into the Thames instead of pouring it into the Drsadvati for our forefathers. And where do you find in the world, except perhaps China, such a country where the civilisation lives through the ages ? Egypt. I have

every respect for the nationality of that country, but it is not the Egypt of the days of the Pyramide. But here is India, in spite of all the vicissitudes of our cultural life, it is the India of the *Vedas*. We still claim it to be so, and if your this *makee* Indianisation goes on in industry, in service, in trade, in everything else, where are we drifting? We do not know. This is no Indianisation. When we have our national government, as we will have very soon, our first duty will be to have a committee which will make a thorough inquiry in order to Indianise the services, industry, trade and everything. Now, I shall pass on to my friend Mr. Abdul Haye.

**Mr. President :** It is not wise to enter into it.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** I shall then leave it. Then finally I do not understand what use there is in discussing finances in this House at all. That is a question which I ask myself very often. But still so long as we are in this House, we have got to look into the Bills of expenditure and this and that connected therewith. We cannot avoid that. We do that for getting what many of us call Dominion status. It has been discussed here already, and it is not for me to go much into that. I was not a student of constitutional history in my early life. But I was the other day simply astounded when my Honourable and gallant friend Colonel Crawford asked the question. "Will you not carry on a fight for independence if you get Dominion status?" I asked myself, what is this? Is it that our leaders are going out with their hats in hand so that Dominion status will have to be put into those hats, with certain conditions and restrictions. As my Deputy Leader said, he questioned the Colonel's credentials. I don't do that. I take it that he was expressing his national sentiment in a representative character.

**Mr. President :** The Honourable Member is not a Leader?

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** I hope I am entitled to discuss the question in spite of it. When the talk of Dominion status came into the political atmosphere of India, I began to study it. I questioned my-self whether I had studied it aright. I was put in mind of a line from the *Gita* :

यस्यां जाग्रतिभूतानि शा निशा पश्यतो मुनेः !

"Where devils revel, it is darkness for the Gods".

Canada, Australia and South Africa have each a Dominion status and they revel in it, and surely they have not got it on conditions. Why does the same thing portend darkness to the Indian? Where does the question of agreements and conditions

come from ? Therefore I say, a subject and a dependent people we are, and ours is to strive for independence pure and simple at any cost and without considering consequences. If any party is interested in living with us amicably, it is their business to come forward with the offer of Dominion status, or whatever you call it. Then will be the time for us to see it and sit in judgement over it, and dictate our own terms and conditions, if need be. But my gallant friend, the Colonel, must understand that our leaders were never out with their hats for Dominion status. They made a generous gesture, for to be generous has been traditionally ingrained in our constitution. India has been generous to foreigners through the course of her history, and this has been the treatment ever accorded to India by the foreigner. It was to help England that Dominion status was agreed upon by so many parties in India. We have been over generous, and the Colonel has proved the type foreigner. Therefore now is the time either to do or to die. We cannot live under conditions like this. It is not only painful but humiliating. It is more. It is insulting, and it is injurious to the health of the nation.

Coming to the scheme of expenditure, an offering of it, so to say, was made the other day in the form of a big book containing items for so many crores of rupees. It was an offering on all fours, for not a pie could be touched. If the Gods swallowed or coveted a particle of the offering, who would give it ? (Applause.) We are used to give offerings to the Gods. Our *Vedic* forefathers gave them. Then they included a drop of *Soma* juice—a kind of wine ; and now there is big dose of opium in this Budget offering. (Laughter.) It is very interesting. We all know how the Indian Government long and strenuously fought in the International Convention for opium to be permitted to help the people of the East with opium. That is a long and unpalatable history. But the agreement came in spite of our self-constituted representatives, and in consequence of that our Provision opium sale is being perhaps gradually reduced year by year. Whether and how far that is being carried out, is not my concern here. Provision opium is safe in the hands of the international arrangements. But I find here, as a matter of fact, that excise opium has been the stronghold of my friends over there.

In 1926 we were told that our excise opium was sold to the provinces, the price being calculated on the basis of the cost price of the production of opium. Then naturally the price is practically stationary. Nobody can deny it. But when do you look into the income from the sale proceeds of excise opium, it was 70,03 lakhs last year (revised estimate), and this year it is 71,23 lakhs. (*An Honourable Member* : Crores, you mean ?)

Lakhs or crores, may be crores. I think they are lakhs. But what I want to point out is that the proceeds from the sale of excise opium are gradually increasing. Was it not high time for the Finance Member to make a scheme for gradual reduction, just as the Convention adopted a scheme for gradual reduction of Provision opium? I ask you, Sir, whether it was not up to him to make a scheme to reduce it gradually in ten or fifteen or five years, or whatever it might be, and to abolish the sale of opium ultimately in the provinces.

I was given a copy of the Bihar Budget the other day. I looked into this excise opium in which I am interested (Laughter), yes, I take opium as a subject. I mean as far as this House is concerned. I don't go into the income, for there I cannot know whether there is a reduction or an increase. But the opium which was purchased from the Government of India excise opium, in 1925-26 cost Rs. 7,46,620, and in the revised estimate it is Rs. 7,58,123. It is a distinct increase of a few thousands, and the Finance Member of Bihar and Orissa seems aggrieved this year for he says, "It is anticipated that this year's poor monsoon will affect consumption (of excisable drugs and liquors) resulting in a decrease in revenue" (Bihar and Orissa Financial Statement page 3.) But still my friend, Mr. Coatman, in his book 'India in 1927-28' tells me that, in 1910-11, the consumption for the whole of British India was 12,527 maunds. In 1926-27 it was 7,021 maunds. Yes, he is a very clever officer of Public Information (*An Honourable Member*: "Misinformation"). Misinformation, yes. He very slyly left out the year 1921. He should have compared the figures with 1921. There was a great fall, and three years ago it was proved by figures in this House that, all over India, there was a tremendous reduction in the sale of excise opium that year on account of Mahatmaji's efforts. But he cleverly compares the present with 1910-11. Then he says about Bihar and Orissa, that, "The Bihar and Orissa Opium Smoking Act prohibits opium smoking except by licensed vendors". I wish his information was correct. I belong to the Province of Bihar and Orissa, and I had the privilege to appear as a witness before the last Opium Committee, where I pressed for this particular measure, and yet it has not been given effect to. I give him this piece of information and I challenged him to deny it.

Then, Sir, I believe it has already been very taxing to you.

**Mr. President** : Not at all (Laughter). (*Cries of 'Go on.'*)

**Pandit Nilakantha Das** : This opium offering is quite in fitting with our traditions. There was an offering of the

whole budget. My Honourable friend, the Finance Member, will be glad that he is Indianising the budget to this extent at least.

The scheme of expenditure is, as I have said, not on the basis of Indian life and Indian income or Indian expenditure.

With regard to the expenditure in our ordinary domestic affairs, we say 'Cut your coat according to your cloth', but here the cloth is found out for the coat which is already there, and the cloth is found out for that coat and not for this *Khadar* coat; for that coat over there, the English Coat. For the *khadar* coat we have cloth enough in this country, but we have not enough for the English coat, which must be made and maintained clean and fresh. (*An Honourable Member*: 'And dry?') No, it is not dry. My Honourable friend, Mr. Amar Nath Dutt, said, the dress has nothing to do with culture. He has his own ideas, but once year after year, we are asked to appear in morning dress. Once our friend, *The Forward*, remarked that the Viceroy would be horrified to know what the morning dress of an Indian is. Let not our friends there be horrified. Our coat is like that and they must find cloth enough in this country for this Indian coat. Let him not first conceive the expenditure as he is doing. What is he doing? He is following the tradition created and fostered for him,

As soon as the Government of India Act of 1919 came into being, and this kind of budget offering came to be discussed in this House under what is emphemistically called the Reformed Constitution, there was anticipated a difficulty in finding money to meet the problem of unemployment in England. There was of course, then the blush of virginity and newness and a device was planned to take money "Home" in a way constitutional. At once the pompous Industrial Commission was announced under the pretence of developing Indian Industry. This mountain of a Commission produced the Indian Stores Purchase Department. That was the main recommendation of the Commission for the development of Indian Industry. The other day when I was appealing to my friend, the Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra, he said, "Industries is a Provincial subject and transferred. I am concerned with industries in centrally administered areas only." I have nothing to do with them, but I was supplied with a poor report of the Indian Stores Department. Very well, it was so small a book. I really thought that the Government of India had decided that all purchases, whether railway, military, civil engineering, and every thing should be purchased through the Indian Stores Department. But what do we find? The whole thing is a sham. It is a fresh luxury at the cost of the tax-payer. In

the last year under report the tax-payer is laid under contribution to the extent of more than Rs. 50,000. Why all this paraphernalia? If you do not like to give an impetus to Indian industry, Then what is the use of all this pompous Stores Department? How much do you buy here? The other day, in the course of my discussion on the railway budget, I proved home the whole case for the railways. There was no reply from the Government side. The difference between last year and this year in the railway stores purchase, so far as foreign purchases are concerned, is 7 crores more and the Indian purchases are 35 lakhs less I was referring to the last year under report and the last year but one. And here I also expect that the Army Department, which is getting 55 crores and 10 lakhs, should give its order for its stores purchase. But I find that there is a Marshal, a General, or some other big officer who will purchase things direct. (Shame.) We have no knowledge as to what he is actually doing. But a very poor sum comes, of course, to the Indian purchases. Perhaps our Honourable friend, Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra, thinks that he is helpless in the matter.

There are so many other departments for which purchases are made; why should they not all go through the Indian Stores Purchase Department? Why is there no attempt at centralisation? Unfortunately I have lost the list. (Laughter.) There are so many departments which purchase stores for themselves. Even pencils are purchased elsewhere. The pencil industry was a growing industry during the war time and after, but it has now practically collapsed. When we first came to this Assembly, we used to be supplied with Madras pencils. Now we see none. These we use, seem to bear some Indian names. Some Indian firms, I am afraid, import these pencils from abroad and impress their names. Cedar wood is the best for pencils. There are various forests in Beluchistan and the North West Frontier Provinces which have plenty of this cedar wood. But no thought has perhaps yet been given to develop them by communication or anything like that. Timber for pencils has to be purchased from California. What is that timber? It is a kind of sugar pine, which is coloured artificially by chemicals injected into the living tree. Here in India you have plenty of sugar pine in the Himalayan forests. We do not investigate into the subject at all in our Dehra Dun Depot of experts and the Indian Stores Department has nothing to do with pencils has nothing to do with telescope; it has nothing to do with microscopes and machines, and many other things, the purchase of which ought to be centralised in the Indian Stores Department. The Indians by this means, should systematically be encouraged to produce and manufacture the required

articles. This is a very grave situation. The master General of Supply, Printing and Stationery Department, and all these departments purchase their own stores. Even the State railways purchase their own stores, they do not purchase through the Indian Stores Department. If they purchase the oils and paints, which they have been doing a little for two years, they seem to think that they are showing some favour to the Indian Stores Department. A sum of 13½ crores as my Honourable friend tells me, is spent in England in purchases for the Army. All those purchases ought to have been made through this Indian Stores Department. But decentralisation is the principle followed by the Government of India.

I suggested the reason of this decentralisation in this House. Money is wanted in England to deal with the question of unemployment, and the reformed constitution is functioning as it does. It is more convenient if the discussion can be cleverly evaded. Then, the railway finance was separated and that was to create a psychological compartment in the scrutiny of the budget. This is railway, so this money set apart must go for upkeep and development. This is the decentralised concentration fostered in us. When you come to ways and means, 30 crores go every year for railways. This sum of 30 crores must go unscathed and uncriticised, for there is an arrangement for five years. So you create this psychological compartmentality. When we talk of railways, we say now to ourselves yes, this is railway money and we should not touch it with our sacrilegious cuts or criticisms. Ways and means must, as a matter of course, find money here in England, or anywhere for railways. What doubt or dissent can there be? There is no centralisation, everything is decentralised with a set purpose. If you have all the money for stores purchase in one lump, then you can view things in the proper light. I do not know whether this is not the thin end of the wedge. The military expenditure is separated this year, and that by an arrangement. It is another decentralisation. If we want to cut something out of 55 crores and 10 lakhs spent under military, the idea comes up that it is military, and under arrangement, we should not touch it. They include their estimates in a very big book all-non-votable yet there was an inclination to look into it. But after this separation even my Honourable friend Dr. Moonje will not perhaps look into it, for the very source of the desire is being psychologically killed. So my submission is that the inevitable mentality is there to work itself out in the military or the railway or whatever may be the department concerned in this clever policy of decentralisation. I shall narrate to the House one story, to illustrate this mentality fixed and set. A school master was once asked by a student: "Sir, *Prana* and *Jibana* both mean one and the same thing (life). But how is it that

the *na* in *Prana* is *Murdhanya* (palatal) ; and the *na* in *Jibana* (dental) ?” The teacher scratched his head for a time and then said in disgust, as it were “Silly child, don’t you realise that this is *Prana*, and should therefore be *Murdhanya* ; and that is *Jibana*, and therefore should be *Daniya* !” Similarly when we come to the Military Department, it is military, and should not be touched, and so on. This is a kind of very dangerous mentality to which we are being introduced. All money should be put together in one lump to be examined, and there should be no separate reserves created. Here you have 23½ crores—Railway Reserve. The other day, I said that this money was being taken from salt. It is the tax-payers’ money. By putting money in reserve, like this day are not only keeping the money idle but also they are encouraging certain industries somewhere in England. Now I don’t know if the military arrangement announced the other day with a military reserve is the thin end of the wedge for another decentralisation. By reserve I mean the surplus which will remain without lapsing, year after year to accumulate under the arrangement for a certain number of year. Towards the expenses of recognition, about which we know nothing. We do not know any items or details about that. That is the idea, I say, of creating another reserve. We will see, by 1930 how many more reserves, how many more decentralisations are being created out of the tax-payers’ money.

Then about debts. I put a short question to my Honourable friend Mr. Sesha Ayyangar, when he was speaking and he replied, “Yes”. ‘First we shall’ he said, ‘take Indian money if it is available ; otherwise, we shall take a loan, we shall if need be, borrow money from abroad.’ I put a question even in England ? He said, ‘Yes ! I have no objection. But I am sorry. Sir, I have to differ from him. I should, if I am put in charge of directing national finance, (Laughter) borrow money from any other country in the world but not from England. I tell you as my friend Mr. Birla over there—I do not find him here now—pointed out this is political debt, not economic debt only. I say I can stand economic debt, but vested interests and political interests have been created and are being created in this country, and it is this money which we borrow in England that is more than half responsible for our subjugation and subjection. Do not borrow from England, if we have to borrow anywhere at all. Yes, every nation sometimes does want money when it desires to grow ; but I say, do not borrow a farthing from England. That should be our principle, even if we get it in England at a little less interest. Then, Sir, no money actually comes here ; we get debts accumulated in papers but get perhaps worked iron clay or stone or

something of the sort for which labour and art is paid in England. You hear you have a national unproductive debt, a commercial productive debt and so many names of various significance. What is the meaning of all these? Do the debts develop your own industry and do they increase the paying power of the tax-payer? No. I have no desire to go into further details. (*Honourable Members* 'Go on'.) I have great suspicions that this money, which is borred, is not utilised for the purpose of giving an impetus to our indigenous industry, or for promoting our national wealth. National wealth does not consist of wagons and locomotives, these stones and those buildings of New Delhi; that is not national wealth. National wealth is the applied genius of the nation; that is, national labour having a money value. It is this applied genius which is national wealth. And what promotion is given to that applied genius of the nation—the genius which can be made into money and which can produce money?

I shall now turn a little to agriculture, if I am permitted. Reduction of rates is said to help agricultural wealth. I shall show you what all these reductions in railway rates mean; they mean something else than what they appear to be. They are fresh agencies for draining. Over and above that, as I was saying, money is borrowed in England. What is the meaning of that money? It is only a paper business. The stores are purchased in England, our locomotives, our rails, our telescopes, our microscopes, and even men are purchased there. As a matter of reality, at the back of the paper business, their industry is supported and encouraged, and they have their own vested interests even propitiated. The starving Industry is paid, new Industry is paid, new Industry encouraged, unemployment dealt with; and for the produce of industries, the interest on the capital again is assured. Thus it is a double debt. It is a very subtle think. I am not an economist myself; and my friend, Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas, will help me next year at least, if necessary.

**Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar :** Don't bother him.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** Then comes agriculture. My friend Mr. B. Das has in this connection referred to the floods and embankments. That is a big and pressing problem in India, and particularly in Orissa. On that I propose not to speak as he has spoken well. But, I shall here speak to you a word about agriculture proper which is the subject now before the country. There was a big Commission, a pompous one. When it came, we all expected that perhaps it was bringing some millennium into India. The terms of reference were published.

My friend Mr. Goswami is here, and he was responsible for a Resolution in this House by which we demanded an economic inquiry into the conditions of the people. We expected something would turn up, but what did we get? A taxation inquiry we got, instead of an economic inquiry. Then when the Royal Commission was announced, generally we thought it would go deep into the matter and hold something like an economic inquiry, as all economic inquiry must be based on agricultural inquiry. But it was not the fault of Lord Linlithgow or his friend. They were prevented from entering into the economic position of the Indian peasant. Land tenure, irrigation of land, tax—all these things which materially affect the agriculturist of India, were precluded from the terms of reference. They were shut out altogether. Then, after two or three years of inquiry, something like a voluminous report came out. On the recommendations of that report something was being hatched, and we were in the dark for a long time; as to what it was; and even now it is not published. Of course I am thankful to my friend Mr. Bajpai, who gave me some information privately (Laughter) as to what was being done about that. In spite of the anxious cares of my friend Mr. Bajpai and his Honourable Member to ensure Indian representation and Indian interest I am sure that in the name of experts—the very negation of Indianisation in spirit and matter—something will be newly introduced. I shudder, Sir, at the name of experts. We have been slaves not only of culture of finances and arms, but also to a certain extent, of experts. And those experts will come, and perhaps some arrangement for big farms—I know and many of my friends know what those farms are—like the plantations of Assam will crop up along with them. There may also be some central office or Institute where will sit probably some entomologists with microscopes with two or three pinned insects under these microscopes. In three or four years they will tell you: “Well to kill or ward off such and such an insect, irrigate the fields with solutions of potassium permanganate”. That is what we find in Pusa. Once there was an insect pest in my cocoon garden, and I was asked to inundate the plants with a solution of potassium permanganate. It was impossible. How could I do it? I do not know, if, in the end, the same thing will happen here, too.

I am not in this place going into the subject how all the labour is being depleted in our rural areas and being thus forced into plantations and to foreign countries in search for a living I shall not go into all those questions. (*Honourable Members*: “Go on, go on”) It is too late now. But I shall now go to the communal question which I consider from quite a different view point. It is not the communal questions between the Hindus and the Muhammadans. There is some

other communal question which has been brought up and fostered in this atmosphere of the Government of India and that is in connection with provincial redistribution, distribution of provinces in India on the basis of language. Linguistic province is the only natural administration division (*Some Honourable Members* : "Question") There might be Honourable Members who question, but the answer is there in Linguistic Division of Provinces and nowhere else. That is the only natural solution where harmony out of and among all the sub-cultures is possible. They will all in that harmony grow into a healthy body politic. It will be a synthesis. India cannot expect to have one homogeneous shade of culture throughout. There must be sub-cultures as there are and will be, and those sub-cultures in synthesis will become one synthetic body politic of the Indian Nation, one comprehensive culture. When our fore-fathers, in the distant post. Vedic times, found the race divided and their language fallen into dialects, what did they do? Where did they find the principle of nationalism or culture? They formulated the Sanskrit language. They did not expect a homogeneous culture but one synthesis they created out of a heterogeneous mass.

But this Government came here not with any such idea in their head. The provinces were somehow or other thrown into their present forms, and some provinces were formed according to the circumstances of annexation. Now I belong to a province (*Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar* : "With no culture!") whose culture has been studiously killed for these 150 years or more under the British Government. Some portion with the conquest of the Northern Circars during the Carnatic War was thrown out into Madras. That is the main cultural portion. Bengal had absorbed a big slice under the Dewani of the Company. Then another portion was thrown into Bengal during the second Mahratta War, and a third portion was still, upto 1849, under the Bhonslas of Nagpur, under which it was allowed to remain. And what is happening? Culture with its vehicle, language is being killed not only in its struggle for existence in the outlying areas; but in one province where you have more than one subcultural entities, what is the affect? They always quarrel with one another, and as the outcome of the quarrel, one party always goes to the Government for what it calls its self-interest and the other party does not lag behind in securing its own benefit just in the same way. As rivals of one another they seek the help of a third party, and this, as we all know, is very advantageous to Government. These communal wrangles these sub-communal wrangles, must be put an end to. I do

not know that the Government are thinking about it, but I should like to tell them that unless this natural division of provinces comes to be a real arrangement, there is no hope for the growth, for the smooth growth of Indian nationality. I know this Government may have very little to do with our nationality, but if I seek to convince the House, I picture to myself what things ought to be under a national Government. If anyone is worth his salt in this land, then he should remember this aspect of the problem this aspiration of the people, and direct his energies accordingly. Sir, I oppose the motion.

( Pandit Nilakantha Das. )

## X

### An unfinished Speech proposing remission of tax on indigenous Indian Salt made during the detailed discussion of the Indian Finance Bill. *21st March, 1929.*

**Mr. President :** Mr. Achrya.

**Mr. M. K. Acharya** (South Arcot *cum* Chingleput : Non-Muhammadan Rural) : Sir, . . . . .

**Pandit Nilakantha Das** (Orissa Division : Non-Muhammadan) May I rise to a point of order ? I presume you will allow my Honourable friend Mr. Acharya to move his amendment at this stage, and if so, I rise to a point of order. That amendment is for redasing the duty from Rs. 1-4-0 to four annas. I have got an amendment which is No. 8 on the list. It is remitting the salt duty in its entire extent.

**Mr. President :** That is what Mr. Ram Narayan Singh wants.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** As I understood his amendment, he remits the salt duties imposed since the days of British rule or the East India Company.

**Mr. President :** I am unable to differentiate between the amendment of Mr. Ram Narayan Singh and that of the Honourable Member. I thought the amendments of both the Members were the same, namely, that they wanted the remission of the tax altogether.

**Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar** (Madras ceded districts and Chittoor : Non-Muhammadan Rural) : May I point out, Sir, that the amendment in the name of Pandit Nilakantha Das is

different from that in the name of Mr. Ram Narayan Singh ? Pandit Nilakantha Das's amendment and my amendment will retain the duty of Rs. 1-4-0 upon imported salt, but will take away the duty on locally manufactured salt either wholly or to the extent of twelve annas according as it is proposed. Therefore, there is a considerable difference between the amendment proposed by my Honourable friend Mr. Ram Narayan Singh and that proposed by myself and Pandit Nilakantha Das.

**Mr. President :** I wonder if Government accept that view.

**The Honourable Sir George Schuster :** I understand that the interpretation of Mr. Ram Narayan Singh's amendment is the abolition of all salt duties. I was not quite clear myself, on the wording, whether he intended only to abolish the duty on salt manufactured in India and imported by land into India, or whether he intended to abolish both the import duty on foreign salt and the excise duty. But I understand from what my Honourable friend has said now, that he intended to move the abolition of all salt duty, that is, duty on imported salt, as well as on salt manufactured in India. In that case his amendment is substantially different from that proposed by Mr. Duraiswamy Aiyangar.

**Mr. President :** In that case, I will ask Pandit Nilakantha Das to move his amendment.

**Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyanger :** May I make the suggestion to the Chair that all the amendments might be first moved and discussion take place thereon and ultimately the questions may be put ?

**Mr. President :** Pandit Nilakantha Das.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** My amendment is :

"To clause 2 of the Bill the following be added at the end :

"and the said provisions shall, in so far as they enable the Governor General in Council to remit any duty so imposed, be construed as if, with effect from the 1st day of April, 1929, they remitted the duty to the extent of the said one rupee and four annas and such remission shall be deemed to have been made out of the leviable duty by rule made under that section."

The whole clause will then read like this as amended :

"The provisions of section 7 of the Indian Salt Act, 1882, shall, in so far as they enable the Governor General in Council to impose by rule made under that section a duty on salt manufactured in, or imported into, any part of British India other than Burma and Aden, be construed as if, with effect from the 1st day of April 1929, they imposed such duty at the rate of one rupee and four annas per maund of eighty-two and two sevenths pounds avoirdupois of salt manufactured in, or imported by land into, any such part, and such duty shall, for all the purposes of the said Act, be deemed to have been imposed by rule made under that section, and

the said provisions shall in so far as they enable the Governor General in Council to remit any duty so imposed, be construed as if, with effect from the 1st day of April, 1929, they remitted the duty to the extent of the said one rupee and four annas and such remission shall be deemed to have been made out of the leviable duty by rule made under that section."

Section 7 of the Salt Act, 1882, provides :

"The Governor General in Council may from time to time, by rule consistent with this Act,—

- (a) impose a duty, not exceeding three rupees per maund of 82 2/7 pounds avoirdupois, on salt manufactured in, or imported by land into, any part of British India ;"
- (b) (*My amendment is under this*) 'reduce or remit any duty so imposed, and re-impose any duty so reduced or remitted'.

From time to time, duties have been remitted by notification under this particular clause. In 1893, in the case of salt manufactured in the Punjab mines, the duty was remitted for salt used in glazed earthen ware. On another occasion in case of Madras salt sent out to Travancore and other places. There are other instances also quoted in the foot note of the section and clause. So, under this amendment, if it is carried, the effect will be that the duty will be levied, and that duty, so far as Indian indigenous salt is concerned, will be remitted entirely to the extent of Rs. 1-4-0. The idea is that the tariff duty on foreign salt is just as much as the excise duty on salt manufactured in India. If we have Rs. 1-4-0 as excise salt duty on salt manufactured in Bengal, say, then the tariff duty on the salt which is imported into Bengal from Liverpool or Germany will be just Rs. 1-4-0. If we say, we have no duty here, then the import duty goes, as a matter of course. When there is no imposition of excise duty, there is no standard by which we can levy a duty on imported salt. So the excise duty there technically, according to my amendment, remains untouched. That excise duty will be remitted, though technically it will be there on the Statute-book for the purpose of the tariff duty on imported salt. That is the idea of my amendment.

Sir, I was just listening to the very sweet and what I may call beautifully persuasive speech of my Honourable friend, Sir George Schuster.

**Mr. President :** He did not persuade you ?

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** It was persuasive all the same. He did, Sir, but perhaps could not persuade me. I quite realise his position and if he could carry the sweetness of his tongue to the depths of his heart, he would be the first man, before I make any speech, to prove my case, to accept my amendment and pour oil over all agitation here. For, this salt tax

is the centre of the objectionable features of the Finance Bill, so far as the economic aspect of it is concerned, this salt tax is the crux of the whole problem. He may not have known it. He is new to this House. Year after year, this salt tax has been, as my friends described it, a hardy annual. I think my amendment requires little persuasion on this side of the House. I know we shall be very strong in carrying this measure, for this measure requires little persuasion to the representatives of the people, irrespective of their political opinions. On this question, I must apologise to you, Sir. Our memories are not only long and painful, but to some utterly unpalatable and even galling.

This salt tax painfully puts me in mind of a tax, which I call mediæval, I may even call it primitive. It is, Sir, a poll tax, and as such, is full of the humiliating memory of the days and dealings of ancient slavery, as well as mediæval fanaticism. I need not go into details of this historical significance of the problem for obvious reasons. Let me say this much, that it is all unseemly for a people to fight with their Government in this second quarter of the 20th century on the issue of a tax round which cling the associations of barbarism.

It is a poll tax, a capitation tax, and more so from the view-point of the Government. We know, it can be proved on authority that consumption of salt decreases, when the tax is increased. But to the Government the consumption is inelastic. What else is it then but a poll tax, a capitation tax? What else is the principle and significance of a capitation tax? True, it puts one in mind of the days of human slavery. Which Government was that thought of poll taxes? Not an organised, not a civilised Government. A poll tax can only be thought of when the Government wants to make money out of the ignorance of the people. No Government would ever think of a poll tax. This salt tax is a poll tax veneered over, with what the Government calls 'indirect', I mean, the principle of indirect taxation. It is a direct poll tax I say, and it is primitive in its character.

**Mr. President :** The Honourable Member is repeating the same thing over and over again.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** Am I? I am sorry, Sir, but this subject is so very painful.

**Mr. President :** That may be, but there are rules governing the debate in this House.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** I am not consciously doing it.

**Mr. President :** I am prepared to believe the Honourable Member !

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** It is a tax which is levied on food. Rich people are not affected by this tax, although I don't say that rich people have nothing to do with the tax. It is a tax all the same, and they pay as much perhaps as the poorest man pays. It is in keeping with the character of the present Imperialistic civilization, which should no longer find its *pro sto* on the exploitation and oppression of the poor. For it has always been the function of Imperialism to exploit the property of the world where protection of such property is the weakest. The poor man is exploited and what else is this tax ? It partakes of the distinct character of that Imperialistic policy of exploitation. It is a tax on human blood. The poor man is bled to find money for the coffers of the State under this tax. I don't propose to pose as a chemist in this House, but I say salt has very much—perhaps 90 per cent.—to do with human blood, and when you tax salt you tax the poor man's blood. Poverty has been a sin for a long time and therefore it is being punished. But how much longer will it be punished like this ? Whatever may be the character of my opposition to this tax, I say it should not be a source of revenue. Salt should not be a source of revenue. If you make it a source of revenue, as I remarked some time ago, you are always tempted to make it your sure reserve, a certain source of revenue. Many other taxes are there, they are not certain, but there is no uncertainty about the poor man, or even the rich man for all that, taking a pinch of salt. You are always tempted to grasp the poor man, to bleed the poor man. It engenders a sort of depravity which is not healthy to the cause of humanity. It stands to murder humanity in ignorance and weakness. This is such a tax.

You may say there is France, there is Italy, there is that Republic of Brazil. They have it, they have, this salt tax. It does not matter if, England does not have it. It has something else. We shall explain that later on, but big countries have it. Why should you not have it in India ? There are examples in the West and in the countries Westernised. I know, but I refuse to enter into the circumstances which actuated them to put on this salt tax. I look within before I look without. What have I got to do with Brazil having a salt tax, I have not been to Brazil. You may have got many books, many accounts, this and that. Only yesterday my friend Mr. Chaman Lall's statements and mine were being questioned for our not having been personally to the tea

gardens in Assam. For that reason our statements could not be regarded as authoritative. Whether authoritative or not, whether facts or not, whether reasonable or not, I don't go to question or to criticise what others are doing in this world. I ask myself what I should do, and I say, so far as I am concerned, I am not going to give any sanction whatsoever, moral or physical, for this tax on the poor man's blood.

**Mr. President :** Does the Honourable Member say "physical sanction" ?

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** Yes.

**Mr. President :** How can he give physical sanction ?

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** Physical sanction in voting. We are sometimes carried to the Lobby against our will. Sanction there is not mental or moral, I think it is physical. Is'nt it ?

**Mr. K. Ahmed :** You will be hauled up to the police court !

**Mr. President :** It is not possible for the Honourable Member to finish before lunch I suppose ?

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** I don't think so.

**Mr. President :** The House stands adjourned till a quarter to three.

The Assembly then adjourned for lunch till a quarter to three of the Clock.

The Assembly re-assembled after lunch at a quarter to three of the Clock, Mr. President in the Chair.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** I was going to say, Sir, that the salt tax should not be made a source of revenue. One may very well ask if it is not to be a source of public revenue, what do you propose to have in its stead. There are two reasons for the total abolition of the entire tax on indigenous salt in India. I have got to explain them a little. One reason is that this is a measure of protection. The other day when Demands for Grants were being discussed, we carried a cut in the salt Demand on the issue that India should be made self-supporting in matters of salt. Indian salt should be made to supply the whole of India. There is a difficulty and the main difficulty is foreign imported salt. If we cannot make Indian salt, it was found out the other day—at least it was so given out—if we cannot make Indian salt very very cheap, as compared with foreign salt, we have no hope, at least for the next 20 years, of making

India self-supporting so far as salt is concerned. It will be very difficult to put a very heavy protective tariff duty on imported salt. It will not look well for many reasons, salt tax being a poll tax, as I have said, it is a bad tax, it is obnoxious to tax the blood of man. Realising all this, and Indians as we are by culture, we have been all along throughout our historic tradition first members of humanity and then members of the nation, it is not for us to say, let English salt, German salt or Aden salt be taxed, not ours. It does not look well. But we are here constrained to give some protection to indigenous salt, and what is the compromise? I will give you here a compromise. The compromise is to remit the excise tax, *i. e.*, excise duty on indigenous salt. Then, this Rs. 1-4-0 per maund remains on imported salt and that is a measure of protection.

It is said that the people in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and some parts of Assam have to depend, entirely on foreign salt. They have also been made during the course of the last hundred years or so, to contract a kind of liking, natural or artificial, whatever it be, they have been made to contract a kind of liking for foreign salt on account of its quality. Whatever that be, I hope my Honourable friend Pandit Duraiswamy Aiyangar, I mean Mr. Duraiswamy Aiyangar . . .

**Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar :** I am a Pandit all right.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** My Honourable friend proved it home the other day that quality matters very little to the common man, even in Bengal and Assam. It is not a question of quality so much as the question of unavailability. It is not made available there. That is our position. But supposing a certain section of the people are attracted by its quality, they love foreign salt, they prefer it on account of its better quality. Admit, for the sake of argument, that it is so, I believe even the Members of Government will agree when I say that such a preference can be found only, with the richer section of the community. It is quite natural that, when protection comes, the richer and the more enlightened section for that matter, who have been mainly responsible except Government, for killing the indigenous salt and for killing its market in Bengal, they ought to be made to pay for relieving the poor.

( At this stage Mr. President vacated the Chair which was taken by Mr. Deputy President. )

It will be a very small burden which such people will never, I believe, grudge to pay. It will be in the fitness of things

that, if any one is to be taxed in this country for the purpose of giving a certain protection to the native industry, I mean indigenous industry, it is that section of the people who can bear such a burden without difficulty. In this case, there will be practically no difficulty to them.

My second reason is that it is not possible for us to propose an adjustment of tariff duty perhaps on this occasion. Had I wished to increase it, I am afraid, Sir, I could not have done so. It is only the duty on excise salt which I propose to remit—perhaps some of my friends do not understand the significance of it ; I apologise to them as I have not perhaps been intelligible. The bill says “salt manufactured in, or imported by land into” India and not Burma. That is, if we pass this Bill as it is, we levy a duty on indigenous salt alone. This Bill is for excise salt duty only. Our difficulty arises there. In this Bill, by no amendment shall we be able to conveniently adjust the duty on imported salt. That duty, I mean tariff duty, is, according to the Tariff Act, levied on the basis of this excise duty, which by rules made under Section 7 (2) of the Indian Salt Act, can be remitted by the Governor General in Council. Thus the duty will remain leviable for the purpose of taxing imported salt, and will not be realised on indigenous salt on account of the remission proposed here. Now, I hope, it is clear that the adjustment of the salt duty conveniently is forbidden ground so far as this act is concerned, and we shall have to take the  
 3 P.M. previous sanction of His Excellency the Viceroy before we can bring in such an amendment. That amendment, as I understand it, and as far as I have experienced it in previous years, that amendment means the putting in of something new into the body of this Bill. If you want to do that, you cannot do that merely by means of an amendment. Two years ago, I looked into the question, and I applied for sanction to amend this particular section to that effect. I am sorry to inform my Honourable friends that I was not allowed to do so.

**An Honourable Member :** I am very sorry.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** There is nothing to be sorry under the present arrangement. So, I say that the question is hedged in a double difficulty. For these two reasons, I propose this particular amendment.

So far as the other countries are concerned, I have said, I refuse to enter into the circumstances prevailing there ; our main concern is India, and in this connection, I confess, to a certain extent, also, England. England is the home of my Honourable friends who rule over our financial and political destinies. When they think of making money out of the poor

man's pinch of salt, will they look back across those 6,000 miles of the blue ocean and tell me what are the things obtaining here? Is there a salt tax in England? I know there was one some hundreds of years ago. That was in the middle ages. The world has advanced since then, and much water has since flown under the bridge of the Thames. They had a salt tax then; but as soon as the people realised that they had a certain right, a substantial right to govern themselves, as soon as their eyes upon towards the political and national future of their country, and their particular share in it, they did not brook a medieval, a primitive tax like that. Objections were raised—I could write pages and volumes, and I can read many quotations, but I refrain from doing so, because I do not propose to take much time of the House if I can avoid it. But I know, from the point of view of human health, health of industry, health of agriculture,—from all sides there were objections—so many and varied that the levy of such a duty was at last found impossible. I may here quote a small passage.

**Mr. D. K. Lahiri Choudhury :** (Bengal ; Landholders) : May I ask the Honourable Member what is meant by the health of industries and the health of agriculture ?

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** My Honourable friend ought to have known by this time perfectly well what is meant by the health of industries and health of agriculture. If he looks only to his own orchards and fields, and if he goes to some industrial centre or even to a village to inspect what the state of cottage industry is there, he will see that it is anything but healthy. I know he is a big zemindar ; I am making no reflection on him but I am afraid he is not in touch probably with the real state of things in the villages.

**Mr. D. K. Lahiri Chaudhury :** I differ from my Honourable friend. I keep in close touch with my tenants.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** Then I ask him, is industry in a healthy condition ? Is your agriculture in a healthy condition in the villages ?

**Mr. D. K. Lahiri Chaudhury :** I simply asked the Honourable Member to explain what he meant by it. I did not mean to attack him.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** I have explained it sufficiently well, I think, and I hope I have been intelligible even to my Honourable Friend over there. I was going to say—I am going to quote one passage to show that even in England, where I need not say anything about the income of the individual or the circumstances of living or the standard of life,

which is dinned into our ears day in and day out, even in this House for imitation ; but I shall quote one thing. An English salt manufacturer, giving evidence before a Select Committee on Salt in 1836, by name William Worthington, said this. A member of that Committee put the question, "Since the repeal of the duty, has there been an increase in the demand, for that sort of salt which is used for household purposes?" The answer—what is the answer? "Very considerable." And here in India the salt tax gives you, gives the Government, six, sometimes ten and sometimes even more, crores of rupees year after year. We are told it is only six annas, or four annas or something like that *per capita*, as if it were a very small thing. But the gentlemen who are sitting during the winter in this Imperial Delhi and enjoy the summer on the heights of Olympus, Simla I mean,—to such people four or six annas I know means nothing. They do not understand what a four-anna piece means. I am afraid they have not seen one, for it is not gold nor is it paper. But we, all the representatives here on this side of the House, have very painful experience of what that little thing means, that four anna piece, to our villagers. As my friend here (Diwan Chaman Lall) tells me, it is a matter of life and death for them.

I should like to remind you of the history of the salt tax in this country. We are sometimes told that the history of this tax is a very long one ; I know long and painful it is under British Rule in India. But I was once surprised that even the Arthashastra of Kautilya was laid under contribution to afford an authority for this particular tax in ancient times. I felt sorry to think that there should be so much ignorance—genuine or put on, does not matter here—about Indian life. Indian culture, Indian government, Indian polity. On account of a kind of a spoon-feeding in culture, we have been gradually accustomed, inured, to things which, if we knew what our forefathers were, we should not care a tuppence for. Now what was the principle of taxation in India in those days? The land today belongs to the Government, or the zemindars—for that matter, through the zemindar it is Government's land—the land then never belonged to Government. It was never the Raj's land. When the kingship was first conceived as is illustrated in the story of Bena, there was no idea of Kings proprietorship over the land. It was a willing contribution of one-sixth of the return on the land, later on supplemented by a land tax that maintained the King and maintained him to please the people and to work for the good of the people, to consider himself the real servant of the people. This was the principal theory of our Indian taxation. How can it be possible that there was a salt tax? If there was a salt

tax, the men who made salt perhaps used to give one-sixth of what they made out of it to the King, probably a little land tax in addition in later days. As a matter of fact, a mendicant in the forest, who used to live by picking grains from the streets or cart ways had to pay one-sixth of those grains picked up, and that was the King's portion. If you look at it from the side of the King, that was a tax ; but I must tell you clearly.....

**Diwān Chaman Lall :** On a point of order, Sir. There is no quorum.

(A count was taken.)

**Mr. Deputy President :** There is a quorum.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** In India there was no tax which the King ever imposed on the people : the basic principle of our culture, I may say, was "Duty" whereas a complete change has come over the world and now the basic principle is "Right". Now the King, as well as the people, are always demanding of each other—the King says, "Give me my tax", the people say, "Give us our rights of representation and of shaping the state policy." "No representation, no taxation". But in ancient days there was no such struggle for existence or for kingship ; there was no oppression of the people by the King, and the people did not feel that they should take away anything called power from the King. That was the culture then, the smooth working, the dovetailing of each other's interests, and in such an arrangement, the salt tax must be impossible. Then what is the meaning of quoting Kautilya to prove the ancient history of the salt tax ?

**Mr. M. S. Aney :** (Berar Representative) : Why does the Honourable Member not refer to the historic fact that the sage Agastya was the first Aryan to give free sea salt to the people of this country ?

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** My gallant Mahratta friend knows these matters better than I do : he is proud of the heritage of the culture of Agastya, who went to his part of the country never to return to Northern India. We believe he is still there guiding their destinies and rising up year after year in the autumn. But it was he who gave free salt ; he went to the South, and the allegorical story is that he made salt out of the sea and before that, as I shall just come to it, the people were making salt from the earth. I am just coming to that.

It is during the Muhammadan period we are told that there was a salt tax ; but what was that ?  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to 5 per. cent. Was it a tax ? I cannot say what it actually was. Perhaps just as

the produce of the land was taxed, so was the produce of the sea, or the land which produced salt. It was like a common tax, an ordinary tax ; it was no salt tax, it was no poll tax, it was no capitation tax ; that is what I want to impress upon the attention of House. It was  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to 5 per cent. Now, will any one compare the percentage of the present salt tax. What is the present percentage ? 1,000, 1,200, is that the proper calculation ? It will come to even more, for the salt price is sometimes 1a. 6p. whereas the tax is Rs. 1-4. According to the proper rule of three calculation, it comes to how much ? 1,600 per cent. Am I right ? And during the Muhammadan times it was  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to 5 per cent. I take it out of reports written by Englishmen—authentic reports ; but I am sorry I have not got them to quote from. Was that a tax at all.

If you say what is the character of the salt tax, I have already told you it is the public revenue reserve. Had it been so, every one, every school-boy knows the story of Muhammad Tughlak, that idealist, that scholar-Emperor, who dabbled in economic problems without studying them, and he would have been the first man to draw on this tax, had it been the custom in those days. He was in want of money, and he went from house to house to collect a poll tax ; for state expenditure he collected his own subjects' property in desperation ; he was in dire need of money and he wanted to issue notes, I mean, paper currency without any metallic reserve in the treasury ; and he wanted that copper coins with the stamp of the Emperor should pass as gold and silver coins. He took to so many means of making money : but we do not hear of the salt tax, even then ; it has never been recorded by Ibn Batuta, that famous African traveller who was a friend and for, seven years practically an associate and a colleague so to say of Muhammad Tughlak. Am I to hear that he could not record it ? I maintain, Sir, that the salt tax had no history before the coming of the East India Company.

I shall simply rapidly pass over the Sikh regime in the Punjab, when some little money—inconsiderable through it be—was realised from leasing out mines in the salt range, the stronghold of the Indian Government's monopoly even today. But the salt, as such, was never taxed. Though in the Sikh days in the Punjab, which were the days of the East India Company in other parts of India, when these mines were leased out and when we might expect to hear of a salt tax—in the Punjab salt range, we do not hear of anything like that at all. It was a mining lease rather than anything else ; that is not a salt tax. Just as a zemindar lets out his stone

mines, or the Government lease out their silver mines, so it was with this salt range ; under a mining arrangement it was let out.

But admitting for argument's sake that the salt tax was a tax in India just as it is today, for argument's sake I take it, it was so ; but will the Honourable the Finance Member take note of the fact that all the sources of supply were open to the people ? The mine was there in the Punjab and the sea from Sind to Chittagong ; all this was open to the people who were making their own salt. Who began the monopoly ? The word "monopoly" came into this country with the East India Company. That the cursed word "monopoly" of salt came into this country with the advent of the British merchant rules. Evidently there was no monopoly of salt in India before then. There being no monopoly, it would be self-contradictory if you say that there was a tax. People were not making salt in factories, and *Nimak Mahal* is a word which the East India Company probably coined. In those days there was no big centralised manufacture of salt. Some times people carried a potful of water from the sea, boiled it in their houses and made salt. I shall now tell the House how the monopoly system has pressed heavily on the poor people, how it has actually operated itself on the people, and how clandestinely people prepared their own salt for which, not they, but their zemindars were punished.

But you may say that if today we give salt free, how can it be supplied to the people in the interior ? They will be put to a lot of expense and trouble to carry salt into the interior from the sea coast. You may say that. But, Sir, I have got literature in my hand to show—I do not know whether I shall be believed at this hour of the day if I tell you, Sir, that all over India there is salt earth from which salt can be made easily. It is made in this way, Sir. First take out the earth and then put it into water. The water is then filtered and boiled and allowed to evaporate, and the deposit that remains is salt. That is how salt is made, and the earth for making salt nature has supplied in her abundance, and such earth can be found even in the land of my friend over there, in Allahabad.

**Munshi Iswar Saran :** (Lucknow Division : Non-Muhammadian Rural) : Not very much.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** Much or little, the source has not been tapped, and you were not living in the days of your grandfather to tell me now

**Munshi Iswar Saran :** Address the Chair please.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** I am sorry, Sir, my friend ought to have lived in the days of his great grandfather to tell me today whether that salt was much or little . . . . .

**Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar :** Did you live then ?

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** Sir, Mr. Thornhill of the Board of Revenue, perhaps of Madras, in the Report on Salt in 1876, on page 94, says that, "the quality of earth salt varies greatly in different localities. That produced from the black cotton soil is generally the best". Mark the quality here. "It is pure white", and not muddy, not the black salt of Madras which is not palatable to.....

**An Honorable Member :** To Mr. Kabeer-ud-Din Ahmed.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** To my friends like Mr. Kabeer-ud-Din Ahmed in Bengal. The salt produced "was in well-formed small crystals" like the Cheshire salt. "That produced in red soil is dirty and red in appearance, the former is used largely for human consumption and the latter exclusively for the use of cattle." Mark, Sir, there was a provision in every household for giving salt to cattle.

Sir, the earth salt policy of the Government recently came in for criticism at the hands of Sir Thomas Holland in a speech which he delivered before the Royal Society of Arts. He alleged that the restriction on the manufacture of earth salt pressed heavily on the poor. The policy, he maintained, was responsible for stinting the supply of salt for agriculture operations, and to that extent accountable for agricultural deterioration in India. This is the criticism of Sir Thomas Holland.

Sir, five years ago, in March, 1924, a question was put in this House regarding salt earth, not by a man who lived on the sea coast, but by a man who lives in the Surma Vally, I mean Mr. Ahmed-Ali Khan. He was pressing for an industry, the extinction of which affected his own constituents, and as a matter of fact, here is my friend Mr. S. C. Dutta from the same constituency who tells me that, not only is there an abundance of salt earth in his district, but there are spring in his own gardens and orchards which give saline water and formerly salt was made out of that water. Now, Sir, a stone has been put and a guard has been established there so that no man can carry a jarful of water and make salt out of it. But whatever be the real state of things there the answer given to the question put by Mr. Ahmed Ali Khan was that, "The Government of India do not propose to abolish the restrictions, nor do they think it worth their while to institute any inquiry in regard to the extent and nature of hardships occasioned to

the poor." I hope my Honourable friend, Sir George Schuster after the fine sentiments he has expressed, will take note of these words—Government do not consider it worth their while to institute an inquiry in regard to the extent and nature of the hardships occasioned to the poor. And, Sir, we are crying ourselves hoarse we have been crying ourselves hoarse on several occasions in this House, for the promotion of cottage industries which are being killed day after day. Of course the machinery for this extinction is imperceptible to the common man. But may I tell you, Sir, that this salt industry was almost a cottage industry throughout India, and it afforded occupation to people in their slack season for which Mahatma Gandhi is now putting,—I cannot say unwelcome or welcome,—the *charka* into the hands. ... ..

**Mr. Deputy President :** We are discussing the question of taxation of salt, and not the manufacture of salt. I hope my Honourable friend will try to be a little more relevant.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** I only mention it in order to press it upon your attention as well as upon the attention of the House.

**Mr. Deputy President :** But the question of the formation of salt is not under discussion.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** No, Sir. It is not the formation of salt. But I submit the formation of salt is connected with the taxation of salt. If you take out the tax, then I want to show to the House how people will have their cottage industry, how they will thrive, how it will help them to grow, how their agriculture will be improved, and how their cattle will be fed with salt. All this is relevant, I submit, to the question of taxation on salt. You have heard of the floods in Orissa in Balasore district in 1927. That was a salt producing district. Formerly there were monopoly centres, but now there are not even those centres, and people are thrown out of employment and they are sinking in floods and dying of famine. Nobody cares for these *rayats*, sometimes they are decoyed by *sirdars*, and sent out to Assam plantations. If they have got a plot of land, it produces nothing. For a land on which salt was formerly manufactured cannot produce rice. Men who have experience in land will tell you that on a land where salt was being manufactured for about half a century at least, not even the best scientific manure can bring the proper amount of fertility. If they have got a plot of land, that land is taxed, cultivated or fallow—for that is the *rayati* tenancy—and in order to pay the tax, these *rayats* have to go to Jamshedpur or to Calcutta to earn money and pay the tax.

**Mr. K. Ahmed :** Don't look at me, look at the Chair, (Laughter)..

**Mr. Deputy President :** Possibly you might be able to extract some black salt from over there. (Laughter).

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** I tell you this is the condition, and I would not have told you all these things had I not been required to do so. But the thing is there, They were, out of pity, in 1927 allowed to make their own salt, and for a full year, I have not got statistics with me, emigration from that particular land was arrested a good.....

**Mr. K. Ahmed :** You are not true to your salt if you have not got the statistics.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** It is the salt of the Government. I cannot be true to Government salt. They were very healthy, and I have seen them making their salt. Government had not the face to forbid them from doing it. Gradually some preventive officers or some other officers were secretly set on them, and local officers were made by law to fine these people Rs. 5 or 6, or 10. That was enough to produce the effect desired by Government, for the people got terrified. They are probably now emigrating in large numbers to industrial centres, Fiji and other places as before.

**Mr. K. Ahmed :** Were you arrested for smuggling ?

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** I do not know whether some of them are today carrying loads of salt as labourers from ships which come from Liverpool to Calcutta. The purpose of my saying all this was to show how a whole machinery of spies, under the name of preventive officers, is constantly in operation so that people cannot even have a pinch of salt if it is not purchased directly from Government. These machines of demoralisation, some germs of which have developed into the criminal Intelligence Department, were invented even when the monopoly first began, in the early of the East India Company. They were then fresh—brand new. Those were the days of regulations. In those days there were no Acts as we have now. There were two regulations, Regulation X of 1819 and Regulation X of 1826, to which I shall refer here. On of them, namely of 1819, makes the boiling of salt water criminal. Then there occurs in the other, i. e., of 1826 a peculiar thing, a very interesting thing. Under the Regulation of 1826 burning of straw soaked in salt water was to be severely dealt with. If it was burnt, what was the punishment ? They were not so civilised in those days. Criminality in those days could perhaps be transferred from one man to another. Vicarious punishments

were, I suppose, allowed. The zemindar was to be fined Rs. 500 for each single case found out among the tenants, and the cases were dealt with not by judicial officers. There is another very interesting thing too. If the zemindar had co-sharers, 2, 3, or 4 or 5 sharers, then the fine, *viz* Rs. 500, for each offence was not divided. Each of the co-sharers was to be fined Rs. 500 for each single case. That was the law in respect of which Devendranath Tagore on behalf of the British Indian Association made a petition where he said :

"In General it is the poor. 'rayats', often without any malicious designs against their landlords, and owing to their inability to pay the high price of so necessary a condiment, who have brought themselves under the operations of this rule, by preparing solely for domestic consumption a little salt upon their daily fires in one of their ordinary cooking utensils, or by burning a little straw steeped in salt water. The manner in which the 'rayats' prepare the salt for such daily consumption precluded all probability of discovering....."

Still, if cases were discovered? Mr. Devendranath Tagore was fined Rs. 500 each time. I shall not tax the patience of the House by narrating the long history of how it grew in severity and how it killed many races of poor people during the course of a century and a quarter. In the Famine Report of Orissa of 1866, page 222, paragraph 49, it is said that "salt manufacturers, who had turned to landless labourers through sheer helplessness" on account of the Government monopoly in salt were the people upon whom "the utmost severity of the calamity" had fallen. You do not, perhaps, know the extent of the mortality in that famine. Now, I am quoting from the Government Report on the famine of Orissa and Bengal. 20 lakhs of people died out of a population of 60 lakhs. That is one-third of the population died, and this salt monopoly was substantially responsible for this calamity.

Then comes another chapter in the history of the salt tax. It is against the imported salt that I propose my amendment to-day. Now, Sir, the East India Company came here. It is useless to quote things. So much quoting is unnecessary. It will simply tax my friends and take longer time than necessary. I shall be as brief as I can be. When the East India Company came here, they pounced upon this salt. Who were the manufacturers and who were the tax-payers? As I hinted the other day, servants of the Company were not paid. They were let loose on the people. Yes, it is a fact. One of my friends told me that he went to pay a visit to that great historian Vincent Smith. He was buried among his books. My friend found in his library that there were many records about the doings and activities of the East India Company and their servants. He asked Vincent Smith, "In your books I find nothing about

the things one may find here." The historian said, "My dear friend, "what can I do? I have come to realise that these men were a perfect set of scoundrels, but for political reasons, I do not write about them." This is what I have heard from my friend. I do not know how far it is true, but I have reasons to believe it to be true from what I know of this salt tax business. I know how the early servants of the Company were let loose on the people. They were paid very little, and were freely allowed to carry on business and plunder people. There was a Resolution to prevent them from taking part in the manufacture of salt. What was the reply? They must make some money. The service must be made attractive to them.

The East India Company was making lots of money. Human nature is human nature everywhere. In England, why should the nation of shop-keepers brook this profit making of a few individuals? A set of people are making profits in India. Why should others be deprived of doing the same? The Borough of Droitwich complained. Then the Chamber of Commerce in the City of Gloucester also pointed out that the manufacture of salt by the East India Company was a manifest violation and evasion of Act 3 of William IV, c. 85 and protested against the exclusion of "the British merchant from the benefit of a market to which he had natural and paramount claims to be admitted." Similar Resolutions were passed by the Chambers of Commerce of Bristol, of Liverpool and other important Trade Centres. I draw.....

**Mr. Deputy President :** Order, order. I hope the Honourable Member will realise that he has already taken one and a half hours. I think he should try to be more brief and more relevant.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** I will be very brief (Laughter) though I have so much to say, for the subject is so vast and momentous, and the description is so painful. Then with regard to the principle of the duty. It was to give facilities, to the English merchants in the market of India, where they had a paramount and natural right. What is that paramount and natural right? I cannot say, nor have I any desire to say that. I don't like to say unpalatable things, especially because my friend over there is so very polite and sweet. Then what was the principle? The principle is, as first mooted by the Duke of Argyll, that famous Secretary of State for India, that the poor man must pay something—I am not quoting it. Perhaps I am not going to speak for a very long time. The Duke of Argyll said—but this is so important (Laughter from some Honourable Members). This is not a thing to laugh at. The Duke of Argyll said :

“On all grounds of general principle, salt is a perfectly legitimate subject of taxation. It is impossible to reach the masses by direct taxes, if they are to contribute at all to the expenditure of the State. It must be through taxes levied upon some articles of universal consumption, there is no other article in India but salt answering this description, and therefore I am of opinion that the salt tax of India must continue to be regarded as a legitimate and important branch of the public revenue.”

I consider this to be not an indirect tax as it is called, but a direct tax, and if I get time and if you will allow me, Sir, I will prove it.

This is the principle of our salt tax—our salt *nagna casta* so to say, as my friend Mr. Aney would like to remind me here—and if this be the principle, may I ask what about the poor man's matches in the market? Is it not a taxable commodity? Do we not fill the coffers of our State with taxes on matches?

**Mr. Deputy President :** Order, order. May I remind the Honourable Member that Standing Order 29(2)(vi) lays down that :

“A Member while speaking shall not—

(vi) use his right of speech for the purpose of wilfully and persistently obstructing the business of the Assembly.”

I hope the Honourable Member will try to bring his remarks to a conclusion as soon as possible.

**Diwan Chaman Lall** (West Punjab : Non-Muhamadan) : May I ask whether it is not within the right of the Honourable Member to use right of speech?

**Mr. Deputy President :** Quite so, but within the restrictions contained in the rule I have quoted.

**Diwan Chaman Lall :** Is there any time limit.

**Ma. Deputy President :** There is no question of time limit but I say that the speech of the Honourable Member must be relevant.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** I am sorry, I never meant to be irrelevant.

(At this stage Mr. President resumed the Chair).

**Mr. President :** Is the Honourable Member still speaking ? Although there is no time limit to speeches, on this motion, the Honourable Member is expected to make a legitimate use of the procedure of this House.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** But considering the importance of the subject, and the fact that we have been paying a tax like this for such a long time, over a century and a half, I hope I shall be wanting in my duty if I do not make it a point this year to convince even the Government Members who have not yet been convinced by argument.

**Mr. President :** Pandit Nilakantha Das.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** Thank you, Sir. Then I was speaking about the Duke of Argyll (Laughter). I asked, this being the principle of the salt tax, that every poor man must give something to the State for its protection of the poor—if I may say so—perhaps the other aspect of the same principle is that the poor man is protected by the Government, receives some benefit real or chimerical, and should be taxed for that purpose—if it be so, I was just going to ask on how many things is the poor man not paying in this land ? Kerosene, does he not pay for it ? Does he not pay a heavy tax for matches and for income-tax ? Who actually pays the income-tax ? And all the taxes that are gathered that come to the Government coffers, where do they come from ? They are all based on primary articles of human consumption. Prices go up. There was the currency trouble, and the price went high and low. Whom did they ultimately affect ? And that, I say, is a thing which reaches each and every poor man in every land, not to speak of matches, or kerosene, or even income-tax, which is sometimes directly levied on the debtor. As a matter of fact I know that many creditors, at the time of lending money, take some proportionate advance as interest for the income-tax. That does not matter. Am I to explain here that the grain of rice, the grain of wheat which the poor eat, is the real article which ultimately bears the burden of almost all taxes ? Then how do you say the poor man must pay something and that it must be out of salt ? By no stretch of logic can such a position be maintained. Here I am reminded of a very curious statement of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, who was discussing this selfsame subject long ago :

‘What a humiliating confession to say that, after this length of British rule, the people are in such wretched plight that they have nothing that the Government can tax, and that

Government must therefore tax an absolute necessity of life ..... and how can anything be a greater condemnation of the British lines of policy that the people have nothing to spend and enjoy, and pay tax on, but that they must be pinched and starved in a necessary of life."

This was what our famous Grand Old Man, Dadabhai Naoroji, a man who gave the ideal of nationalism in the single term *Swaraj* to the country at a time when the whole country was going to be thrown into chaos, a man who brought cosmos out of chaos, this was what he said about the salt tax. He condemned this salt tax and condemned the Government on that score.

It was said that the tax was no tax at all and that it did not affect the consumption of salt. It was so stated in this House, and I myself heard it often. It is not we are told, like India rubber, elastic. It is inelastic. If you tax salt at the rate of even Rs. 30 per maund, even then the man has to eat salt. He must find money for paying the tax and eat it. The other day, in a communique which we were discussing, the average was given as 12 lbs. in India per head consumption. The lowest was 8½ lbs. per head. That is the figure, if I remember aright. Shall I tell you, Sir.....

**Mr. President :** Why do you threaten me ? (Laughter).

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** Whom did I threaten, Sir ? I am only appealing to the House through you, Sir.

**Mr. President :** The Honourable Member knows that the Chair is very unwilling to hold that any Member of this House is wilfully and persistently obstructing the business of the Assembly and I am not still prepared to believe that the Honourable Member is doing on this occasion.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** No, no, Sir.

**Mr. President :** I would therefore ask the Honourable Member to be brief.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** I bow to your ruling, Sir, and I shall be ruled by you whenever I am irrelevant. I may be unconsciously irrelevant, I never mean to be irrelevant, but I am prepared to abide by your ruling.

**An Honourable Member :** Kindly be brief.

**Mr. President :** The Honourable Member may be relevant, but there is another rule which says that the right of speech shall not be used for the purpose of wilfully and persistently obstructing the business of this House, but I am not prepared

to believe that the Honourable Member is doing anything of the kind. I would, however, ask the Honourable Member now to be brief and conclude his observations.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** I hope I have convinced the House of the fairness of my motion. That was my only object in speaking at this length. I am very very anxious to convince the House with as many arguments from as many aspects as I can. I never mean to obstruct the the business of the House and I never like to stand in the way of any Honourable Member exercising his right of speech.

Then, Sir, let me be brief (Hear, hear). Before I was interrupted, I was upon that *per capita* consumption. **4 P.M.** It was 12 lbs. average and 8 $\frac{3}{4}$  lbs. minimum. But what was the official calculation when the salt tax was yet green and young ?

General John Crawford (not our Honourable friend here, Colonel J. D. Crawford) Medical Officer of the Bengal Government, in a statement to the Select Committee on salt (1836) says :

“A Bengal or a Madras sepoy receives a ration of 17 lbs. per annum that is  $\frac{3}{4}$  oz. per diem. A Bombay sepoy 2 oz. per day or 45 lbs. per annum.”

This is the land allowance.

“at sea it is 40 per cent, more with salt fish to boot.”

This was what was being given in the thirties of the last century.

**Mr. President :** Order, order. If the Honourable Member does not conclude his speech in another five minutes I shall have to revise my opinion about the Honourable Member's attitude.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** I shall if possible take another opportunity, with your permission, to say many more things that I have got to say.

**Mr. President :** I always give the Honourable Member an opportunity to speak.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** Then, I have finished.

## XI

### Proposing the trade Disputes Bill for recirculation for eliciting opinion there on and opposing the consideration of the Bill.

3rd April, 1929.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** (Orissa Division : Non-Muhamadan) : Sir, I had no mind to take part in this debate. This is indeed a similar Bill, a twin brother, I may say, to the other Bill the fate of which is yet hanging in the balance—I mean the Public Safety Bill. Following all the debates on this Bill, there is something like a *suppressio veri* or whatever it may be called, something like that, and Members who spoke have not been speaking out, as it were, their whole minds. Some such impression was always perceptible throughout the debate, and the cat has at last come out of the bag. It is now clear, at least from the last to or three speeches, that the real object of the Bill is to suppress all political movements in this country, by, if possible, making labour always remain tangled to capital, as its sweet submissive hand-maid, as if labour has nothing else to do in this unfortunate land, as if it has nothing to do with politics and as if labour does not want Swaraj, and as though labour wants a regulation such as Regulation III of 1818. The Government seem to think that, because the labourers do not get enough to eat, their, I mean Government's, duty will be always to keep them half-starved and to minister to their wants in such a way as to make them, *i.e.*, the labourers, always look to their own bellies and never look beyond that limit. I say on the other hand, that the masses of the population have decidedly a greater concern in the question of Swaraj than perhaps some commercial men or others who have allied or vested interests in this land.

**Mr. K. Ahmed :** What vested interest have you—to mislead them, or to make them debble in politics ?

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** Sir, today I am not in a mood....

**Mr. K. Ahmed :** Why not ?

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** . . . . . to reply to my friend Mr. Kabeer-ud-Din Ahmed. For this is, as my Deputy Leader said, a very grave situation we have got to face to-day. We have no time to be frivolous. This is no occasion for it. My friend, Mr. Ibrahim Rahimtulla, who has just speaking. . .

**Mr. K. Ahmed :** He is Mr. Fazal Rahimtulla. You are not in good mood and even forget his name. So better not speak at all.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** He said that labour organisations are used for political purposes which he would not allow. I say, you look at the question with an outlook it deserves, and see if it is so used only in this land. Peculiarly circumstanced as we are, the question moreover has a special significance here in India. Let us not mince matters. (Hear, hear.) I do not know, as a matter of fact, what is not politics in this land. (Hear, hear.) The basic principle of living in this land is the struggle to get free. It is much necessary to me in this House as it is necessary to the poor man who is engaged in those city slums of Bombay. It is again with a view to relieve him and to give him better conditions of life that we want better Government in this country, that we want our own Government. To that extent at least, all labour organisations and all labour movements are intimately connected with the political movements in the land. Politics divorced from labour is as much sham, as labour divorced from politics is object slavery—and that specially in a land like India. When one ought to seek the solution of our national problem in a proper study and practical application of this aspect of the question. People from those Benches want to keep politics apart from labour.

Labour, it is said, should not be exploited by politics, or politicians. To men of this way of thinking, labour has never been anything but an object of exploitation. They think of labour in no other terms. Well, it is a question of exploitation in any case. The thing is that the commercial men, and those that have interests allied with them, object to labour being exploited for political purposes. Sir, that exploitation for political purposes, if it is exploitation at all, is quite legitimate. But is not exploitation. It is education of labour in understanding its own interests. In all such attempts of the politician it is only labour's own interests which are concerned. But, Sir, what about the exploitation of the other side? The other exploitation is the exploitation of labour by capital for commercial and profiteering purposes, for putting money into the pockets of the capitalists at the dire expense of labour. It is for that exploitation that the entire punitive portion of the Bill has been framed, and it is that exploitation which we must counteract—which it is our duty here to combat at any cost.

: It has been said, Sir, that there is no necessity and no case has been made out for re-circulation of the Bill. Mr. Fazal Rahimtulla said this. He is not here unfortunately, but in the

same breath he says, in his minute of dissent that the Bill cannot be acceptable unless some clause about picketting gets in there. It was not there, as far as I know, in the original Bill ; it is not there in the Bill as it has emerged from the Select Committee ; but my Honourable friend, Mr. Fazal Rahimtulla, is going to move an amendment to that effect. Is it not proper, Sir, on that issue alone that opinions should be elicited ? He speaks against himself, he says all the opinions are there and no more opinions are necessary. But Sir, he proposes an entirely new amendment himself. This is his amendment :

“After clause 18 the following new clause 19 be added, and the subsequent clause be re-numbered accordingly :

‘19. Where any trade dispute is under inquiry or investigation by a Court or Board, any person who, with a view to compel any workman employed by an employer who is a party to the dispute to abstain from doing or to do any act which such workman has a legal right to do or abstain from doing, wrongfully and without legal authority . . . .’

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra :** (Member for Industries and labour) : On a point of order, Sir. Is a discussion of this amendment relevant to the present debate ? That is an amendment which will be moved later.

**Mr. President :** The Honourable Member is giving a reply, as I understand, to Mr. Fazal Rahimtulla. Mr. Fazal Rahimtulla said that there was no necessity for circulation and the Honourable Member is pointing out that, if not for anything else, it was for his own amendment that circulation was necessary.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** I am not moving this amendment myself nor am I criticising it with that object. It is his own personal view ; and if for nothing else. I say it is for his own amendment which wants to be inserted in the Bill that opinions are necessary. The amendment proceeds :

“(a) persistently follows such workman about from place to place ; or

(b) watches or besets the house or other place where such workman resides, or works or carries on business, or happens to be, or the approach to such house or place, shall be punishable with simple imprisonment, which may extend to three months, or with fine which may extend to two hundred rupees. or with both.”

I am sorry to have to say, Sir, that this is more formidable than any of the existing provisions, and on this particular amendment alone opinions are necessary. But I am simply saying that gentleman who proposes this comes forward in this House and says that no case has been made out for recommitting the Bill for eliciting opinions.

My Honourable friend, Mr. K. C. Roy, suggested that he was a journalist himself and that he always depended upon the opinions of the Press in this matter. If, Sir, the Press has already given their opinions and do not give any fresh opinions at this stage, it is perhaps because they do not think it worth their while to give any more opinions. Perhaps they simply entrusted the entire question to the good sense of the Members of this House.

It is therefore clear that what you want is that, in no way, should the very smell of politics ever enter into these city slums. I would first of all ask those who hold this view to explain to the House and to the country what exactly they mean by politics. If we want to give some more wages to the labourers and make that an issue for a general strike, I think we are legitimately entitled to go out into the country and approach the labourers from door to door to go on strike on that issue. If we, the politicians, who look to the better government of the country, who know what the country wants, if we feel that a certain state of things should not continue among our labour population, I maintain, it is our duty, at the risk of being imprisoned even in that Meerut jail or anywhere else, even at the risk of being charged with the most unrelishable intention of exploiting labour for politics, to go from door to door in the slums of cities and ask them to come out on a general strike. But, Sir, if you are going to prevent things like these, you are simply cutting us away from the mass of our people who are the real elements in any fight for Swaeaj. You simply do not like that the labouring population of our country should come in contact with us or that we should come in contact with them. Your object is to shut out labourers from all light as well as right of citizenship, to make them convenient victims to your own greed of profit and power. What a horrible idea is this ?

The framers of this Bill, Sir, come here and tell us that this is a Trade Disputes Bill, that there was some requisition from certain trade union organisations to have arbitration boards or things like that in order to settle trade disputes. And, Sir, the occasion was taken, when the Government thought the opportunity was ripe, to put in some venom like this. They saw this opportunity and took advantage of this

requisition of those trade union organisations in this country to further their own purpose. As the Bill stands, clauses 15 to 20 form a separate portion altogether and have nothing whatever to do with trade disputes as such. If you want to separate trade and industry from the politics of the land, if you want to estrange these two things from one another, you not only destroy our national wealth, but fill our legitimate national aspirations. I must point out, Sir, that politics is comprehensive and is the very life of our nation. To any nation, it is a thing which pervades the entire life of that nation ; and to a subject nation I say there is nothing else but politics, pure and simple, in every department of life. I cannot think of a state of affairs in India where even some of my Honourable friends on the opposite Benches can divorce themselves from politics. Every moment in this land the struggle is going on in labour, in industry, in Congress, in fact in every department of human activity, and that struggle is political and political alone out and out. If you will divorce politics from your trade and industries, we will be nowhere ; we will not be able to live in this land. This is our position.

Now, as to eliciting opinions, after the full analysis by my friend, Diwan Chaman Lall, of the opinions that you have elicited, how can any one stand up here and say that there is no necessity for re-circulating this Bill. Whether you accept the principle of the Bill or not, it does not matter to me, and I do not want to enter into that technical question. Suppose you did accept the principle of the Bill, you are entitled to change your opinion even now. Even just before the Bill is passed, you are entitled to change your opinion. Now, look at the array of the minutes of dissent. People who have signed the Report, subject to their minutes of dissent, stand up one after another and say that the Bill should be sent out to the country for eliciting further opinions thereon. Then again, rightly or wrongly, even people, who are expected to be interested in this matter, are not in the House today ; they do not seem to take as much interest as they ought to have taken in this matter. They are callous about it. After all this, to hear it said that no case has been made out to justify a re-circulation of the Bill is simply astounding to me. Again it has almost become customary to say, at the end of the Reports of Select Committees, that no such change has been made in the Bill as to require its further publication. These two or three lines at the end of the main Report of the Select Committee here are being made much of in favour of immediate consideration of this Bill. I have seen it stated so many times in other Reports similar to this. I am a common man ; I am not a lawyer ; still sometimes I have seen that Bills have emerged

from the Select Committee out all recognition. I am a common man, and even as such I have not been able to recognise some of the Bills after they come out from the Steel Committee. You must take me as the test, because lawyers who have to deal with legal matters day after day can find out the intricate points, but I am a common man, and even then, as I have said, I could not recognise some of the Bills after they had come out of the Select Committee. I don't know if I recognise even this particular Bill. But this common formula is here. Sometimes I have myself signed Reports, typewritten without this common formula, which is afterwards put in after the signatures are taken, as if that were a formal matter. I have very often seen such things, and I have myself signed many such Reports, though I did not attach any importance to those three or four lines at the end. The present is a somewhat similar case. Members, again, whose dissent is the very negation of the main Report, are asked to sign the main Report. I myself have got the experience. What importance can they attach to such a signature, and why should they care for the last three lines which is, so to say, a common conclusion to almost all main Reports? Now, to base arguments on those three lines seems absurd.

Well, what a pity, I don't understand the whole situation. We are asked not to use labour for political purposes. Certain clauses of this Bill have been surely used for political purposes, to kill all our political movements, to kill Indian nationalism, as if to promote nationalism is politics, and not to kill it. I cannot enter into the details of those clauses now lest the Chair should call me to order. One way to stifle all legitimate discussion on the Bill is to gag people, by telling them that it is bad that politics should be allowed to be introduced into labour problems. Another way of gagging is to come from the Chair, and it is from the Chair, I know, for it was a protection against this gagging that I intended in the point of order I wanted to raise yesterday. For every sentence that I or any one else on this side of the House will utter about these clauses will have intimate reference to facts and circumstances, such as,—how the strikes have been conducted, who are the leaders, whether they are Communists, whether they are influenced by any other labour movement in some other part of the world. Things like these are bound to be discussed, and I do not know whether the Chair will allow it. The Chair will not allow it, but without making such a reference to these things I do not know how the discussion can at all go on. Then where is the consideration of the Bill? Gagged on both sides the House would feel helpless. There is no scope for discussion. Still people are here who stand as it were hypnotised and take this moral and material gagging as the best argument on the Government side.

Material gagging is there from the Chair. It requires no explanation. To say that politics—national politics—is taboo so far as labour is concerned, is a real hypnotic influence. Politics and labour are poles apart. They are two distinct things and Indian politicians should shun the criminal habit of mixing them up. This is politics—that is labour. I really don't understand this watertight division—this attempt at creating psychological compartments, as is were, to divert our attention from the real issue.

Therefore, Sir, I say that a good case has been made out by my friend, Diwan Chaman Lall, and the Bill must be re-circulated for eliciting opinion, and whether the Whitely Commission comes or not in the meantime, or it comes and goes, it does not matter. I do not attach much value to its being limited for five years. Other Acts were so limited in 1919. Such limitation may again be the thin end of the wedge. I need not predict what is in store for this Bill as an Act, or in effect what may fail to our labour population or to the politicians of India. But my present position clearly is that the Government should not gag people morally and materially, and in various other ways in their attempt at passing the Bill, and the Bill must be re-circulated for eliciting public opinion. There is no other way.

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EXTRACT FORM  
Legislative Assembly Debates 1930  
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(25th February to 20th March, 1930)

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*Speech Delivered by*

**PANDIT NILAKANTHA DAS, M. A.**

Member of the Central Legislative Assembly in 1930.

*(Now the Hon'ble Speaker of the Orissa Legislative Assembly)*

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**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** (Orissa Division ; Non-Muhammadian) ; Sir, it is somewhat awkward for 1 P. M. me to stand here to oppose this Bill just after my Honourable friend Mr. Kelkar has spoken. He opposed the Bill on constitutional grounds. That is ground enough in itself on which all supplies should be refused. But, Sir, as the Bill relates to the entire Indian Finances, and the financial policy of Government, I feel I should oppose this Bill as far as possible on financial grounds too. I shall first begin with the aspect of financial policy. In this Bill my Honourable friend the Finance Member adopts what he calls radical measures. It appears he is always living in a glass house, through which he sees the Indian Empire, and whatever radical measures he might introduce, they will have nothing to do with the real conditions prevailing in the country. The consumer and the taxpayer are the people by whom we, as their representatives, as well as the Members opposite as Members of the Government, have got duties to discharge, and I may say briefly that it is not by imposing duties in season and out of season that we discharge those duties. If we want to realise our duties by them, we must be acquainted with their real condition. Certain theories have cropped up during the course of ages, especially in a country like England, a country which has got to live by selling its manufactured goods, and our Government as well as many of

us, on account of a tradition set up in this country, are fighting on the strength of those much-made-of theories, for the development of our resources in a country which is agricultural and whose people to that extent have practically nothing in common with the people of England. There are also certain sentences in the Finance Member's budget speech which I may call budget baits. Some political advantages which may accrue from our agreeing to certain mischievous measures have also been pictured to us. His main burden of speech again seems to me to be that, like a very good housewife, he is after reserves. Last year he created what I may call a military reserve. It practically continues; and even when it began, the remark was made that these reserves are not only unnecessary considering the conditions prevailing among the taxpayers in India but they speak of a very bad future. There is also the ever-open sore called the Railway Reserve, no which any further discussion here would simply be tautology. Now, there are being created other reserves such as the debt redemption reserve and some other reserves, which I have forgotten, and they will be set apart, like untouchable individuals, in the dark corners of our public treasury. I do not know for what purpose they will be applied or invested in the meantime so long as they are not actually required for purposes for which they are reserved. It is, so to say, a kind of temporary embezzlement so far as the taxpayers interests are concerned. Reserves may be *prima facie* very good things, but we must understand the real nature of the difficulties among the masses when we are going to impose fresh taxation to the extent of about 6 crores, and when, in the same breath, the Finance Member has himself said that the purchasing power of the poor peasant and the taxpayer in this country has gone down to a very large extent, and it is a fact. At such a time to fall upon reserves like these is not only unnecessary and bad, but it is criminal, to say the least.

Then I come to what the Finance Member calls economy. The first item of economy that I wish to touch upon is the curtailment of expenditure in railway capital investment. Apparently it is a very good thing, but I may observe that, in effect, it will go to kill many of our new enterprising industries in this country. Last year this subject was discussed in connection with the stores purchase policy. After the war times were over, the manufacturers of railway materials in England wanted support, and ready purchasers to sell their articles at very high prices. For this purpose the then Member in charge of Commerce wanted to create a separate railway fund, and committed this Government, as well as this House, to an expenditure of 30 crores new investment each year for five

years in the name of development of the country. This fund yearly set apart was so enormous that, in spite of inefficiency and lavish expenditure and mismanagement, the entire money could not be spent. What was at the bottom of all this? I deliberately say it was not for the development of India. It was to help the British manufacturer. In the Imperial Economic Conference in which Sir Charles Innes, the predecessor of the Member for Commerce represented India, he said so in so many words. Those words have been often repeated in this House and they will bear eternal repetition, as public memory is short. He said :

“Large sums have been set aside for the rehabilitation of her (India’s) railways and I hope that we may be able to embark on some new construction. On railways material alone we spent last year, almost entirely in this country, more than 8½ millions sterling. Other development schemes are in contemplation, and in one way or another the Government estimate that something like 70 millions sterling will be spent on imported stores during the next five years for the railways and other development schemes. As in the past, so in the future, I have no doubt that the skill and enterprise of the British manufacturers will see to it that the vast bulk of their moneys will be spent in this country.”

Again he says :

“The Government of India were required by rule to buy their imported stores through their Stores Department in London, which was under the control of the High Commissioner for India. The High Commissioner had to accept the lowest satisfactory tender; not necessarily the cheapest, for he has been given a wide latitude for selection.”

Again : “The practical result has been that between 90 and 95% per cent. of the value of the purchases made through the High Commissioner during the past year had been expended in England on articles produced by British manufacturers.”

That is the result and it speaks for itself. I do not know whether there is, on the non-official side, as much anxiety to see to the promotion of the iron industry as there is for the cotton textile and other industries which are very well represented in this House. It was quite impossible even to divert at least 5 or 10 per cent of this money to the Indian market. If they had done so many young industries would have come into being here, and if they went on progressing, perhaps this Government, led by the nose by a band of people six thousand miles away, would have come with a begging bowl in one hand

and a pistol in the other for a preference, or even bounty to the British manufacturer for our railway purchases, with a view to kill our industry and re-establish the market which their forefathers had prepared for them in this land.

I put a pertinent question to my friend Mr. Parsons last year. I asked him, in course of the Railway Budget debates, whether it was not a fact that some of these firms ( Indian manufacturing firms ) were encouraged in this business (of making railway materials), and they are now no more because they were starved out for want of orders. His clear answer was, "At any rate that is the position." What was wanted to be done in the interests of the British manufacturer was being achieved in this way.

I had the honour of being a member of the Railway Finance Committee last year. I went into this question very searchingly. I spend the entire year practically on this iron industry and the purchase of railway materials. I have tried my best constitutionally to impress my view on the Railway Board, but we have no power in that Committee. It is not a statutory committee and we can only recommend, and we do not know what becomes of our recommendations. I persistently pointed out the state of the iron industry in this country, and I wanted the Chairman of the Committee to divert the purchases to the Indian manufactured articles. Not only that, I wanted him to devise means so that railway materials that are not now manufactured in this country might be manufactured here in future. We are spending about 30 to 35 crores every year, both in open line and new construction, and if this money be properly diverted to the Indian markets, with the collaboration of the Members in charge of Industries and Labour, both here as well as in the Provinces, if need be, and if this money could also be utilised for the development of the iron industry in this country, it would take ten years to stop purchasing in the British market each and every article that we purchase for our railways and even for Military and other purposes.

**Mr. President :** Was not the Honourable Member in the House when the Railway Budget was under discussion ?

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** Unfortunately I was not a Member of this House then. This Finance Bill is claimed to be for the development of the country, but I am shortly going to show that it is not for the development of our industries but for killing them, that these economies are going to be made. They are not real economies.

**An Honourable Member :** Convince the House.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** I shall convince the House, but unfortunately conviction carries no vote in this House.

I said just now that it would not take more than 10 years, and in order to bring matters home in this connection you will permit me, Sir, to enter, as briefly as possible, into the history of the Iron industry in this country. Practically, it is the Tata Iron Works of Jamshedpur alone which provide raw materials to other iron industries, and that is the only Indian concern. I have used the word "Indian" deliberately, as there are other firms like the Bengal Iron firms, etc. which I call non-Indian. Of course, I am not now dealing with the textile industry, to which I shall come on some other occasion if you will permit me to do so. I am dealing with iron industry for the present. I made my headquarters at Jamshedpur in order to study this problem thoroughly from the point of view of labour, management of the industry, Government encouragement, and from every possible aspect I tried to study the question, though I was not the beginning of my life an economist. What did I find there ?

Today we see that people are coming for the protection of their industry at home, and at the same time, instructions are being issued that India should participate in a Round Table Conference for self Government if, at the expense of Indian development, England could be supported. Three years ago, in the case of the steel industry, the same plea was advanced. Now Imperial preference is in its naked form, but then, as my Honourable friend Mr. Jinnah told me, it was not Imperial preference as such. Be that as it may, we were asked to give the British manufacturer a chance. But what about the development of our own industry ? We were asked to try to protect our own industries side by side with those of England and the taxpayer spent his money like water in order to do so. But what did I find after all this ? After my searching inquiry and investigation, I came to know that no protection was necessary at all in India. It is simply a camouflage and a subterfuge to protect the manufacturers at home. Any protection that is given to our iron industry in the name of development of India is simply misdirected manipulated and what I may call criminally abused, in this connection you will permit me, Sir, to read out to the House a Resolution which some Members have tabled to be moved in this Assembly. It runs thus :

"This Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that he may be pleased to appoint a Committee of officials and non-officials to enquire into and report and recommend remedial measures on the working of the Tata Iron and Steel Works of Jamshedpur with special reference to the following points :

- (a) Whether and to what extent the protection granted to save the Company is justified.
- (b) Whether and how far the Directorate and the managing Agents, ultimately responsible for the control of the entire business, are in Indian hands as originally contemplated.
- (c) Whether and how far the present controlling agency is actually working for the Indianisation of the Industry with a view to promoting Indian economic and industrial interests.
- (d) Whether and to what extent the manufacture of Steel Policy involved in the sale of products and scraps and the purchase of materials and machineries as well as the loan policy of the concern are justifiable.
- (e) Whether the State is doing whatever it can in its purchases and otherwise to encourage this Basic Industry.
- (f) Whether and how far, if any, the management and the controlling agency are responsible for the danger of labour troubles kept up under manipulations of people interested in matters other than labour."

There is also a confidential memorandum which I hold in my hand. It shows that not only are the members of Government dictated to from Whitehall, but there are agencies throughout this country, even today, to strangle our industry or to use them for their home purposes.

In the course of my speech, I shall be compelled to use the word "Englishman" in a rather undignified manner, but I know there are exceptions and that all Englishmen are not alike. They are not all interested in killing other nations and filling their own pockets. Therefore, whenever I will use the word "Englishman", I will use it with this reservation.

This Tata Iron Industry is known to be an Indian industry, and its scope for development is enormous. I told you in the beginning, Sir, that, if properly nursed and looked after, in 10 years' time our industrial development would have killed the Indian market for all other nations outside India. Let me illustrate this with a reference to the Tata Works.

Who made this huge industry at Jamshedpur? Now, if you go inside the Tata Iron Works, you will find that almost every important branch of it, from top to bottom, is practically in the hands of or are controlled by Englishmen. (Mr. B. Das : "Americans.") I know they are not Americans, except the General Manager, Mr. Kinnen. Is Sawday American, is

Peterson American? The business is practically now in English hands, and these English hands and English brains are responsible for and clandestinely and surreptitiously manufacturing and selling articles and managing the entire concern for the benefit of the people of the British Islands and the interests of the Imperial British race.

All honour to the name of Jamshedji N. Tata. He was a great patriot a great man with great conceptions. His idea evidently was to build an Indian industry ultimately to be run by Indian hands for the benefit of India. So with that view perhaps it was well begun, as I shall presently show. During the last world war, it also did yeoman service to the Empire, and that at an enormous sacrifice—a sacrifice of several crores of rupees, which the concern could have made for itself if it so desired. But what came in return for all this? Now the plan is to let it pass into English hands anyhow by manipulation. Or if it is to remain Indian in name, it must be allowed to remain in a moribund state, burdened with heavy interest bearing English debentures, to supply raw materials to English concern in peace time, and to be kept in readiness and reserve for war purposes, if ever any war threatens England so as to make that country depend on India for war materials. This is the clear position. It must be allowed to live, but it must never be allowed to contribute in any way to the development of Indian industry and Indian resources, which evidently was the object of the great mission of Jamshedji N. Tata.

• Now what was primarily responsible for the original success of the Mission when Sir Dorab Tata started the concern in 1907?

**Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas :** Mr. Jamshedji Tata was the first to conceive the idea!

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** No, it was Sir Dorab Tata. Jamshedji Tata had been dead by that time. In 1907 shares were issued by Sir Dorab Tata and Mr. Padshah. The money market was then very tight in England. It is unfortunate that we have come to such a perverse state of culture that we have no strength to depend upon ourselves for anything. We turn our eyes to England. That is the subjugation of the culture or cultural subjugation, as I have often said on the floor of this House and elsewhere. So naturally, Sir, Sir Dorab Tata and his friends turned their eyes to England for money to establish an industry in India. Where can the money come from? It cannot come from India, you must go to England. The English money market was then tight. If only an Englishman had entered into that project, things

would have been different. So the project was going to be abandoned. Mr. Lovat Fraser, in his book on Iron and Steel in India a Chapter from the Life of Jamshedji N. Tata—says :

“The Swadeshi movement which on its more praiseworthy side meant the cultivation of the doctrine that the resources and industries of India ought to be developed by the Indians themselves, had reached its height. All India was talking ‘Swadeshi’ and was eager to invest in ‘Swadeshi’ enterprises. Sir Dorab and Mr. Padshah, who had spent weary months in the City of London without avail, after their return, conceived in conjunction with Mr. Bilimoria, the bold idea of appealing to the people of India for the capital needed. The decision was a risky one, and many predicted failure, but it was amply justified by the result. They issued a circular which was practically an appeal to Indians. It was followed by the publication of a prospectus, which bears the date August, 27th, 1907. Mr. Axel Sahlin, in a lecture delivered to the Staffordshire Iron and Steel Institute in 1912 has described the instant response. He says : ‘From early morning till late at night, The Tata offices in Bombay were besieged by an eager crowd of native investors.’”

In fact all the money was subscribed by seven to eight thousand Indian shareholders in three weeks. I need not tire the House by reading further quotations. This was how the company was financially begun, and then for the working capital the Maharaja of Indore purchased all the debenture shares. This is the whole fact about the huge financial starting of this concern. Money for enterprise is not wanting in this land, but the spirit is wanting—nay, it is being killed every day. The Honourable the Finance Member looked perhaps for money in England in vain the other day. The London money market is tight. Will he care to tap the “Swadeshi” spirit in India ? Will he nurse it ? Will he depend on it ? No, he knows only to put his mailed hand into the almost empty pockets of the helpless and unwary taxpayer.

Then, let us see, who made it possible for the Tatas to fix the place of that industry in Jamshedpur. The American, the English and all other experts in geology and industrial mining and technics were requisitioned into service by Mr. Tata, and they had been looking into all the survey maps and geological atlases available, and moving in several places for years and years. After several years of weary labour, they could come to no conclusion, when at last an Indian, a Bengali, by name Mr. P. N. Bose, then in the geological research service of Mayurbaanj State of Orissa, boldly gave the uncalled for information that there were hills and fields of good iron ore in

Gorumahisani in Mayurbhanj within better reach of the Jharia fields of cokable coal. As the results of the investigation on this information, the concern was finally established at Sakchi, now re-named Jamshedpur. The same author, Mr. Lovat Fraser, in the same book gives his appreciation of the practical character of Indian genius in these terms :

“In the story of the industrial development of India Mr. Bose is assured a permanent mention. His enquiries were the prelude to the discoveries of Mr. Weld\* in the Durg area, and he now pointed the way to still more promising results. His work is one more refutation of the current criticism of Bengalis (and Indian, for that matter, I may say,) on the supposed ground that they are not practical men.”

We are often told that we are not practical men, that we are not businessmen.\* So, the other day when I was discussing, in the Railway Finance Committee, the appointing of trade Commissioners for the development of the Indian market elsewhere, I asked whether these Trade Commissioners—and my Honourable friend Mr. Fazal Ibrahim Rahimtulla was one with me in this—would be Indians. It was with much difficulty that we could make our friend the Chairman of the Railway Finance committee, appear to agree for the time being to the reasonableness of the argument for appointing Indians for those posts abroad. But he said, that could only be achieved in course of time, for the one post under discussion had already been fixed for an Englishman. Now, I understand that six or eight Trade Commissioners will be spread all over the world with fat salaries, and I am sure, there will be no Indians amongst them, for Indians are not businessmen. These Trade Commissioners are all to be from the Indian Civil Service. Here are the Members of the “steel frame” who are subjanta, capable of looking after and managing all the affairs in the world, political, administrative, civil, military, educational, social, economic, commercial, industrial and what not. Apart from other considerations of manipulation, etc., I ask what will other nations think of us and think of our “Dominion status in action”, when not we, but foreigners, especially Englishmen in our pay will sit as our Trade Commissioners in their lands? The Indians, after being under the tutelage as they would like to call it, of Britain for over 150 years, have not been fit enough to be appointed their own Trade Commissioners in foreign countries. For this idea of our own unfitness has been sedulously and perpetually instilled into our minds so that we have come to the habit of ourselves believing that we are unfit. So I say, if the policy changes today, if the Government come into national hands, if a bold policy of development of industries and resources is undertaken in the proper way, then in 10 years’ time, the

entire phase of the country and the standard of life of the people, or whatever you call it, would change completely. India is not potentially a poor country. Year after year the Finance Member comes into the House and tells us that India is a poor country. We agree, for we have no other way but to agree under the present conditions and circumstances, as the development of the country is not in our hands.

I must now turn to the development of this iron industry and the question of how it is manipulated. I may be allowed, in this connection, to read this confidential document which I have in my hand and in the course of reading, I will explain the points for the benefit of my Honourable friends. This document says :

“The firm is in name Indian, but both general management and sales are perfectly and in detail controlled by Englishmen, some of whom were Members of the India Civil Service.”

Here again the Members of the steel frame come in, because they know everything. The document continues :

“The directors seem to be practically powerless,” and of course my Honourable friend Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas will excuse me for pointing this out. The proprietors of the company, I am afraid, do not take note of that. The document continues :

“The Company is burdened with a heavy debenture raised in London. The outstanding debenture appears to be more than the share capital.”

This is all after the war.

“The rates of interest are 7 to 8 per cent., and this interest is responsible for the fact that the shareholders get no dividends for a number of years. For these debentures the assets of the concern are liable.”

And my Honourable friends in this House may well realise how it can be manipulated very easily, if, as the phrase is often put, we do not put our house in order, so that the entire concern will pass into English hands on account of these debentures, if for nothing else.

**Mr. B. Das :** What is that confidential document ? Who is the author of that document ?

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** What is there in a name ? Suppose it is yourself who is the author of the document. What is in a name ? You may see it. Then it goes on :

"A Labour Federation has sprung up, with Mr. Homi as President, and this Mr. Homi is well known to the members of the Assembly. His activities have not benefited the concern while the labour troubles originating in his activities may lead to non-payment of the debenture, the result of which is likely to be disastrous and may cause the concern to pass to English hands."

Time and again this question has been raised on the floor of this House that even English officials are siding with him in creating troubles over put up grievances. For, as a matter of fact, the grievances for which all this trouble arises are practically non-existent today in Tata's. I must be excused by my Honourable friend, Mr. Chaman Lal, when I say this. There is of course plenty of room to improve, but I must say, in fairness to the heirs of that great man, Jamsheedji Tata, that comparatively with other labour centres, here the labour is well cared for and well housed. When I come to labour, I shall compare them with the coolies in English firms. The name cooly is significant. It is humiliating and insulting to the Indian to hear that name applied to human beings. In Tata's they are not called coolies but they are called by other better names. Now coming to Mr. Homi, these English officials and even Englishmen at the helm of affairs in the management and in the other affairs of the Company are also secretly siding with him. This has often been said on the floor of this House, and I was myself responsible for publishing a document in the "Capital" of Calcutta in which there was a challenge. The whole publication of mine and the editorial comments of the "Capital" and other papers that followed in publishing the same was based on a letter from Mr. Homi to some Bombay share speculators, whereby his entire interest, as exposed in that letter, was to speculate in shares for which he used this labour trouble as a handle.

Sir Hugh Cocke (Bombay : European) : Sir, on a point of order, may I ask whether there is any limit to the range of this discussion and whether the affairs of a public company can be discussed on the Finance Bill ?

**Pandit Nilakantha Das** : Is it very trivial ?

**Mr. President** : Perhaps the Honourable Member would like to take a few minutes more ?

**Pandit Nilakantha Das** : Not a few minutes only. I shall have to finish this document. I had no other occasion to speak and I must finish the entire national and industrial development scheme, and show how it could be developed and how it is being developed. All this is relevant to the Finance Bill.

The Assembly then adjourned for Lunch till Five Minutes to Three of the Clock.

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The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Five Minutes to Three of the Clock, Mr. President in the Chair.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** I was speaking about the chief iron-  
industry of Tatas and how it is being manipulated by English-  
men and officials for home purposes, and in this connection I  
have stated how the labour problems are affected by this  
manipulation through a gentleman named Mr. Homi. Now, I  
shall analyse it. In the manufacture and management, sale,  
public tender, contract and buildings and all these departments  
the same manipulation is going on which if not prevented,  
however much we may impose duties on our poor consumers,  
we cannot relieve the industry of the present situation, nor will  
there be any development of the industry in this country. This  
is a principle which requires no argument to be accepted.

Now, Sir, the inner working and management are carried  
on in such a way as to prevent the concern from using its own  
pig-iron for manufacture of steel articles, and it becomes a  
source of supply of raw material to foreign countries. This  
pig-iron is a technical name, and I may be excused if I attempt  
at a little explanation of what pig-iron is. Pig Iron is a basic  
material for steel industry. It is a first product from the iron  
ore. Then in course of progress it comes to a stage where it  
is called billets. Out of these billets the steel articles are  
made. These are the three stages with which I shall deal. To  
have some idea of the management of business, the following  
points may be noted. The Pig Iron, which is the basic materials  
for all steel industry, is produced very cheaply by the Tata  
Iron and Steel Company. Perhaps it is the cheapest pig iron  
produced in the whole world. It is sold in foreign countries  
in enormous quantities at a very low rate, at half the price at  
which it is sold in India to the home consumers. It may be  
attributing motives, but I am not going to do it all at once.  
There are two practical effects of this. Now they do not make  
steel, and their only object is to prepare that raw material, the  
pig-iron and to export it to foreign countries as raw material.  
The second effect is that other small iron industries, including  
the village artisan, are starved.

Now there is a combine of three firms, including the Tatas,  
for selling pig iron to the Indian consumer at an abnormally  
high fixed price. Tatas have no option to take a reasonable

price, even if they desired. I do not know why the Tatas want to enter into this combine. Combine is a commercial term. It is something like an arrangement among the members of the combine themselves that they will sell pig iron at a certain rate to the Indian consumer. The Tatas, who sell very little of their pig iron in this country, have come to join this combine with the Bengal Iron Company and the Indian Iron and Steel Company Limited. These two latter make pig iron and their interest lies in the combine. These two are practically English concerns, English managed. One has sterling capital and the other rupee capital. I do not attach much importance to the difference between rupee and sterling capital. External capital is external capital all the same, and this theory was exposed in its naked reality when we were discussing the tin-plate labour strike in this House at Simla. Therefore the only interest of these two defacto English firms is to make profits out of the pig iron, to manufacture castings out of pig iron, if need be, at a good margin of profit, to oust all Indian competition, and to keep the English manufacturer untouched. The Tata Iron and Steel Company joins this combine, nobody knows why. It is stated that its profit out of the arrangement is insignificant. It sells very little of its pig iron in this country, as I have stated. This subject was discussed last year during the discussion on the Railway Budget, and this way of crippling the home manufacturer and depriving our village artisans of the cheap raw material and supply of raw material to the manufacturer abroad was sufficiently criticised and condemned.

\* Then there are the steel billets. After selling out all this pig iron, what is the next stage? Steel billets. Steel billets are purchased by the Tatas from Europe at a cost of Rs. 92 per ton whereas they sell pig iron at Rs. 36 to 40 per ton in foreign countries. This is a curious industrial phenomenon. They have got an arrangement with the Tin-plate company for steel sheets and bars and these tin sheets and bars are prepared out of these billets purchased at Rs. 95 per ton, but the tin sheets and bars are sold at Rs. 84 per ton. The State has got an arrangement for purchase of rails and probably steel sleepers at Rs. 110/- per ton. An English Company pays Rs. 84 per ton whereas we taxpayers pay Rs. 110/- per ton as price for the finished products of the Tatas. Steel joists and other finished products are sold to the Indian consumer at the rate of Rs. 130 per ton. It seems wonderful. I do not like to say now with what object the Company is running.

**The Honourable Sir George Schuster :** On a point of order : Is this at all relevant to the Finance Bill? Could the Honourable Member explain how it is relevant to the Finance Bill?

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** I am just giving an idea to the Honourable Member how he could enter into all these things and how he could help to develop the iron industry. (Hear, hear.) This kind of superfluous measures of imposing duties and so on and sitting in glass houses will not do. I am explaining how things are working so far as the Tata Company is concerned, and I hope, instead of getting tried, my Honourable friend will bear with me. It is with a view to keep up a show of justifying protection that a figure of Rs. 130 per ton is perhaps maintained, but this has been instrumental in giving a sound and substantial market to English steel manufacturers in India. The English steel industry cannot reasonably compete otherwise.

**Mr. Amar Nath Dutt** (Burdwan Division : (Non-Muhammadan Rural) : On a point of order, Sir, can the Honourable the commerce Member go out of the House when an Honourable Member is speaking about his Department ?

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** Without this manipulation, the English manufacture can never compete with the steel manufactures of the world, much less with those of India. No protection was necessary. I do not know about the textile industry. I have not studied it. It may be the same. There is definite information in this confidential document to the effect that, even today, the Tatas are negotiating with an iron firm in England for sale of enormous quantities of pig iron on a contract extending over a good number of years. In this case the price will be even lower, say, about Rs. 30 per ton. It is, however, not known yet if any contract is contemplated with the same firm for the purchase of billets at more than Rs. 95 per ton.

Then comes the sales department, which is under an I. C. S. Englishman. The whole management is under this I. C. S. Englishman. This is how things are going on there. This department sells all scrap, that is second class products, to a private firm, not by public auction or by public tender, but by private arrangements. A very interesting thing I shall divulge in this connection. This firm has got among its staff some who had been officers in the Tata sales department itself. It is a big firm. Some of the Tata Company's officers have left their jobs in the sales department and have come to this firm as members or shareholders. Many of the articles sold as scrap are again not scrap, but finished products passed as scrap. All these articles are sold away every year, for about 20 lakhs of rupees, whereas the same articles are calculated to bring yearly double the money in the ordinary Indian market. The detailed working of this depart-

ment is mysterious, as may be suggested from the single fact that the officers (Englishmen) in charge of the department found it more profitable to give up their lucrative jobs in the department to become members of the purchasing firm.

Then comes another department managed by one Englishman, the town administration department, which has to do with contracts for building and other engineering works. Here I may refer to the fact that purchase of plant and machinery is also made not by tender but by private arrangement. The town administration is, as I have said, in charge of an Englishman. I shall inform Members here that the town was planned by an Indian engineer of the Bombay Public Works Department, Mr. Godbole, but afterwards it has come into the hands of an Englishman, who knows nothing of engineering or planning. It is said that contract by the town administration department are given privately to a selected few, whereas, if tenders had been invited, the cost would have been much less. Here I would cite an interesting example. There was a building belonging to an Indian club; the town administrator wanted to acquire it very urgently for the works of the Steel Company; it was purchased for Rs. 7,000, but soon after, it was sold by Rs. 4,000 to one of the subordinate officers of the town administration department.

Then I come to the fourth point with which I shall finish this subject. Coal which is one of the biggest items of purchase is also, in several places in the hands of Englishmen. Tatas are being sued by various English coal concerns for specific performance of contracts, damages and on various other items for which the Company is being made legally liable for huge sums of money. All this has been the subject of Press criticism, and it is expected the whole thing will be laid bare in its savage reality and nakedness if an impartial inquiry is undertaken.

The authorities of the Company always say that there is profit in every sale they make. They make a profit in the export of pig iron and the sale of steel products. Even according to their own statement, there is a clear margin of profit in the sale of sheeting and bars for the Tin-plate Company, which are sold at Rs. 84 per ton, not to speak of rails which are sold to the taxpayer at Rs. 110 per ton, and joists, tees and angles and other sections of bars and rounds, which are sold in huge quantities to the ordinary consumer, at not less than Rs. 130 per ton. They also make large savings in freight at the expense of the taxpayer. With all this, the concern is so conducted as to be perpetually in heavy debts without paying any dividend to the shareholders. As a result, the growth

of steel industry, is not only discouraged in this country, but many living industries as well as the village artisans are being prevented from getting any advantage out of our primary steel concern. Thus the country is in danger of running into a great economic disaster, coupled with discredit to the Indians and the Indian genius, which were responsible for the very finest steel the very dawn of civilisation.

These are a few suggestive hints given in this memorandum, and if an inquiry is undertaken everything will be laid open, more astounding facts in the detailed working will come to light exposing more vividly how some Englishmen in the concern are primarily responsible for this state of things for purposes which have nothing to do with the interests of Indian industry.

It may be said however that the directors, who are the *de jure* controlling authorities may intervene to set matters right. But unfortunately for the Indian taxpayer and the Indian Nation the directors, as I have said, are either powerless, or are indifferent in the matter. The Managing Agents have delegated all their powers to Mr. J. C. K. Peterson, I. C. S. Englishman and the entire affairs of the concern are in his hands. An Englishman cannot ordinarily be trusted in the business of our industrial economy or development, particularly in a concern like the Tata Works, which sincerely managed and developed, is well calculated to ruin the British steel market in India. Oftener than not, his sole and primary concern is to guard the interests of his Home manufacturer. Mr. Peterson is moreover a member of the "steel frame" of the Empire to boot. This simple truth the directors of the Tata Company may well be expected to realise. But they don't. The result is the ultimate ruin of our industrial prospects. Crores are being demanded today in this Bill to protect and develop so many of our industries. So they were often demanded and voted for to protect the Tata concern. But a thorough investigation, I am sure, will prove it beyond doubt that the our ruling masters for their own purposes dupe the taxpayer into protections of this kind. The Tata Industry, for instance, never was really in need of protection, nor is it in need of protection even today. Even in spite of our giving unintelligent protection to the industry, it is today suffering from dangerous manipulation protending ultimate ruin to all our industrial and economic future. A clear indication of the effect, is that Indian money and enterprise has already grown suspicious. The Indian is daily losing his sense of self-reliance in business. It is high time for the Members of the Assembly take the matter seriously, and demand an inquiry into the whole situation, which has been long overdue, and solve the problem once for all as to how we can develop our industry and resources to our own national ends.

We have complained all these years that the State has not really helped any industry. With all their apparent solicitude for putting a protective tariff on steel, practically no development has taken place. Here I may refer to the State purchases, by which a huge market could be provided for Indian industries very easily, and at the very door of the industry. Has the Finance Member thought of it? No purchase has ever been scientifically directed to this end. Still, in spite of the Government, some purchases could not but be made in India, consequently some firms raise their head. They are to be killed by sharply cutting down and raising and then cutting down Railway capital expenditure. That expenditure is raised in the name of development of the country, and cut down in the name of economy to dupe this House.

One of the best recommendations of the Industrial Commission was the creation of the Indian Stores Department, which was established to give a perpetual stimulus and encouragement to Indian Industries which would thereby be developed by regulating purchases and diverting them to the Indian market. The object of the Indian Stores Department, was that all our main purchases should be made through this Department, so that this Department would be directly and indirectly responsible for the development of Indian industries. But let us see what has happened on account of the purchase policy of the State, before Government imposes heavy duties. My friend the Finance Member calls the imposition of this duty a radical measure, but before imposing this duty, I should like to ask him to take some radical measures to direct these purchases in a manner which would help the development of Indian industries. That is our first duty. But what has happened? Last year I was mistaken, because the figures that were given were misleading. I was given report for 1927-28, where I found that the loss to the Indian Stores Department was only Rs. 53,000. But now I find it is four or five times that for the self same year. I am coming to that. The Department was started in 1922. All these years it has been working at an enormous loss to the taxpayer, for little Government purchase in made through the Department. There are favourite manipulators among the officers everywhere to make purchases for the Government Departments and even Railways. Who cares for the helpless Stores Department? This Stores Department is not only not paying its way, but has all along been a heavy burden on the taxpayer, though it always gets some percentage for inspection and some commission on our purchases for and sales, and though our entire State purchases for the Army, the Railways and for various other Departments are articles worth hundred of crores of rupees.

This is how the Indian Stores Department serves its end. Last year I was rather gratified to find that the loss was much less. In the Report for 1927-28, I found it was something like Rs. 53,594, whereas in two previous years it was over two and four lakhs of rupees respectively ; and in the new Report I was expecting it to be still less for this year. Instead of that, I find there is a small note to the effect that the accounts were not complete last year, and the figures were wrong and instead of Rs. 53,000 and odd loss, the nett deficit in 1927-28 comes to Rs. 2,39,699, or rather in round figures it is about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  lakhs. In the previous year the deficit was given as something like 2 lakhs and 18 thousand, and in the year under review, i. e., 1928-29, I find the figure given for the deficit is Rs. 4,96,733, that is practically 5 lakhs, and this is the charge on the pockets of our taxpayer for developing our industries. After this charge, we are again putting our hands into his pockets by imposing new duties. How can we bear it, being the representatives of those people whose purchasing power has diminished and is diminishing very considerably day by day ? Sir, we have been made a poor people, and it is now the duty of the Government to see that we are first made rich so that we might be able to pay those duties which Government demand. Where there is a Government there is taxation, I quite admit, but such actions as the present which the Government are taking in this matter can be expected from no reasonable Government of modern times.

Before finishing this subject, Sir, I should like to bring to the notice of the Honourable Members a particular instance to illustrate how our investments and purchases are not only being manipulated for British purposes but mismanaged and passed over and even probably countenanced wherever there are English officers in the service of this Government.

**Mr. President :** Is the Honourable Member not going to deal with the ratio ?

**Pandit Nilakantha Das :** I will come to it presently, Sir (Laughter) if I may not have been already too long. I am in a very awkward position. I hope my friends will bear with me for a few minutes (Some Honourable Members : "Certainly, go on, go on..") I will try to be brief.

In the last Simla Session, Sir, I put some questions relating to the purchases of the Bengal Nagpur Railway. I need not read these questions and weary the House, because it will take a long time. My Honourable friend knows it over there, They will be found at page 573 of the Simla debates . . . . .

**Mr. B. Das** (Orissa Division : Non-Muhammadan) : But the Honourable the Railway member is not present in the House.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das** : I am sorry all our suggestions and all our criticisms are treated in this fashion, but we have got to make them, whether our suggestions are considered by those in authority or they are thrown into the waste paper basket, I do not know. (An Honourable Member "Most likely".) It is likely that is why we come to bid good bye, and we do not want to give them supplies, because they are not responsible. These are not small matters relating to the Bengal Nagpur Railway ; they are sufficiently serious to merit the anxious consideration of the House as a whole. Let me tell the story briefly. The Agent, now retired, with three Chief Engineers of the Railway and some members of their family and one Member's wife, came together and formed a company called Henry Williams (India) Limited. I have got records to prove that the company is registered in their name with a very small capital, and it was said,—I do not understand what exactly it means,—that the paid-up capital was about 3 lakhs and Rs. 6 lakhs was to be considered paid-up for considerations other than actual payment or something like that. Anyhow, these people formed themselves into a registered company, and on a piece of land which belonged to the Bengal Nagpur Railway, at the cost of the same Railway, they got a wall and a siding line put up. After doing all this, the said company came into existence as a private company. Some of the members of this firm are still working as Chief Engineers in the Bengal Nagpur Railway. They somehow managed to get some patents, and under those patents they want to supply iron and steel sleepers, styling them as "Universal" sleepers. And what are these sleepers? How are they made? I found in course of my enquiry that the old steel sleepers were condemned as unfit by the Chief Engineers, who are members of this firm. They were purchased as scrap iron by the firm of Henry Williams Limited. They made slight cuts at the end and other alterations in these sleepers and passed them on as patented new sleepers at a huge profit, I am told the profit per sleeper is about Rs. 5. This thing has been going on for the last four or five years. (Some Honourable Members : Shame".)

The other patent is for cast iron sleepers, for which the Bengal Iron Company got a monopoly by private arrangement perhaps of profit sharing. These cast iron sleepers were being purchased for the Bengal Nagpur Railway at a monopoly price which is decidedly much higher than the normal market rate.

In the last year's Report on the Appropriation Account for the Railways it was found out that the whole plot of land which is now possessed by Henry Williams has been rented at a very low rate, and it is calculated that there is a loss of Rs. 52,000 in rent alone for the land in a year. When I saw this in the Report, I myself investigated into the matter, and I gave the whole thing in the questions. In reply I was promised by the Honourable Sir George Rainy a statement at Simla. I was not a Member of the House for so long here, and the statement that was promised has not been laid on the table. I have put a question on that, and I expect to get a statement. As my Honourable friend Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas and other friends on the Railway Advisory Committee know, I gave a complete memorandum on the subject in that Advisory Committee. The Honourable Sir George Rainy said that it was a matter of detail and not of policy. But I must express my sincere thanks to my Honourable friend Sir Purshotamdas that on that contention he readily stood out to support me, and ultimately a departmental enquiry and a statement to be followed by an enquiry committee, if necessary, was promised by the Honourable Sir George Rainy. But nothing has yet been done. When the Government somehow feel the craving for an inquiry they appoint a Tariff Board or direct the Board to inquire, or set up a committee, and in a couple of months a report is made, considered, action is probably taken, and in fact everything is done. Crores of rupees are being made by swindling by some officers of the Company. I know what I say to be true. Still the heads of the departments are sitting tight, and statement if not forthcoming. This is how the money that we are spending on railways is being mismanaged. I have got other instances which I may produce, but this one instance will illustrate the whole situation, and in the face of all this, we are today going to the taxed to the tune of 6 crores.

I shall discuss later on the effect of the textile tariff proposals and Imperial Preference on the handloom industry and the village artisans. May I ask the Government what is being done to help the agricultural population? These gentlemen on the Treasury Bench come from a country where village artisans and agricultural population are scarce. They live on their manufacturing industries. When do the Government propose to organise the village industries and shall village factories? Here again in the name of agricultural improvement we are faced with heavy duties on sugar. A sum of Rs. 10 lakhs is also thrown away as a bait in the name of sugar industry research. I was not present in the House when the budget speech was made, and it reminded me of an old adage "you kill my cow and make a present of a pair of shoes to me."

# The Ideal And Outlook In Education

( IN INDIA AND THE EAST )

By

**Pandit Nilakantha Das**

(A paper read on 29-12—1930 in the Benares session of the All Asia Educational Conference.)

It is very good that All Asia Educational Conference has been conceived as a soul-uplifting institution of cultural importance. The cultural basis and the need of All Asia may rather be a vast subject and are more expected to come out of the Conference as its generic result than to be mooted in the beginning. Besides, many of the Asian nations, the Indian included, have, in imitation of the West, long fixed upon a nationalistic outlook and idea in the system of Education, the human outlook of which is still to emerge, if by education we mean the making of the man as man. Free education by which man achieves a free growth towards a natural destiny, is yet to be understood in its real significance, and applied in the spirit of genuine sympathy for the opening humanity. Many of the difficulties that beset us at present in our attempt at educating the child in our own way, according to our special needs and congenial outlook of life, seem almost insuperable.

The Bulletin No. 2 gives 17 heads for discussion. They are good only when the very ideal and outlook is fixed, and in this our unfortunate land, this ideal and outlook of education has remained even now a subject for primary investigation, in spite of the so-called transferred character of the subject of education in the Indian polity for the last 10 years. Hence I feel strongly inclined to say a few words on that subject of all subjects, detailed in the bulletin, as I convey my cordial thanks to the Secretary and the organisers for the invitation they have so kindly extended to me and which I received in jail.

A word of apology. From my very youth I set myself apart for practically finding out some way for the real education of our children. Very early in life I started, in collaboration with the late lamented Pandit Gopabandhu Das, and a few other enthusiasts, an open air school, "The Satyabadi School," at Sakbigopal in Puri District. This gradually grew

into a big residential high school under by resident head-mastership. In 1921 it was turned into a National School, and has since collapsed. But to me it had spiritually collapsed even before 1921, on account of unnecessary and unreasonable departmental measures coaxed and coerced into it, in spite of the loud appreciation of its open air character and many other genuinely original features even by the local Government, the then head of which Sir E. A. Gait paid more than one visit to it. One Englishman, the Divisional Inspector of Schools Mr. Mac Combe, actually remarked :—

“It is a pity that it took the Education Department so many generations to find out that in India a shady garden for eight months in the year with a simple shed for the rains is the only thing necessary even for a high school.”

( I quote from memory )

Need it be said that not even one minor item of the features, then admired by the department as well as the local Government, has come to stay in the educational system of the province. The flood of that appreciation admiration and praise, as I now better realise, was meant rather to drown us out of our real life and spirit, which certainly did not fall in line with the educational outlook of the State, but which the State could not easily thwart on account of its moral force and logic. Thus I shall state briefly what I have gathered from experience and tested in experience, and some generalisations and principles deduced from things experienced. But as I am here reading a paper written by me in jail as a prisoner, I cannot be expected to embellish the writing with any references or quotations, if otherwise I could have so embellished it at all. Besides, for the last 10 years I have been out of touch with education, as I have since come into the active politics of the day, which gives no opportunity for leisurely studies and deliberations.

The ideal of education is in theory always the attainment of human destiny. But the outlook of this destiny has long been fashioned in conformity with the State. It has come to stay in the modern world. Even present cultural activities, so to say, much as scientific and historical research, inventions and discoveries often bespeak not of colourless pursuit for the disinterested solution of the problems of humanity. Even mataphysics seems at times studied as a hand-maid of nationality or even nationalism, rather than a pure search after truth. As to religion, the less it is spoken of, the better. In the present world any religion, that is out to save fallen humanity and takes converts, is generally either crudely and

fanatically formal or purposefully self-aggrandising, often serving as an emissary in the statecraft of the Imperialist. It seems to have long lost its actual touch with the soul of man, if it had any.

But whatever be the origin of the State control as well as the national outlook of education, the fateful Nemesis demands that the East cannot but imitate it from the West at least for a time, till she is able to stand on her own legs, just as vast agricultural lands in the East today are mad after industrial competitions as well as competency of the West. However much we may deplore it, we must first protect our home market at any cost before we think of occupations, adapted to the needs and the genius of the race. This is as true of our economic existence and progress, as a system of National Education controlled by the State is a present necessity for the very cultural existence of the East. But the basic outlook of Eastern life should not, therefore, be overlooked even in such a necessary reaction. Otherwise the future evolution of the race may not only be hampered, but permanently twisted and bent in channels undesirable. The entire race may also be dissipated in dazed imitation and retaliation.

I shall simply give some suggestive hints at the ultimate goal of the education and culture of the East. But as a state-controlled national education is the immediate necessity, I may be excused if I detain the audience a little longer on that item of the subject. Let me begin by illustrating it from the practice in England, for England has been on our back, and poses to force her culture into us perhaps at any cost, for which often her boastful demand of India's grateful obedience is responsible almost for a loud world opinion in her favour.

Once carried away by the halo of the formal independence of our local bodies, I had to apply myself to the proper method of Education of the child under the present system, to make the best of a bad case, as I then thought. Naturally I was anxious to draw upon the method obtaining in England for inspiration. I ordered for a suitable child's text or reading book from an English firm. It was a big volume with bold big letters, and vivid illustrative pictures. It was meant broadly to point out the peoples of different races and nations of the world—the white, yellow, nigger and all. To my view it savagely opened up, how the proud English Imperialist trains his child to look upon other peoples with hate and conceit. For one instance, which touched me most, I may say, that our India was therein represented by a cooly in a thin strip of loin cloth with a balanced load on his left shoulder. Underneath was a short description to the effect (I speak from

my memory here), "These are Indians, over whom you will have to rule, when you grow up. They are very poor. Their annual income is not even as much as you get to spend for yourself on a holiday (or something like it). They are uneducated, superstitious. But they had a religion in older times".

When I saw the book, my heart sank within me, specially as an educationist my idea was not to create any prejudice in the child, or to teach him any opinion or direct morals even in story-telling. But deplorable as it may be, our next move cannot but be much like it in our own way. Similarly a Chinese, who is painted to the European child as a pig-tailed opium eater probably with a crude picture writing, cannot easily overcome hatred for hatred. The entire East is rapidly imitating in reaction this sort of National Education. As practical men, facing facts as they are, we cannot and ought not to cry at once a dead halt to this surging flood. We can only try to guide its course wisely. All the East will have to float with it at least for a time in conscious and self adapting imitation, till it comes to a resting ground. But even such imitation, as this, presupposes an amount of selection, assimilation, and virile spirit of active response, if not of actual realisation.

But India is yet unable to do anything like it. Her ideal of education, its methods and details, must be fashioned for her not by her own people, but by parties adversely interested. Her control of education must be given her ready made. She will have no voice in any thing. India is not entitled to offer hate for hate, nor is even her love for hate free or magnanimous, and is, therefore, not a virtue. Undoubtedly the State controls our education, but the State is not what we may call ours. The policy is closely guided with a set purpose for the exploitation of the resources of the land, and the education of the sons of the soil is undoubtedly a very potent factor in that exploitation. We have been trained and educated even to a forgetfulness of ourselves and our fathers. This political aspect of the educational policy must change before we should think either of national or of human standards and methods of education for this country. The British administration is almost a perfect system of intelligence and far-sighted vigilance. Even the child's eye, as it glides over his text book, or his limbs, as they move in exercises in the village school, nay, even the peasant's very methods of cultivating the soil, are undermined by something foreign and extraneous which is often not felt, as it is adapted with so perfect intelligence and farsight.

Onwards to the very heights of the University education the spirit is the same. For instance, we speak of technical

and even vocational education. But how many young men take to the agricultural college without a fixed eye for a Government job under the department carrying a fatter salary with, than without this technical education? Even the sports are influenced by the proficiency in riding and the like, in the Civil Service selection. The service again, with which the entire system of administration is now kept up, is a bane, rather than a boon, as it is often erroneously considered, for the promotion of education and culture in the land.

Unfortunately in the interestedly persistent policy of the present Indian State undesirable ideas and institutions are growing up into traditions and get acclimatised to an extent, so as to appear in course of time but natural. Such has been the idea of service in this land. Originally it was never meant to be an instrument of national administration or culture. It was conceived with the distinct idea of luring our intelligentsia into being helpmates and henchmen of a people, that are out to fatten at our expenses. For reasons which are obvious, and may not be discussed here, the salaries were fixed at a very high pitch—much higher than the ordinary worth of the men outside the service. For whatever education was imparted, it was done with a view to recruitment into the service and nothing else. Still today our demand for Indianisation of services is loud and criminally persistent. This, by the bye, has been the worst block in the opening up of the channels for a natural evolution of our educational system.

This I am afraid, requires a little more explanations. For 'clearness' sake let me illustrate it. An Englishman in whatever service he may be, however much alluring be his position, salary, and allowance (for in India they are always alluring), is found oftener than not to move with his service in his pocket, so to say. Even for small differences of opinion with their own men Divisional Commissioners have been known to have resigned to take to forming, management of private firms, journalism, or authorship. But an Indian servant has scarcely an opinion of his own in the policies of the State, nor is it his own men with whom he may differ. An Indian Graduate, a Civil Servant, for instance, is generally a helpless slave. Out of service he feels like fish out of water. He knows nothing else, and is capable for nothing else. He knows only to write accounts, evidence, and judgments in English, for which he is paid. He has had little training in the policies of administration, or developing outlooks for a progressive state. A bit of knowledge in the English language, to be rather indecently precise, is his-only acquisition to sell in a particular market at a price, not obtainable anywhere else. Had the proceedings of the court and other departments of administration been run

in vernacular, as it used to be in the days of Vikramaditya, or even of Sivaji, the so called Indian Civil Servant worth even over a thousand for a month, could easily be replaced and outdone by many, who are wasting their genius in our villages.

Thus, circumstanced as we are at present, our clamour for Indianisation is not only an ever developing process of self-deception, but influences and indirectly leads the entire educational policy of the land in channel most undesirable. The crushing wheel of cultural subjugation is mercilessly advancing, resulting in an appalling waste of humanity. In the name of education an active poison to achieve a slavish submission of the soul, is injected to a few so-called upper class of hybrid and monstrous humanity, with a ruinous consequence to our vast historic and human resources. And we are gradually losing capacity for self-realisation which is the eternal destiny of man. We are apt to lose ourselves in details. But the real comprehension is wanting. The outlook must change. Otherwise, however much we may attend to the compartmental details of education such as physical, technical, vocational, excursions, optional, compulsory and the like, we shall never achieve what we want. Spread of literacy, or even independent institutions like Gurukul may be responsible for some bye-products with a desired appearance, but they will be badly incommensurate with the energy and wealth employed on them.

In this connection I should like to make it clear, that I may not be taken to mean that I am against Indianisation as such in our administration. That no Indian can afford to be. What I mean to emphatically point out is that our policy should be out and out, "India for Indians", and that in the Indian fashion. Pay, pension, and other conditions of service, ought to be adapted to the Indian ways of living : and Indian genius, and real Indian aspiration, should be given a free and unfettered play. Experts may, if need be, be recruited from abroad, but on our conditions. We should not be playing into policies, where expert advice and efficiency might make slaves of us, as they are doing now. How all this could be achieved may develop into a discussion, for which a Conference like this, conditioned as it is, is not a suitable place. But there can be no doubt that unless an entire transformation in the direction indicated is achieved in the very basis and outlook of the situation, the genius of the Indian youth will go on wasting as it is doing today, in spite of our strenuous attempts in working up details, which would be simply like pruning and fashioning the branches, when the tree of poison is still well-rooted, and being amply nourished by minerals and materials underground and unnoticeable. This basic element in our life and education today remains a permanent source of danger

to our very cultural existence, and I cannot too much impress upon this conference how our educationists should betimes feel alive to the gravity of the situation before it is too late.

As one mainly concerned with the Indian Education in this Conference, I may be excused, if I deal with even some more aspects of our present educational system in this connection. It really pains me to hear unqualified praises sung in favour of the policy of education, finally adapted in this country in the early thirties of the last century, under the influence of Lord Macaulay, joined with a section of our countrymen, headed by men like Raja Rammohan Roy. In spite of the shrewd vauntings of that astute English Statesman in favour of giving savage Indians a taste and training in the superior culture of England, the real intentions of the policy have not remained concealed. English was then made the medium practically of all our education worth the name. I have no antipathy for the English language as such, for it introduces a man into one of the biggest literatures in the world. So also are languages like French and German in their own way. Men with educational and cultural ambition ought to study one or more of them. But the intention of making English the medium of education in this country was obviously different. To the convenience of a handful of Englishmen, as the ruling caste in this country, the entire system had to be adapted—so much so, that even the sacred Varanasi should appear as Benares, if she expects acceptance in our fashionable society today, not to speak of other more formidable aspects of the adaptation. The budding Indian youth was consequently made to learn a language and nothing else all his life. Oftener than not learning this language well with its peculiar sounds, accent, stress, colloquialism, and all, to please English ears, and thus to evoke the proud Englishman's sweet patronage, came to be the best of his life's ambition. Not only the struggling growth of humanity in culture was stunted, twisted and distorted, but his self confidence, i. e., the very basis of his self-realisation, was undermined, and an inferiority complex throught the race became the inevitable result. The educated and the common folk lost touch with each other. The ruling class, including the native recruits, came to be a class different from the ruled, and the Indian habits, customs, manners, dress—in short, all the elements in which culture makes itself manifest—became undermined, and looked down upon even by the so-called educated Indians themselves. All this has so permeated the cultural atmosphere of India, that even today when the ideal of full Swaraj is almost high on the horizon, 'cultured' dinners, for instance, are served and eaten by Indians more in European fashion, than by the Europeans

themselves. Many are found even to shirk a discussion of this their unconscious sense of inferiority by suavely saying, that dress, dinner, and things like that, are but small matters after all, and not worth discussing. Others are not wanting who even boast of this their change of customs for the better. But the educationist looking to a cultural destiny of the race cannot afford to overlook things like these, small as they are, for reality is nakedly evidenced in things small and unguarded.

After indicating the genesis and the basis of our present educational system, it is rather needless to expatiate upon the methods and the manner of its promulgation. The youth of the race generally grows and dies uncared for. And the system interestedly caters for a few, who are nurtured, so to say, in glass houses sedulously watched against free atmospheric influences. The history text book, for instance, is meant to sing the praises of the servants of the East India Company, and depict them as demigods to our children, though as a matter of fact, as a rule, may be, with a few exceptions, they were each and every one of them of a character, before which the very name of civilisation would blush in shame and fear. For fear of some of the truths being exposed, Pandit Sundarlal's *Bharat-me Angrej Raj* (British Rule in India) was proscribed only the other day. This is but an instance, which is not alone in the field. I know of very good, sensible well behaved, and promising young men having been compelled with the instrumentality of the heads of educational institutions to write bonds of behaviour pledging abject and docile submission to the present Indian State politics under the penalty of expulsion. The poor youngmen's offence is that they love nationalism, and aspire after patriotic politics. The unnatural coercion underlying this bonded behaviour, or like measures, means to make them sneaking hypocrites or degraded slaves all their lives, and is often responsible for driving the buoyant youth into means and methods dictated by desperate ambition. This is directly and deliberately destroying humanity, and that in the sacred name of education.

Our history teaches us, moreover, that Sivaji was a free-booter, Siraj Uddoulla a rouge, and the whole country was plunged in blood, and lawlessness, and ruin, out of which got sent the Britisher to deliver us. All nationalism, love of the land, is tabooed as sedition, out of which the existing system of education is meant to protect the child at all costs, and to introduce him to a loyalty, which means unquestioning reverence to the British, and their institutions. The child is made to learn that even the exploitation of the Indian market is for the good of the poor Indian, for it gives him cheap articles, and the very emasculation of the race under the operation of

Arms Act is meant to protect our people from a hereditary cut-throat propensity. Thus in all the education, that we get from the village school to the University, we are made into moral physical and cultural slaves, or at best jackdaws in peacock's feathers.

Only the other day an eminent Indian educationist like Sir Jadunath Sarkar in his convocation address at Allahabad is reported to have said :—

“We know that when an Athenian boy reached the age of 18, the state took complete charge of his training ; he was enrolled as an ephebos, and had to swear in a temple (a) to fight in defence of his home and religion, (b) to leave his country better than he found it, (c) to obey the Magistrates and laws, (d) to oppose any violation of the constitution, and (e) never to disgrace his arms or desert his comrades. Can not the Indian youth who enters the college be inspired by a similar sense of sacredness in his new vocation ? Can he not be properly fitted for civic life, and taught to do his part in leaving his country really better than he found it ? This is the most vital problem with us today.”

It appears that he quoted the passage particularly with a view to giving our Youngmen in colleges an idea of the importance of obeying the laws and Magistrates, and opposing violation of the constitution, as means to fit them for civic life this quotation he seems thus to use as a special piece of demonstrative advice to wean our Youngmen from the present Congress movement. I take it, that Sir Jadunath believes what he says. And this exposes all the more savagely the horridness of the effects of the present system of our education from top to bottom. The outlook of Athenian education then, as it is now more or less all over the West was national and controlled by the State to be fashioned after its own requirements. But what does it indicate when we come out to imitate it in letters in the present day India ? And if we do so imitate, in defence of which home and which religion are we asked to fight ? Which arms are we not to disgrace, and which comrades not to desert ? Words like constitution, law, and its guardians do not surely represent absolute entities to be externally respected without consideration of human relativity. But to question things like this to a man like Sir Jadunath in criticism of educational policy in India, may seem almost sacrilegious to many an educationist of today. Yet this is the ruinous situation, into which we have been cunningly and

imperceptibly led during the course of the past hundred years or so. This Conference has to take note of this.

The Indian Educationist particularly has here a most delicate task. A spirit of rank retaliation immediately awaits the system. The signs of its beginning are already on the horizon. The Educationist may not indulge here in the vain attempts to countaract it directly, or avoid it altogether. That would simply worsen and aggravate the situation. He can only try cautiously to turn the reaction into a constructive response, and thus save the race from what may otherwise end in a huge waste and dissipation of human energy. For if India is at all destined to live, not merely as a mass of humanity but as a cultural entity, a reaction is inevitable. The task of the educationist is to find out, how to guide it with a sympathetic touch of unselfish service, and thus give it in practice a creative character.

But from the quotation noticed above one thing still more far reaching stands out clearly, that the basis of the Western Educational culture, which has been directly and indirectly influenced from age to age by the Athenian principles, is national, and presumes a control of the state in its operation. Here may be looked for the main distinction between the educational system of the West and that of the East. To this broad aspect of the question I am coming presently. In the meantime, for the present, we have no way out of this national outlook, and this political control of our system in the East, so long as we have got to stand in the struggle, long begun with the West, for our very cultural existence. We cannot get out of it however much we may desire. For by even opposing a man we unconsciously fall into imitating his ways and methods, and become like him.

The ancient Athenian system again, though national, was more or less tribal in its character, and was in effect applied to develop the genius and characteristics of a homogeneous people. The development of man, which ought to be the ideal of free and unfettered education, was not so much hampered in that ancient Athenian system, as it is now in the system of the States of the West. In the last century particularly, several economic and political forces, that were long in working since the renaissance, were responsible for developing a kind of new entity, so to say, called the Nation. It had very little to do with the destiny and the aspirations of man as man. Political and economic conceptions were forced upon heterogeneous human elements of a particular area, and the Nation emerged like a machine-made commodity, so to say, in which free growth of humanity was fashioned not after human

ideals as such, but out of notions, growing from what may be called militant common interests. Under the circumstances the state assumed complete charge of education, for the State was, to all intents and purposes, made to appear as the Nation. Class rule was the result; and with annexations, colonies, and foreign dependencies, grew up the imperial aspect of that nationalism, under which the entire world is fretting today. And even the masses of the Nations themselves are at times found to struggle for overthrowing the notions of forced class-rule as Nationalism.

But the West developed the system out of herself and for herself, and also developed with it traditions and institutions, firmly established in complicated interests of races groups and individuals. Even conscription of the peasants in some states might, if need be, form a part of their national system; and in fact compulsory military training does form a part of education of states like Germany. In such systems today by free education is not meant freedom of human development, but only a freedom from paying for education by the parents or the guardian of the child. Compulsory education is a common term. It is a system in which the parent or guardian is compelled, under the penalty of law to give education to his child. No system can be contemplated, in which the parent or guardian will feel in his bounden duty to educate the child, who may grow just in the natural channels to his own human destiny. For the Western Nationalism practically ignores man as man. It is in a sense the interests of a few, artificially spread over a heterogenous mass of the populace, and foisted upon the latter as their own self interest.

Here it is, that the East should rise up to the task of fulfilling her divine destiny of adding the real human aspect to the culture of the world. But how, so long as the economic and political self interest rules the world and undermines it, and the very Bismarckian idea of the nation holds its far-flung away over the world? Even the rise of the stages of Socialism, culminating in the aggressive policy of the practical Bolshevic, and even the high-sounding League of Nations have not been able to create an impression on it, Politically Independent countries of the East as well as India cannot but, therefore, pass through a stage of dire nationalism and a system of education entirely adapted to it. In fact in 1921 even Mahatma Gandhi devised a system of education, which he called 'Nation'. The compulsory teaching in our schools of books like, 'England's work in India,' and the "Citizen of India," found a right retort and fitting counterpart in the compulsory three hours' spinning prescribed for the child in that national education. The English Imperialist trains the Indian child for

his own purposes, and the Indian Nationalist ought, therefore, to train the child for the immediate needs of the Indian Nation. The poor child has for the present no freedom either way, nor has the teacher. The human destiny in the child is overlooked. Nations of Nationalism just in the Western sense is made to prevail.

So also is the modern system obtaining even in the prosperous Japan, and the rising Turkey. Independent countries they are. But they are just coming out of the Jaws of the Imperial West. Japan was not a conquered country, to be sure. But the all-devouring economic and political impact of the West, resulting in a deadly cultural onslaught, cannot be denied even in the case of Japan. If she is to stand, she too, must look for exploiting as many markets of the world as she can, and make her political and economic position such, as to inspire the admiration of the West. Thus the system of Education everywhere should, at least for the present, be fashioned after the idea of the Nation, whatever be the genesis character and scope of such an idea. But the Educationist of the East, particularly of India, should bear the fact in mind, that he will have to begin this sacred human task with a comprehensive outlook of life full of far-sight and vision. He ought not to be beguiled into mere methods and details, only to help indirectly in the huge waste of humanity, that we see is now daily going on in this unfortunate land of our fathers.

But at the same time our Educationist of the East should remember, that this notion of machine-made nationalism is but a stage in the growth of humanity as a whole. It is not the ultimate destiny of humanity. It is a stage in disintegration, out of which will come the synthesis, just like a ripe fruit or a seed, which is the ultimate destiny of the plant, coming after and out of the stage of development, in which the original seed disintegrates itself into leaves, branches, and the trunk of a tree.

For such a destiny the East must look back to the genesis of its life and culture, and to the basis of its distinctive genius. The East kept up culture in its everopening stages and aspects when no State ever protected it. No youth in his training was bound under the penalty of the law as in Athens. There was none to demand a particular type of education from a particular individual, nor was anyone coerced into a particular way of life. Sages and savants considered it their duty to teach and train the youth of the race, and the parents propelled by the same sense of duty sent their children to the retired forest homes of those sages and savants. It was the duty of the king, too, to supply for the up-keep of those forest Universities, for

which there was neither popular nor Legislative demand. Thus the form of society, which was based on duty self emanating in its eternal interdependence of human relations, was the ideal to condition human evolution. It was natural, and conceived and practised just after the eternal laws of Nature. The sun shines, and the flower opens, without demand. Such are the phenomena of nature, self-opening and self-evolving on the basis of the principle of eternal duty, i. e. Dharma. There was no demand of right as in modern States, and the progress was therefore calm, serene, and sure.

Such was the basis of the system of education, which was not adapted only to a fashioning of the youth after something artificial and superinduced. It was a creative principle, and an evolving force, propelling from within the youth, and drawn out just in the direction of his self emanation and self realisation. In those residential Universities of the forest the child had scarcely, if ever, an uniformly fixed course of studies and training, but the principle of training was nevertheless one. The youth was being carefully watched in his ordinary daily duties, and was imperceptibly guided in the proper way to his natural destiny. Properly trained to the satisfaction of the Kulapati or the teacher, the youth would be told "Go out into the world, You are a man".

This is the real making of the man as man, aimed at and achieved with the keen personal sympathy, and the magnetic spirit of sacrifice, inspired into the youth in the carefully guided evolution of his human self—free and unfettered. This is the ideal for which the world and humanity waits, so to say, to be full and happy. This is the ultimate destiny of the east, as this was the very basis, and exhibits the real genius, of the Eastern culture. Even in our system of National Education, which cannot but be the immediate stage in the life of the East, this broad and permanent aspect of humanity must not be lost sight of by the teacher, and the people in charge of educating the youth of the land. The struggle for existence arising out of a militant demand of rights, cannot, however, be the ultimate goal. The West has tried it, tried it long and strenuously. But even today happiness of humanity is rather farther away, and even in the League of Nations, member nations, in their clandestine attempts at securing their own self interest, are often found to play with problems like disarmament more in cunning subterfuge, than in the straight way befitting a desire for a real solution of the problems of the Nations. But the East did very early find the way to happiness in calmly balancing the society on the basis of Duty, which precludes a demand, and therefore a jealous struggle, deception and exploitation as permanent elements of human institutions. East has

been long deceived, beguiled and even dazzled, because in its calm evolution it forgot the fighting aspect of human nature. Now the way has paved for the proper synthesis, and Mahatma Gandhi has revived the culture not only in its prestige, purity, but he has made even his non-violence a fighting strength, his duty and self-culture as the best means to establish one's rights. Let the culture now grow from more to more, and inspire the youth and the age alike. Out of the nation will rise the real and living humanity, that is, not nations but peoples in synthesis, and the human destiny with its balanced existence of man in active happiness and living calm will be attained.

To this ideal and the Ultimate end of Education our teachers and Educationists ought to be alive. It is not a question of schools and departments with prospects of pay and pension, that can influence such an ideal. It is the broadened outlook and selfless work of those, that know and understand, that can achieve the desired result. Everyone that feels that he is educated today, should also, like the sages and savants of your, feel the burden of his responsibility in the matter. Various ways and outlets of educating your people should thus be permeated with the proper ideal, and be guided in the methods appropriate. This is the vast and the sacred task of the entire East, which has been the primeval teacher of the world, and which will still give out its pent up genius, and add the essential aspect to the culture of humanity to make it synthetically complete and permanently happy.

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From

**Pandit Nilakantha Das, M.A., M.L.A.,**

**ORISSA.**

Nababharat Office, Cuttack-2.

To

The Chairman & Members,  
The States Reorganisation Commission.  
Cuttack, the 25th May, 1954.

Dear Sirs,

The Orissa Boundry Committee called the O' Donnell Committee was set up in 1931 to recommend the boundry of the Orissa Province to be then formed. By a resolution of the Utkal Provincial Congress Committee, I was authorised as its sole representative to give evidence before the said Committee on the subject. I submitted my Statement with two Memoranda which I attach herewith for your reference. They will speak for themselves. The second Memorandum (the supplementary Memorandum) is particularly interesting, as it referred to a Memorandum presented by the then Andhra Mahajan Sabha in which joined for the purpose, the then Congress leaders like Doctor Pattavi Sita Ramaya and late Sri Nageswar Rao, to claim lands populated by 80% Oriya people as Andhra lands. The Resolution of the then Provincial Congress Committee was also printed along with the above documents. This is specially important now as it sets forth the real Congress view point and definite Congress claim of Utkal, of a time when Congress was the undisputed representative of the people of the land and its national vision was clearer and more disinterested. The present Congress Organisation, the main part of which is the Congress Government of Orissa, may not be dependable in this case, for obvious reasons and complications.

To set forth the relevancy in full of my submitting to you the above documents it is necessary to mention here, a little history in this connection. The Statement with the Memoranda and the Resolution of the Provincial Congress Committee were duly submitted to the then Boundry Committee towards the end of November, 1931. The Committee fixed the 10th January, 1932 for my oral evidence at Jamshedpur. But five days before that, that is, on 5th January, 1932 the Congress

organisations were suddenly declared unlawful. I was then the elected Chairman of the Reception Committee of the proposed Puri Session of the Indian National Congress. Hence immediately I left Puri for Jamshedpur, leaving instructions to so arrange matters as to appoint me the Congress Dictator of the Province not earlier than the 10th, so that I might appear for the proposed oral evidence. But at Jamshedpur on the 8th evening I got a telegram telling me that the then High Command of the Congress had issued mandate for the Orissa Congress Organization to boycott the O'Donnell Committee and consequently I had already been appointed the Dictator of the Province. Immediately I started back to Puri and was arrested and sent to Jail, for a long term.

Strange it is that because of our boycott of the oral evidence, the Boundry Committee gave no consideration even to my printed Statement and Memoranda with the Utkal Congress Resolution which had already been submitted to them. They did not even mention this in the list of papers, memoranda etc., they received, considered and published along with their report.

Here, in submitting for your considerations, the same Statement, Memoranda and the Resolution, as they were then printed, I may simply add the following few words.

(1) The Province of Orissa, of course, except the States which have been subsequently added to it, was formed on 1st April, 1936 as a result of the recommendations of the O' Donnell Committee. Evidently no consideration was than given to the Congress view point. Yet it will be clear from my Supplementary Memorandum that unlike Orissa the Andhra Des was strongly represented by their leading Congress men to voice the Andhara view point under name of Andhra Mahajan Sabha.

Further, no less a person than the late Dr. Sachidandnda Sinha of Bihar was himself an associate member of the O' Donnell Committee. Hence Congress or no Congress, Bihar interest was undoubtedly more than represented. In Orissa, however, there was no other Organisation or individual to carry similar weight with the Committee.

(2) Orissa Province was to be carved out from four neighbouring Provinces. They were enjoying a long and abiding vested interest in Oriya lands. Each had reasons to consider its own portion of Orissa, as a wind-fall, so to say. They also command influential centres of the then Government like Calcutta, Patna, Nagpur and Madras. You may now realise, how difficult it was for a New Province like Orissa to be formed

in the teeth of their Opposition. In this, Orissa's case may be well compared to a posthumous son claiming his share of property in a Hindu Mitaksara family after the entire family property had been divided among his elderly and influential brothers.

(3) Thus, it is clear that Orissa's boundry can in no way be said to have included any land or lands which a neighbour can now reasonably claim to be its own. On the other hand your enquiry may surely indicate that lands lying outside the present State of Orissa should still come to it.

I just mention below a few illustrative points, very relevant in this connection.

(A) In 1765 A.D. Clive got from the then Emperor Shah Alam the Dewani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. This Orissa is what is called as Nawab's Orissa and ever since it is known to be the land between the Rupanarayan and the Subarnarekha. Is there any doubt that this land was Oriya land? But from that Nawab's Orissa no portion small or big has yet come to the Orissa State. When the first Local Self Government Act was passed and acted upon in 1885 A.D. it is well known how and by what means Oriya Primary teachers were scared away by interested people and how consequently Bengali Language was forced in Schools and Courts. The Oriyas, moreover, were ruthlessly suppressed in using their own language with the threat of being arrested and sent to jail. The artificial process of forced provincialisation of this land may not further be described. A casual reference to the Autobiography of the late famous Poet and Author Fakir Mohan Senapati and a reference to abnormally reduced Census figures time after time since then may give the Committee an idea on the point. Are only two generations of this forced process enough to break the linguistic and cultural sentiment of an ancient and historic people like the Oriyas and divert its natural course in complete acclimatisation? Rather, on the other hand, this might result in a cultural set back and demoralisation if not in a revolt-reactions so undesirable in our National progress and development of India as a whole. At least some portions of the Nawab's Orissa should come to the State of Orissa and the boundary there should be carefully determined.

(B) About the district of Singhbhum, which includes Saraikela and Kharaswau, the linguistic consideration, though some what complicated on account of political reasons as well as the vested economic interest of the State of Bihar, is very simple. Not only Singhbhum, including Dhalbhum and the Ex-State areas, but the major portion, if not the whole of

Chhotanagpur including Jashpur and Sarguja linguistically has nothing to do with Bihar with its Hindi Language. Language is the vehicle of culture and the other day East Bengal has shown what a man's language means to him. Oriyas have got a tradition and history of their language and literature. But in spite of the fact that the land of Bihar was the parent of our Bharatiya culture and philosophy, Maghi has not developed a literature of its own. Biharis may adopt Hindi as their Court and School Language, but it is not their mother tongue. Let them not seek to force it on Oriyas or in regions where Oriya is the naturalising and civilising agency. Because, Hindi has been adopted as the National Language, it is no argument to say that Hindi should be adopted in Chotanagpur or at least in South Chotanagpur, i. e., Singhbhum, Dhalbhum, Saraikela, Kharaswan and even in Jashpur and Sarguja. Admittedly, the National language of India is no substitute for our Regional languages. In my Memorandum, I have discussed the Language problem of Chhotanagpur at some length to show how Bihar should not claim any portion of Singhbhum and the contiguous lands.

Then look at history, as to how Chhotanagpur has come to become a part of Bihar. Accidents of British military annexation and organisation for occupational or imperial convenience, or any similar incidents should in no way be set forth as arguments here.

Even, to-day, the meaning of the name indicates that the whole of Chhotanagpur is more Nagpur than Bihar, Sambalpur, Sarguja and Jashpur were at a time, during the British period, included in Chhotanagpur, the name of which area upto 1833 was South West Frontier Agency of the then Bengal Presidency.

After that, the lower Provinces of Bengal were formed, consisting of five Provinces called Bengal, Assam, Bihar, Chhotanagpur and Orissa. Separation of Assam has its own history, Chhotanagpur was practically no-man's land. In 1860 Sambalpur, in 1905 Sarguja and Jashpur were separated from the Chhotanagpur of Bengal. In 1912, however, the Bihar and Orissa Province was formed as a fresh stroke of imperial policy to annul the notorious Bengal partition of 1905. This was done under the influence of great Biharis like Imam brothers, one of whom was then the Executive Councilor of the Governor General, then in Calcutta, with the faked plea of giving a sea-board to the new Province. This sea-board was nothing but the sea coast of Orissa. Thus the inclusion of Orissa in the New Province automatically included Chhotanagpur, so rich in minerals, merely as a Geographical necessity.

It is significant here that the Province was named Bihar and Orissa, and Chhotanagpur was never considered as a separate entity. Whose land is it then? Which State or States should claim it? In any separation of Bihar and Orissa, to treat the then Orissa Division of the Province as the Oriya land of it and the whole of Chhotanagpur as Bihar is neither proper nor equitable. At the juncture, when Orissa was separated, not only it was a fact that Orissa was a beggar, so to say, and the neighbouring Provinces were in the position of givers, and commanded their own influential centres of Government as I have indicated, but the Province of Orissa was formed as a side-issue of the imperial policy of 'Divide and Rule' more as a bye-product of the formation of the Province of Sind than with any consideration of Oriyas as a people. This policy and this attitude had also an indirect bearing on the recommendations of the O' Donnell Committee.

Linguistically, Chhotanagpur is distinctly Oriya towards the South, Bengali towards the East and Maghi towards the North. As to the Administrative convenience and similar other points of argument, I am presently coming to them. Hence, at least the entire Singhbhum with some of its adjacent areas and also Jashpur and Sarguja with it, should come to the State of Orissa. Bihar cannot claim any portion of it on the ground that it has got it merely by the accident of annexation or that the area has got natural resources, which Bihar as the abler partner should alone be allowed to develop.

(C) Baster and Singhbhum were, till the other day, included in the Utkal Province of the Congress. They were made parts of States other than Orissa on the plea of administration convenience. But after the merger of all the States and planned development of the country almost all communicational difficulties will vanish. So in the present re-organisation of the States, administrative difficulties will have very little importance.

But Defence considerations are important. Communicational convenience and strength and solidarity of the Frontiers are essential considerations in independent India. In considering the boundaries of Orissa no Defence considerations arise except in the coasts. Hence, there would be no difficulty in assigning the entire Hinterland of natural Orissa to the State of Orissa.

(D) On the Andhra side, however, the coastal considerations may have some value. For the past 300 years, coastal region towards the North up to Chicacole has been successfully

encroached upon by the Andhras. There the boundary line will have to be very carefully determined, perhaps on the basis of the census figures of small areas. But the non-coastal areas in the South require quite different consideration. The civilising agency in the lands hitherto called the Vizag Agency and the Ganjam Mals can never be considered anything other than Oriya. The Koraput District includes a major portion of it. In remaining portions of the Vizag Agency areas, where, civilising agency is Oriya should be clearly demarcated and added to the State of Orissa.

As to the Ex-State areas of Rayagarh, Samangarh and Bindra-Nuagarh, and such other areas, of our then Congress Resolution, not much comment is necessary. They go with Sambalpur and its ex-State areas of the present Districts of Kalahandi and Patna, as well as the District of Koraput in their linguistic association.

(E) On these broad principles boundaries of the State of Orissa will have to be decided. The posthumous child, as I have said, should be given his proper share. In spite of instructions issued from the centre and desires expressed by wise man to the contrary, interested border people are still indulging in all sorts of unfair means of coaxing and coercing and that sometimes with direct or indirect help of the Government in false propaganda and collection of forced and false signatures, with a view to beguile the Commission. Even ridiculous measures, like publishing pure and unadulterated Oriya folk songs as Hindi folk songs of Saraikela, which must have come to the knowledge of Commission, are being adopted. These look like means and measures adopted during the British days. Even pacts like that in the name of the State Ministers and Provincial Congress heads of Orissa with Bengal to give up claiming any portion of the Nawab's Orissa are in the air. Not only do devices like this seek to influence you into verdicts ill-considered and unreal by making the already complicated border situation more complicated, but may cogently remind one of a similar pact in connection with Saraikela and Kharaswan made by the then Chief Minister of Orissa with three other neighbouring Chief Ministers in 1948. I am sure, such means, measures and devices will have little weight with you. So I refrain from commenting on them.

Our great and glorious heritage is India. It is now a Republic. This Republic has selected you as the sole judges of national problems and issues, very intricate and complicated. Your verdict is expected to be final, as it ought to be. Details about the boundary are not for us to supply. Let us not there-

by further complicate the course of justice you are to deal out. You command all facts and figures, you require. They are in the Archives of the Government. Hence, I have only indicated a few historical facts and broad principles of arguments. I shall however, be ready to explain things orally if desired to do so.

Yours Sincerely,  
(Pandit Nilakantha Das)

Encl :—A printed book containing the statement and Memorandum with supplementary Memorandum with the Resolution of the Utkal Provincial Congress Committee submitted to the O' Donnell Committee.

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THE STATEMENT  
AND  
THE MEMORANDUM

**WITH SUPPLEMENTARY MEMORANDUM.**

(With the Resolution of the Utkal Provincial Congress Committee authorising Pandit Nilakantha Das to give evidence before the 'Orissa Committee', 1931, for fixing the boundary of the Oriya Province, if one is to be formed.)

BY

**Pandit Nilakantha Das**

*(Submitted on 28-11-31 to the Orissa Committee—1931, setting forth the view-point of the Utkal Provincial Congress Committee.)*

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## THE STATEMENT

Oriyas demand a province of their own. It is a necessity. Why? Because this is decidedly the only solution now of the life and death problem of the Oriyas. This problem is both economic and cultural.

Nobody denies that the Oriyas in History were a sturdy and prosperous race, set up a culture second perhaps to few other races in India. They developed art in its pure Indo-Aryan form and spirit. The monumental works of architecture are witness to it. Theirs is the unique culture of Jagunnath where alone in the cast ridden Hindu world of India problems like sectarianism and untouchability have been solved both in practice and principle on the broad basis of humanity. Their literature too was vast and voluminous.

Over and above all this day kept up their political independence for over four long Centuries against the powerful Mahomedan Kingdoms of Bengal and Bahamini as well as the great Hindu Kingdom of Vizainagaram. For all these Centuries Oriyas wielded something like an Imperial Power—a terror to their Jealous neighbours.

Such a race is dying inch by inch under 170 years of British Rule. True it may be, that politically it first began to fall under the palliative and pacific influence of Vaishnavism of Eastern India of the 16th Century. But that loss of political independence had nothing to do with the cultural or economic life of the race. In fact it is during the Mahomedan rule that the South Orissa, then partly under the direct rule and partly under the indirect influence of the Mahomedan Government of Hyderabad, was responsible for the best products of Oriya literature of those days. Unlike the present, those were not the days when change of Government had anything to do with the language or the social and economic organisation of the indigenous people.

The extent of the Oriya lands including backward tracts under Oriya reclamation in pre-British days is undisputed. None of our neighbours even has any doubt about it, nor has the Government. It is much wider on all sides than the lands claimed by us for the proposed province. But in our present claim we have excluded the areas where during the last 170 years of British Rule alien influences have succeeded in killing the Oriya language at home and consequently the Oriya culture. In those outer areas Oriya is non-existent today.

Why ? Because the Oriyas have been allowed to lie in four different provinces uncared for by all. The Oriya minority in each of the four provinces has been exploited and their culture has been killed with their language. Their economic conditions are faring even worse.

They have been with Bengal, with Bihar, with Madras and even with the Central Provinces.

The earliest experience in Bengal was that Zamindaries of Orissa were sold in Bengal by means in no way fair. The Commissioner of Orissa in 1818, that is, just 15 years after the British occupation of Orissa, describes this as "little better than downright robbery" perpetrated on the Oriyas. This "dispossessed upwards of two-thirds of the original native proprietors from their estates." Non-Oriya officers issued nominal notices in Bengali and English of abrupt sales, and themselves purchased those estates **Benami** for paltry sums. One Bengali officer, whom the Commissioner names, purchased for Rs. 23000/- estates than paying a government revenue of Rs. 53000/-, and yielding even then an income to the proprietor of much more than Rs. 53000/- per year. Thus most of our Zamindars are absentees, and live in Bengal, where they spend the hard earned money of the neglected Oriya ryot in charity or otherwise. May I suggest here that much of this charity alone goes to public welfare in Bengal in shape of contributions to universities, schools, colleges, hospitals, clubs, libraries and the like ? I may also point out by-the-by that our Ganjam and Vizagapatam Zamindars are no less charitable for similar institutions in Madras. But the Oriya ryot is helplessly and hopelessly suffering from floods and famines, and goes to labour Centres like those of Assam tea-gardens to earn even to pay his rent and tax.

The Orissa famine of 1866, in which according to Government calculation one-third of the population perished, is another outstanding result of neglect. Since then there have been many more famines but few know about them but the Oriyas themselves.

Education, health, public service and Government patronage all go the some way.

As to culture and its vehicle language, instead of protecting Oriya minority with resonable care, strenuous attempts have been in the past made to kill the Oriya language outright in schools, college and courts. Now there is no Oriya in midnapore. and Dhalbhum in schools and courts,—not even as an alternative language which would at least has appeared a fair dealing.

People in those areas are struggling for their-traditional culture by reading old Oriya literature printed in Bengali script.

After the seventies of the last Century when inspite of the Bengali, attempt to kill Oriya language, it was found still to live in Puri, Cuttack and Balasore, organised attempts fair and foul have been made in Midnapore and Dhalbhum, Census after Census to record Oriyas as Bengalis—a fact to which Census reports themselves, not to speak of anything else, bear testimony. Even by 1891 the number of Oriyas in Midnapore had been made to appear as 5½ lakhs out of a total population of 28 lakhs. By 1901 the number of oriyas was a litte over 2 lakhs, and in 1911 it came to be only over a lakh, and so on. These figures speak for themselves.

In madras our experience follows mainly the same lines, and Sambalpur's struggle for existence in C. P. has been no better, The little area that still remains in C. P. is claimed by others today to be Non-Oriya.

Last of all we were required without our knowing it, to "supply a sea-board" to Bihar. We then fondly hoped that we might at least get a port in our coasts, and the restoration of Oriya language in Singbhum. Nothing came and nothing else can possibly come.

Painful it is to note that our tenancy, character of ownership and holdings and allied economic institutions built upon long experience and traditions had been already getting mis-handled in neglect under Bengal. All these results of neglect were in Bihar stereotyped in a statute—one of the shabbiest ever enacted—called the Orissa Tenancy Act. This paved the way towards steadily and swiftly completing that economic ruin of the race which had been begun in selling our Zamindaris in Bengal.

Let us look at the present administration.

Over a crore of Oriyas are in four provinces. What is the character of their association in those administrations? True, they are culturally struggling. In places their language has been killed. Still there have been men who could be in high position in office. But may I ask how many Oriyas from which parts of Oriya lands are in the secretariat in the Government of India, or even in those of provinces? How many judges are there picked from the Oriya lawyers? How many graduates have been selected for technical or professional training and so on? Questions like these may be asked and the answer need not be said. But professors in Patna, Calcutta, Nagpur and madras will testify to the fact that Oriya youths are in no

way less intelligent or capable than their lucky neighbours. Even in the lands themselves places in the local administration are not well upon to the Oriyas. What have the Government or our neighbours got to say to this ?

What higher technical and professional education is provided for Oriya in all these Provinces ? If they are found backward, as it is often said, what measures have been devised to make them forward like their forefathers ?

Oriya literature is languishing in limping imitations during the British Rule. No authentic history of the land or even a research of the monumental works of art has been yet seriously attempted by any Oriya. There are no facilities even throughout the Oriya land for such an attempt. Instead of investigating the basis of tenancy and the distribution of holdings in the Oriya lands our history or economic professors in the Cuttack College feel required to write lecture notes on the evolution of the limited monarchy of England or on the advantages of free-trade to the manufacturing countries of the West. But need I say that things are quite otherwise in Calcutta and Madras ?

The provision for health and sanitation of the Oriyas again has engaged the serious attention of no Government. Almost everywhere in the Oriya lands, I have seen, people travel miles in summer to fetch drinking water from a muddy pool, or a well with blackish water one foot deep. Are these things ever reported to the Provincial Centres ?

Oriyas know everywhere to their cost that the administration is merely a tax collecting and oppressive alien organisation. Their administrative prospects will really look up if measures be devised to put an end to all this state of things.

Financial aspect of the problem also goes all on the same lines. It has been found out that our present finances are almost just enough to pay the way. I am sure in course of time our finances may be still worse, if the present state of things is allowed to continue. Had the finances been overflowing, half the reasons for the necessity of a separate Oriya Province would vanish, for the finances of the state go hand in hand with the economic conditions of its people.

It is needless to expatiate upon experiences like the above. The fact is that the race is culturally and economically dying. We feel that our historic race, which was so useful to the synthetic culture and nationalism of India, is still to be useful and must have to be saved. Oriyas have a right to live as much as any other race in India—both culturally and economically.

Does the Government or any of our neighbours deny us this right to live? Certainly they won't say they do. Better late than never. Oriyas have got to be thankful to the Government for they have at last recognised the necessity, and have come up to setting up this Committee. Earnest attempts to set up an Oriya Province as a result of the Committee is, however, sincerely expected. The Indian National Congress has, it may be said incidentally, recognised a separate province for Utkal.

It is the duty of the Government as well as of the Nations to see that the Oriyas live. The only course to such a way is that the Oriyas have a separate province of their own. For after all the experiences of the past 170 years no other radical remedy can be contemplated.

Oriyas say—Give us our lands together in one administration, and thus give us a chance to build up our finances, along with our historic culture. How can we otherwise discuss finances now? Our cottage industry is killed in neglect, and no modern industry comes in its stead. Even the co-operative credit societies and village Self-Government to the Oriyas have been like oppressive foreign agencies forced from above in place of our organised village communities and caste and artisan guilds, which are almost dead today.

In my explanatory memorandum to this statement I have dealt in somewhat detail with the prospective finance of the proposed Oriya Province. Here I can only say that Oriya lands are full of resources, and Oriya hand is traditionally trained in skill and is easily adaptable to it. This is the best national wealth that the Oriyas possess and it awaits being utilised.

I may here simply suggest some instances as to how our economic conditions may in future be tackled. Our village and cottage industries which have died for want of nourishment and support may still be effectively re-organised. The once famous salt-industry can be revived. Various small industries out of the abundant supply of fish from the Orissa Coast as well as out of cocoon and other garden oil-seeds native to the sea-board lands can be scientifically investigated and organised into small soap, oil and manure factories and the like. Forests can yield from timber to tanning chemicals as well as lac for other suitable local industries. Mineral colour has been found in Bhubaneswar, natural cement in Jenapur and coal in Talcher. Resources like these may be further investigated and suitably developed. Inexhaustible store of Iron and Manganese Ore in Mayurbhanj and Gangpur State of Orissa has already made the existence of the Tata Iron & Steel Company possible in

Jamshedpur. Now look at what would have happened if the State Administration of Mayurbhanj had not got its iron resources investigated and explored by an expert Mr. P. N. Bose. It is a fact that when the Tatas after all the expensive expert help and advise they could secure from foreign lands, going to give up the idea of setting up an Iron Works on Indian soil, Mr. P. N. Bose gave them the information he was able to collect under the service of Mayurbhanj State and in result the Tata Works were abruptly fixed for Sachi in Dhalbhum *i. e.* present Jamshedpur.

Throughout the Oriya land natural resources still lie unexplored for the Oriya lands contain vast areas of non-alluvial geological formations of the Paleolithic Periods (Vide Mr. Rakhaldas Banerji's History of Orissa, Chapter III).

Besides this stone and ivory sculpture, filigree work and other industries for luxury may be either revived or properly encouraged. Agriculture and commerce still remain quite unattended to. Sugarcane, particularly, for instance, has great possibilities in Orissa. New and suitable crops for the flooded areas await investigations. Sericulture may be given a chance there. Ports and big industries like ship and locomotive building as well as the making of rolling stocks and other railway materials may well be thought of.

The best wealth linked to all this is the quality of the Oriya labour, which is one of the best in India, in capacity for endurance, continuant and economic habits and adaptibility to skill. Employers everywhere bear unreserved testimony to all this qualities of the Oriya labour. Even in Simla today Oriya mechanics and fitters are particularly requisitioned from Calcutta for Water and Electric Works.

Now our neighbours are claiming this land and that for various reasons, I may say, under various pretexts even when things have come to this pass, and when it is long overdue that the Oriyas should be allowed to look to their own affairs. Granting for arguments sake all their claims as they are, what is their constructive proposal for letting the Oriyas live? They must be given a province for developing their own culture and their own economics. There is no other effective alternative. In view of this let our neighbours give something constructive. At this juncture this is what is wanted of them in their marshalling evidence before the Committee by those that support their respective claims.

Let them in this connection be reminded of the fact that it is very easy to make destructive statements like the following.

(a) Singhbhum schools teach Hindi, therefore, Singhbhum

should be linked to Patna. (b) Dhalbhum records have been maintained in Bengali, therefore, it should go to Calcutta, (c) Midnapur people have been recorded in census as Bengali, therefore, they will be compelled to forget their fathers, (d) Kolhans or the Jeypore Agency are to be reclaimed in any case, and it matters little if the old agency of reclamation i. e. Oriya, is changed into Hindi or Telegu, and the like.

Government too should not only sit right in judgment over quarrelling parties. They must put forward their own constructive proposals with all statesman-like dash and boldness befitting the measures proposed.

This is the very basic outlook which should comprehensively influence the entire subject under enquiry before the Committee. Scrutiny of administrative and financial details and sifting of evidence may be helpful, but not essential. The Oriya race has to be given a lease of life. It is to be given a sure chance to live.

With these few remarks which I consider very essential I give below the resolution of the Utkal Provincial Congress Committee directing me to give evidence before the Orissa Committee. The resolution also contains a detailed description of the areas claimed for the proposed Oriya Province. I also beg to attach hereto a detailed memorandum elucidating some of the points raised in this statement and contained in the resolution of the Utkal Provincial Congress Committee.

P. O. Sakhigopal,  
 (Dist. Puri—Orissa.)  
*The 28th Nov. 1931.* }

Sd. NILAKANTHA DAS.

## Resolution of the Utkal Provincial Congress Committee

*Adopted on 15th November 1931*

Resolved that Pandit Nilakanth Das, our representative to give evidence before the Boundary Commission do base his evidence on the following principles.

(1) The representative of Utkal Provincial Congress organisation shall mainly confine himself to the linguistic aspect of the Oriya Province to be formed. But as in outlying areas Census figures are not and cannot evidently be a faithful expression of the real linguistic position required for the purpose in these areas, a border out-look should be put forward and historical, traditional, cultural and ethnic considerations as well as considerations of more congenial process of reclamation and naturalisation particularly, in areas now called 'backward' should be largely drawn upon to help the solution of the problem.

Inclusion of strong and substantial minorities in the border lands e. g. Ghantal Sub-Division in Midnapore and Chikacal Taluk in Ganjam, should as far as practicable, be avoided for they may create administrative difficulties in the future Province which should be culturally homogeneous in consonance with the ideas of the Indian National Congress.

(2) As to the financial position of the coming Province, such an aspect of the question depends upon the future constitution in India and the Provinces, and the area accepted for the forming of the new Province is also a factor to count. But relevant suggestions in anticipation of such a constitution as well as the inclusion of the areas may, however, be generally adumbrated if necessary.

(3) Administrative and other considerations regarding the new Province may not supersede the linguistic principle, which is the basis of the entire demand. Within that limit administrative or other consequences may be discussed. For instance, an area linguistically acceptable for inclusion in the new Province should not generally be left out for administrative considerations, as it is assumed that the new Province will be responsible for devising means to afford facilities for administration to all its areas.

(4) How neighbouring Provinces will be affected financially administratively, or otherwise is a question which does not

primarily concern us. But formation of the Oriya Province will help a good deal to give the neighbouring Provinces a more homogenous character to their political administrative as well as financial advantage. This aspect of the question may be discussed incidentally wherever necessary.

(5) As to the inclusion of areas in the new Province our representative will have to be guided by the Resolution No. 8, on the subject, of this Committee, adopted at its sitting on 1-8-31 at Balasore, which resolution is as follows :—

That it is the considered opinion of the Utkal Provincial Congress Committee that the following tracts should be included in the future Oriya Province.

- (i) Orissa Division of Bihar and Orissa Province.
- (ii) Ganjam District except Chikacol Taluk.
- (iii) Vizagapatam Agency except Gudem Taluk.
- (iv) Singbhum District and Barabhum and Patkuma and Manbazar Thanas of Manbhum District of Chhotanagpur Division.
- (v) Contai and Jhargram Sub-Division and also Dantan Mohanpur, Marayan Gurh, Kesiadi, Nayagram and Kharagpur Thanas of the Sadar Sub-Division of Midnapore District.
- (vi) Khariar and Phuljhar of Raipur District and Chandrapur-Padmapur and Malkhorda Zamindaries of Bilaspur District.
- (vii) All the 26 Orissa Feudatory States.
- (viii) Bastar, Raigarh, Sarangarh States of C. P.

## Memorandum.

Before I begin the memorandum on the lands to be included in the proposed Province for Orissa or Utkal, let me, in brief indicate the history of the Oriyas as well as the lands which still constitute their natural home. Here I wish to make it clear that in my observations on ancient history, I confine myself to the latest results of authentic research.

The history, as far as it is studied from inscriptional and other authentic records, goes to show that three ancient lands, i. e. Kalinga, Utkala and Odda, with portions of Dakshina Koshala (present South East C. P.) go to, form the original home of the Oriyas. During the life time of the Buddha, i. e. fifth or even sixth Century B. C. Utkala was contiguous to the kingdom of Gaya. Two Utkala merchants carrying merchandise in carts to the markets of Gaya, are reported to have then been converted into the religion of the Buddha. Other Pauranic and traditional legends point to the same geographical position of Utkala. Kalidas describes Raghu to have entered Kalinga from Utkala at the river Kasai near the present town of Midnapore (5th Century A. D.) This shows Utkala had no coast, and between sea and Utkala the Midnapore District intervened. Kalinga was the coastal strip of land from the mouth of the Ganges to the end of the present Ganjam District. This is indicated by the conquest of Kalinga by Asoka the Great (3rd Century B. C.) as well as the extent of the Kalinga Empire of Kharabela (2nd Century B. C.). Tamralipta, the present Tamruk was included in Kalinga, though at times it became independent of Kalinga, and formed itself into a separate sea-coast principality. The Oddas in those ancient times inhabited the Southern Native States of Orissa, and their land included a portion of the C. P. (See Prof. B. C. Mazumdar's Orissa in the makings' Chaps. I & II published 1925).

Towards the end of the 7th Century Kalinga was divided into three parts. Both the Oddas and the Utkalas had by this time descended to the coast, or extended their kingdoms which came to include the coasts of Kalinga. The Kalinga kingdom in its turn extended southwards to the mouth of the Godavari. Thus from the Ganges to the Godavari there lay three Kalingas (1) Utkala (The present Balasore, Midnapore, Singhbhum and other contiguous territories in West Bengal and South Bihar). (2) Kalingodda or Kangoda, at times divided into two kingdoms Dukshina Tosala and Uttara Tosala, named

after the capital Tosali near present Bhubaneswar in the Puri District. This kingdom extended from the Vaitarani in the Balasore District to the Vanshadhara in the South Ganjam. (3) Kalinga (from the Vanshadhara to the Godavari). (Vide Map facing page 49 of Mr. R. D. Benerji's 'History of Orissa' Vol. I published 1930). The inland boundaries of these kingdoms have not yet been definitely fixed by Historians. But the inland country was by the 10th Century A. D. known as the kingdom of Khinjali (R. D. Benerji's 'History of Orissa'). This was again included in a much bigger territory called Jharkhanda for a long time. This Jharkhanda extended from the Manbhum District to the Agency Tracts of Jeypore in the Madras Presidency (Vide Prof. B. C. Mazumdar's 'Orissa in the making' Chap. IV published 1925).

\* From 1038 onwards Orissa became a consolidated independent Hindu Kingdom till 1568 A. D., when it was occupied by Bengal Afghans, and then in 1576 by Akbar the Great. All this time it ordinarily extended from the Ganges to the Godavari and included the present Bastar : Vizag Agency ; portions of Raipur and Bilaspur and the Jashpur State ; the present District of Singbhum, Midnapur ; portions of Burdwan, Bankura and Manbhum ; besides other territories which are not relevant to this memorandum. Bengal and Bihar had been conquered and occupied by the Mahamedans in about 1200 A. D. But this Bengal was East and North Bengal. The present West Bengal now includes a great prosperous tract of the then Orissa kingdom. After 170 years of Moghul occupation of Orissa, the Marhattas came into the field, and in 1751 Nawab Alivardikhan of Bengal ceded by a treaty a portion of Orissa to the Marhattas of Nagpur, reserving to himself the Midnapore portion of it. Most of the Southern portion i. e. the present Madras portion of Orissa, including South Ganjam beyond Tikkali and Vizagapatam had been conquered by the Mussalmans of Golkunda in 1751. The Bengal portion of Orissa i. e. the Midnapore-Dhalbhum portion of Orissa, between the Rupnarayan and Subarnarekha, as it was then called, was included in Clive's Dewani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. About the same time as a result of the Karnatic Wars the English got the Southern portion of Orissa from the Hyderabad Government up to Ichapore, and then gradually extended it over North Ganjam as the independent principalities there had to submit one after another in about 10 years. In 1803, the English took Puri, Cuttack and Balasore Districts from the Marhattas. Sambalpur District, which included the Oriya tracts now under the Raipur and the Bilaspur Districts, still remained in the hands of the Bhonsla Marhattas

of Nagpur up to 1869, by which time it became British land, and remained till 1905 in C. P. In 1905, Lord Curzon's Government brought the District of Sambalpur under Orissa Division of Bengal. But portions that now remain in Raipur and Bilaspur Districts were not then transferred to Orissa. There have been various adjustments of boundary between Balasore and Midnapore as long as Orissa was a part of Bengal.

This, in short, gives a bird's eye view of the political dismemberment of the Oriya lands. It is significant, however to note in this connection that in 1852, Mr. Bailey, the then District Officer of Midnapore, proposed a permanent transfer of the entire Hijli portion of Midnapore to Orissa on account of language difficulty, as well as on account of the fact that unlike other parts of Bengal, major portions of the Contai Sub-Division of Midnapore is, like a major portion of Orissa Division, temporarily settled for 30 years. Even after the separation of Bihar & Orissa from Bengal an attempt was made by the local officials to form South and West Midnapore with Hijli as headquarter into a separate District. In that case the Oriya language in Midnapore might have had a chance of life. But nothing has come out of these attempts.

Transfer of Madras tracts to Orissa has similarly been raised time after time, but in vain. Some amount of effective Oriya influence in centres of Provincial Governments would have directed the deliberations on such proposals quite in other channels towards more just and reasonable decisions.

Then the language question which is mainly the criterion  
 III. The Language of delimiting the boundaries of the Oriya  
 Question. lands, may be a little elaborately discussed.

Without meaning any reflection on our neighbours it may as well be stated here for the information of the Committee (i) Land-grabbing attitude and activities of neighbours that the Oriya interests have not only been neglected by the Government for these 170 years; but the Oriyas who have been perpetually weakened in the neglect have never been thought of by their neighbours as well. I have said in my statement, how during the early British Period, Zamindaris of Orissa were sold in Bengal.

Interested neighbours have moreover been in all responsible posts throughout the period, and it would have been more than human, if they had not desired the land for their own occupation as the intermediary ruling and landowning race for their own benefit as well as the benefit of their children. This fact is mainly responsible for all the trouble that arises regarding

the delimitation of the Oriya lands, and the Committee is to watchfully and wisely deal with this aspect of the question as they proceed in their work.

In this connection, I may be permitted to explain that the unfortunate Oriyas have been trying distinctly from after the great Orissa famine of 1866 to be put together in one administration. But their neighbours have been always unfair to them in this matter. For instance in the seventies of the last Century prominent Bengali Officials of Orissa were supported by prominent men in Bengal to prove that Oriya is not a separate language, but a dialect of Bengalee. But fortunately Oriya was then recognised by Government as a distinct language for courts and schools in Orissa Commissioner's Division. Midnapore and Singbhum were not then thought of, as these districts were not able to counteract the Bengalee influence of Calcutta. Since then Bengalees have been guarding with care the Oriya lands thus accidentally coming as a windfall to them.

In Singbhum, including Dhalbhum, the attempt to make Bengali the school and court language had begun in 1851. The then official remark, quoted in the Singbhum District Gazeteer, says that only a few Bengali Mukhtears were practically the only Bengalis in Singbhum, and therefore, Bengali could not be the school and court language in the area. By 1864, however, the demand of the Bengalees was ultimately granted and since then Dhalbhum had to adopt Bengali.

By 1886 in Oriya lands of Midnapore Bengalee was forced as the language of primary education. Census enumerations were deliberately tampered in an organised manner, and an inferiority complex was inculcated in the helpless people by means of press, platform, literature and ordinary daily dealings, in a manner and to an extent, that people themselves felt timid to make themselves known as Oriyas, for fear of being exposed to ridicule and even to malicious treatment. Astounding as these things are, they are facts bitterly experienced even by the Oriyas of the present Orissa Division less than a generation ago. Recognition in the Calcutta University of Oriya for the present Orissa Division was continually and stoutly opposed by the Senate and the Syndicate of the University upto 1903, when the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal had to intervene in the matter. Of course by using the word 'Bengali' I may not be taken to mean each and every individual in Bengal. That may be sweeping and unfair. What I mean to indicate is to acquaint the Committee with the actual state of things in outlying Oriya areas, so that in ascertaining the real good of the people, they may not be

carried away by the recorded Census figures or even by the apparent influence and opinion of some perverse Oriya individuals resident in some of those areas.

The same applies more or less in all outlying Oriya areas. Memorandum for Ganjam and Vizagapatam areas speaks for (ii) Struggle of those areas. C. P. area is also separately Singbhum. treated in a memorandum. But a word more for Singbhum need be mentioned here. Just after the District was out of Bengal and came to Bihar and Orissa, there began open attempts to throw off the yoke of demoralisation. Singbhum Utkal Sabha was started. In 1916 two Oriya high school—one at Bahadagoda in Dhalbhum and the other at Chakradharpur in Porahat—with many feeder primary schools were begun. An Oriya teacher was demanded for Chaibasa H. E. School, and the authorities had to make provision for one. Representations were made to make Oriya the school and court language, and in 1920 the annual session of the Utkal Union Conference was held at Chakradharpur.

Attempts for setting up Oriya schools are faring badly as the recognised court language has not been Oriya. But the attempts have never been slackened. Singbhum is now included in Utkal Congress in the teeth of opposition from Bihar, as I shall describe presently.

Mr. R. D. Banerji, the most authentic Historian of Orissa, IV. Actual Extent of the Present Oriya Lands. the famous archæologist and numismatist of Mohenjodaro and Harappa fame, and in this the right-hand man of Sir John Marshall, so to say, states :—

“Even now the titles of the majority of Hindu Zamindars of Midnapore prove that they were land-holders and feudatories of the Hindu Kings of Orissa at no distant date. The people of South Western Midnapore are very much like those of Balasore and Mayurbhanj State in manners, customs, language and caste. Towards the West the language of the Orissa gradually merges into that of the aboriginal tribes, who live in the secluded valleys of the Eastern Ghats beginning with Dhalbhum and Singbhum to the North and West Mayurbhanj and ending with the states of Karond, Kanker and Bastar in the Central Provinces”. (‘History of Orissa’ Vol. I. p p. 1 & 2 published by R. Chatterji, Calcutta. 1930).

The same author says a little further (page 3) :—

“Originally the Andhra Country seems to have lain into the South of the Godavari, though the Telugu

language has now crept up Northward along the coast in the Vizagapatam District."

The same author also incidentally remarks :—

"The Ganjam District still continues to form a part of Madras" and "Southern Midnapore is still included in Bengal."

• As to the reclamation and naturalisation of aboriginal tribes by the Oriyas the same author indicates a comprehensive survey and includes the Kolian or Austric tracts of Dhalbhum and Singbhum (This tract should include the jungli areas *i. e.* the Jhargram Sub-Division of Midnapore.) of the ancient Khinjali kingdom, established in the high lands of Orissa extending over the entire Southern portion of Jharkhanda. It is interesting to note here that the present Zamindar of Joypur in Vizagapatam Agency is still known as the Ruler of Jharkhanda. The Raja again is a descendant of the House of the Raja of Puri.

This gives in summary the extent of the entire Oriya land, and that from the pen of a Bengalee Historian whose scholarship in research is unquestioned. His untimely death occurred only last year, and his monumental work, 'History of Orissa', is a posthumous publication, the second volume of which is still in the press.

Prof. Sunitikumar Chatterji of the Calcutta University follows the lines of Sir George Grierson in the main. His (ji) From Linguistic View Point Prof. S. K. Chatterjee. (On Midnapur) linguistic researches in connection with the "Origin and the Development of the Bengali Language" (published by Calcutta University in 2 Vols. 1923) are the results of the best researches yet on the subject. He clearly points out the language of south-west Midnapore to be characteristically Oriya. Though at times he calls this language towards Hooghli side as 'South Western Bengali', he puts the phrase 'South Western Bengali' invariably within inverted commas, and in his discussions exposes characteristics of the language distinctively belonging to Oriya *e. g.* 'Mana' for plurals, and 'U' or 'ru' for ablatives.

Prof. Chatterji who always names the areas in possession of Bengali, does nowhere mention Dhalbhum, not even in (On Dhalbhum) connection with his 'South Western Bengali'. Evidently he does not think of the area in his study of the Bengali language. To any impartial observer the process of Aryan reclamation in Dhalbhum is Oriya, which is still the language of the main Aryanising population

there, as it used to be the sole Aryanising agency till two generations ago.

^ Sir George Grierson is no doubt a great authority on the question of Indian languages. His study, characterisation, and classification of language and dialects are masterly and marvelous. But it must be borne in mind that in the territorial distribution of language in India he could not but have been guided **Prima Faci**, by the Official-Census reports. He was deputed by the Government for linguistic survey of India. And he had to depend upon Local Government Officials, whose reports he has often bodily incorporated in his linguistic survey. In the case of Oriya area of Midnapur, he says, he has incorporated in his survey the report submitted by Mr. Acharya, a Bengali Officer. But fortunately even then the Oriya population of Midnapur appeared in the Census Report to be over  $5\frac{1}{2}$  lakhs. But Dhalbhum had been made to show a very different figure in the Census of 1891. Bengali had been made the sole school and court language in 1886 in Midnapur ; but it had been so made in Dhalbhum so far back as 1864. Sir George Grierson's delimitation of the Oriya areas might have been fair, correct and to the point, had it not been for these disadvantages under which he had undoubtedly to labour.

In spite of these disadvantage Sir George Grierson is clear about the linguistic character of the South-West Midnapur. He says, "The Oriya heart still beats in the language." (On Midnapur) In the Oriya area of Midnapur he includes the entire Contai and Jhargram Sub-Division, a little of the Tamruk Sub-Division contiguous to Contai and parts of Sadar Sub-Divisions upto Kharagpur i. e. the river Haldi (Vide his map defining the Oriya area—'Linguistic Survey of India' Vol. V. Part II). With little minor adjustments this is now the portion of Midnapur claimed to be included in the proposed Oriya Province.

He says that Dhalbhum is Bengali. There is nothing strange in this statement. He could not have said otherwise.

He does not say on whose report the statement (On Dhalbhum) is based. But in all probability the reporting officer was a Bengali gentleman. He quotes a specimen of Bengali of Dhalbhum. But he is silent as to where and under what circumstances he found the specimen to be printed in his book. A cursory inspection of his map of the Oriya land will show that Dhalbhum is a deep unseemly cavity-like gap created in the Oriya area, and there is no explanation either geographical or otherwise for such a gap. The documents of the 19th and the late 18th Centuries presented to the Committee as a

supplement to their memorandum by the Dhalbhum Oriya leave no doubt as to the Oriya character of the Aryan language prevalent there. Other aspects of the question presented in the same memorandum on Singhbhum and Dhalbhum are also conclusive as to the Oriya character of the Dhalbhum area. The name 'Dhal' is distinctively an Oriya family name, and Dhal-Bhum means, land of the 'Dhals'. Any casual inspection into the non-Aryan villages of Dhalbhum will also speak for itself. The fact that all Bengalees in Dhalbhum are required by Government even now to produce certificates of domicile for Government Service, Scholar ships etc., is significant and conclusive as to the Non-Bengali character of Dhalbhum.

In the 'Linguistic Survey' very little discussion appears about Dhalbhum, and the abrupt conclusion that it is Bengali is evidently due to the fact that Sir George Grierson was misled for the various reasons indicated above. For over two generations the language recognised in Courts and Schools in this area has been Bengali. This fact apparently may give any cursory observer the idea that the area is not Oriya. From this appearance must the reality of the situation be carefully dug out, if the Bengali Historian, the late Mr. R. D. Banerjee, and the Bengali Linguist and the Philologist, Prof. Suniti Kumar Chatterji, are not to be absolutely depended upon.

The District of Singhbhum has two other Sub-Divisions beside Dhalbhum. But these two Sub-Divisions are separated from Dhalbhum by two Oriya Native States, Singhbhum. Saraikala and Kharsuan, which form like a broad wedge across the District, showing the geographical area of the Oriya land in those parts to include the entire Singhbhum District as well as West and South Midnapore. But the two remaining British Sub-Divisions of Singhbhum may nevertheless call for some special discussion.

These two Sub-Divisions are the Kolhans and Porahat. The Kolhans is, so to say, the core imbedded in the Porahat Sub-Division which forms an outer ring. Kolhan is thus geographically a natural extension of Orissa Native States, and not a part of any land on the other side of Porahat. Hos are mainly the aboriginal inhabitants of the Kolhans. They are also found in Orissa Native States and are practically non-existent in any other part of India.

About Porahat there is little dispute that it is Oriya. But the Kolhans seem to be claimed by the so-called Hindi-speaking Bihar, on the ground that the land has been for some generations re-naturalised into Hindi. But it is geographically impossible to join the Kolhans to Bihar, retaining Porahat for

Orissa. For the Kolhans Sub-Division is completely surrounded by Porahat Sub-Division and Orissa Native States. It touches no other land. If Bihar should claim any portion of Singbhum, (if not the whole District including Dhalbhum, as it hitherto used to do in the Indian National Congress) it must at least claim both the Porahat and the Kolhans together, on the plea that Hindi has been the recognised school and court language in these areas for over two generations.

(iii) Basis of Claim — Let us examine this claim and test its validity on the Linguistic distribution of lands and people of Northern India :—

Before going into any details about the claims and conditions of the Oriya language in the outlying areas the basis of those claims and conditions should be clearly comprehended.

In olden days (i) Magadhi was the Indo-Aryan language used in Eastern India i. e. in lands now comprising Bihar, (Old Northern Orissa, Bengal and Assam. Its Western neighbour Indian Languages) Bihar was (ii) Ardha-Magadhi (half-Magadhi) just allied to it, used in the present Benares regions. To the West in Mathura, Agra region was used (iii) Sauraseni, which was much different both from Magadhi and Ardha-Magadhi. This difference among other reasons leads Sir George Grierson and many other Orientalists of the West think that Aryans migrated into India in two different groups in periods separated by Centuries from one another.

Linguists agree that by the 11th Century (i) Magadhi branched out into 6 language Viz. Oriya, Bengali, Assamese, (Their Modern Maghi, Bhojpuri and Maithili—the 3 latter now Representatives) in possession of Bihar as spoken folk languages. These six languages are also called Eastern Indo-Aryan Group. (ii) Benaresi, Avadhi (Oudhi) and Chhatisgarhi (of Raipur, Bilaspur of the C. P.) branched out of Ardha-Magadhi. These are at present called Eastern Hindi Group. (iii) Brajabhasa, Rajasthani, Punjabi and other languages came out of Sauraseni and are at present called Western Hindi Group. The Brajabhasa of the 16th Century lent its syntactical structure to Urdu or Mahamedan camp language, from which is coming the present Hindustani as well as literary Hindi of Northern India.

By 1200 A. D. all Northern India including Bihar and Bengal was conquered by the Muslims, who ruled the land since (iv) Behari and) then. Orissa, as has been said, was from 1038 Oriya Languages. to 1568 a powerful Hindu Empire of vast (Speciality of Oriya) dimensions, and developed not only monumental art, but voluminous popular literature. The language was

consequently firmly established from the Godavari to the Ganges. This Oriya also became the reclaiming and Aryanising Agency throughout the entire Jharkhanda of yore, i. e. from Manbhum and Ranchi Districts is Chhotanagpur to beyond Bastar State in C. P.

During the Mughal and Maharatta Rule, language or race question did not arise as they did never force a language in the (Its Progress areas under them as a part of an administrative Retarded in British measure. In fact much of our rich Oriya poetic Rule) literature came from Mahamedam Ganjam. During the English Rule our language and culture have been struggling for existence for more than 170. years for obvious reasons. To devise effective means to end this life and death struggle of the Oriyas is a necessity.

For a long time Bihari languages were being called dialects of Hindusthani only because Hindusthani was the language (Bihari Languages adopted in schools and courts in Bihar. Sir are not Dialects of Hindi) George Grierson, who first enquired into the subject linguistically, has recorded his decided opinion that it is a mistake. He says that Bihari languages have nothing to do with Hindusthani and I have taken my remarks above from Sir George Grierson as well as from Professor Suniti Kumar Chatterji. By these two scholars, among other linguists, I am guided in the remarks that follow:—

Hindi, which now adopted by Bihar, is not its own language. By language is meant here, the language spoken by the people, (Hindi is not and the language which is the real civilising Language of Bihar.) agent in a particular area. According to all linguists Bihar has, as has been said, three languages—Maghi to the South or Chhotanagpur side, Bhojpuri to the West or U. P. side, and Maithili to the east in Tirhut or Bengal side.

Oriya in Singbhum is contiguous to Maghi. All these three Bihari languages are as much branches of the Magadhi or (Oriya allied to Eastern-Indo-Aryan stock, as Oriya, Bengali Bihari Languages.) and Assamese. Sir George Grierson says that “Bihari language has so much in common with them (Oriya, Bengalee, Assamese) in its inflexional system that it would almost be possible to make one grammar for all the four languages” (Linguistic Survey of India Vol. V Part II page 1). Further on at Page 3, the same author finds out that the two Bihari dialects Maghi and Maithili are much more allied to Oriya etc. than even to Bhojpuri on account of letter's association with Eastern Hindi.

Hindi, as it is at present understood, is mostly an artificially sanscritised language made out of Urdu or Mahamedan camp (Characteristics of Hindi.) This Urdu, as has been indicated, was built on the basis of the Brajabhasha or the language of Agra and Mathura of the 16th Century. Hindi has thus an element of a large Semiti vocabulary, and its structural or syntactical substratum is thus derived neither from the Maghadhi group, of which Oriya, and Maghi are members, nor even from the Eastern Hindi including Oudhi and Benaresi. Maghi could not develop a literature for itself through long Centuries, as also other Bihari languages. Hence Bihar adopted Urdu, her official language during the long adopted Hindi) Mohamedan Rule. Linguistically Hindi is a foreign language to the Bihari peasant, and it has so remained all along. Any man can go to a Bihar village any day to see what the language there is. The villager never talks Hindi, nor can he understand the Hindi of schools and books. Educated men talk Hindi to outsiders, but among themselves they invariably talk their own language. Even at Gaya an Oriya can easily feel at home among his Maghi-speaking brothers, and (Oriya and Maghi vice versa, for Maghi and Oriya are mostly like quite alike.) each other. That some educated people in Bihar read, write, and talk Hindi (or even Urdu, for many Bihari educated men still use Urdu and write in Persian script) does not mean that the language has been naturalised, or can ever be easily naturalised among the mass. To call Maghi or any other Bihari language a dialect of Hindi still, would simply be tantamount to a linguistic nonsense.

Sir George Grierson distinctly finds entire Singbhum, even with a big area in the Jashpur State of the Ranchi District, is (Singbhum is much more Oriya than Maghi. And linguistically there should be little doubt as to entire Oriya.) Singbhum being included in Orissa. But I may go so far as to suggest that, if necessity arises, any portion of Chhotanagpur (But Maghi area under Maghi influence might be well added to can, if necessary, the future Oriya Province. For Oriya in linguistically all allied to Maghi having developed no literature, Oriya will be a much more congenial agency of educating and civilising the mass than Hindi, which is practically a foreign language to them.) come to Orissa easily)

It may be interesting to note in this connection that, inspite of all advantages of the Centre of the Provincial Government (Hindi medium in and much better local bodies, Districts in Bihar Bihar retards and Chhotanagpur, with Hindi as medium, are Primary Education) always invariably much behind the Districts of Orissa in population at schools, and consequently in primary

education. (Vide Report of the Progress of Education in Bihar and Orissa 1926-27 published by the Government).

Chhotanagpur (except Singbhum) again is an area which is neither Bihar, nor Orissa. If Bihar and Orissa become two separate Provinces, then surely the distribution of Chhotanagpur should be independently considered. Biharis cannot all at once jump to claim the area on the plea that Hindi should be forced there, as in Bihar, as the language of courts and schools.

Hindi is besides, going to be the common second language of India on account of communal and other considerations. It (Hindi is going to be the Second Language for all India.) will probably have a place side by side with the English. In that case, the people talking Oriya will have as much advantage of it, as those talking any other language of the Magadhi group. Hindi has thus, no special claim for being the medium of primary education in any land in the Eastern India. Here it only need be hinted that the slice of Manbhum claimed to be included in the Oriya lands naturally goes with Singbhum, and may not specially be discussed.

Here it may not be irrelevant to refer to one incident in connection with the Congress Organisations regarding Singbhum, including Dhalbhum. Bengal Provincial (v) Congress Decision. Congress Committee has never been known to claim any part of the Singbhum District for itself. But it has claimed Surma Valley in Assam, and Surma Valley, therefore, including Sylhet, is now in Bengal Congress. But Bihar disputes the claims of Orissa all along on the plea that Hindi, which is the National language according to Congress, is the recognised school and court vernacular in two Sub-Divisions of Singbhum. This dispute came to head in 1921, when all India Congress Committee set up an arbitration of three gentlemen including Babu Rajendra Prasad, the Congress leader of Bihar. The Committee met in Singbhum and decided to issue a reply postcard to each and every Congress Member in the District. The number of Congress members was then a little below 8000. Post-cards were issued accordingly to each and every Congress Member and about 5000 replies were received in the District Congress Office. Of this 5000, only 332 were in favour of affiliation with Bihar—the rest being in favour of Utkal. But in 1924 reference having been again made to the All India Congress Committee, Bihar reluctantly agreed that all the Singbhum District except Jamshedpur area may go to Utkal. Since then Jamshedpur Congree Members themselves have

decided to remain under the Utkal Provincial Congress Committee.

In this connection I may refer to the areas claimed in Raipur and Bilaspur Districts of C. P. and the three States (vi.) C. P. Area Raigarh, Saranggarh and Bastar. The argument applied to those tracts, except perhaps Bastar, which is not disputed, is similar to that applied to Singbhum. There the Chhatisgarhi language disputes the claims of Oriya as a language of primary education or as a reclaiming agency. Chhatisgarhi is linguistically a dialect of Eastern and not Western Hindi. This Chhatisgarhi, besides, owes for a great influence both to Maghi and particularly to Oriya. Hindi is practically as artificial to this area as even to Gaya which is in possession of Maghi. Oriya is the predominant civilising agency and vehicle of culture in those areas. Bastar State has, on linguistic, racial and cultural grounds, been undisputedly allotted to Utkal by the Indian National Congress.

All the foregoing arguments, as well as argument that follow, apply, **Mutatis Mutandis** to the Oriya area of Ganjam (vii.) Madras Area and Vizagapatam District of the Madras Presidency. I have only incidentally referred to those areas. I have refrained from a detailed discussion thereof, not only because the particular memorandum on the area is full of relevant informations and discussions, but whatever the Madras Government might have been made to say on occasions, our neighbours their have come to agree to the principles of delimitation, as well as the justice and validity of the Oriya claim. Undisputedly the Oriyas have lost much prosperous area on that coast. There is no use now in pinning for the Vizagapatam Harbour or our historic Viceroyalty of Rajamahendry, because these lands were Oriya some three hundred years ago. [Vide. R. D. Banerjee's History of Orissa Vol. 1. P. 3—quoted above IV (i)]—The actual delimitation there now cannot but generally follow the findings of Sir George Grierson with but minor adjustments to be made on enquiry into local conditions.

Over and above what I have stated in my statement, I may here be permitted to suggest some further discussions on the (viii) Census Census figures as they appear. I had the honour to move a resolution on the subject of the Oriya Province in the Legislative Assembly, 8th February, 1927. There I said :—

“I may here inform the House that the Oriyas have been under several administrations in several tracts, and practically in each of the tracts an Intermediary

Ruling Race with vested interests has been created, and the Bengal Government puts it clearly that the Census Supervisors and Enumerators are afraid to record people as Oriya-speaking because they fear if they put it like that, the tract will be transferred to Orissa. It is there in the letter which was written to the Bengal Government and came to the Government of India in 1922. Actually the Superintendent of Census at a meeting of Enumerators and Supervisors heard it remarked by one of them that they were not willing to record people as Oriya speaking even though they had evidence to that effect."

Then I quoted a passage as the Superintendent heard it. The Singbhum Oriya memorandum has quoted many such instances from the Census Operations of 1931. But this much I may note that after about two Centuries of British Rule even the Census Supervisors and Enumerators in an Oriya area have not been Oriyas as such.

A more important aspect of the Census Enumeration is also worthy of notice here. In the out-lying areas of (Linguistic Classification wrong from the beginning.) Midnapore, Dhalbhum, Singbhum and those of C. P. where either Bengali or Hindi has been the sole recognised school and court language for generations. So also Telugu was the court and school language in Ganjam till a generation ago. Enumerators and Supervisors do not enter into the house to talk to people and linguistically to distinguish their language for the purpose of their own Census Records. Presumably they ask the men who are educated in recognised Vernacular of the land, and their statements go unchallenged for all the members of their families, as well as their dependants. This is what usually happens, and in fixing the boundary of the Oriya lands the Census figures can in no way be depended upon, specially in a land where Oriya is neither the language of primary education nor is the recognised Court Vernacular of the land.

Under such circumstances, I suggest that Historians like the late Mr. R. D. Banerji as well as Linguists like Prof. (ix) Constructive Chatterji should be mainly depended upon, Suggestions. particularly with regard to the areas disputed by Bengal, for these two scholars, eminent as they are, are both of them Bengalis and could not have been guilty of any Oriya leanings or bias. In other areas consideration on the lines adopted by Sir George Grierson, in addition, as already suggested in case of Madras areas, will generally lead to fair findings.

For Sir George Grierson is generally correct except for the fact that he had to depend upon the Census figures and Government Officials in particular localities for his informations. And all officials must now have been as impartial in their report as they might be expected to be. With this little margin his delimitation may be taken generally to be authentic, though even then, it must not be supposed to be in favour of Oriya side.

These Historians and Linguists may well be taken as authorities generally for fixing the boundary in the tracts (x) Backward called backward. Ganjam Agency as well as Tracts. Joypur in Vizagapatam Agency, as set forth in the resolution attached, are Oriya. So also are the small areas claimed in the Central Provinces and the entire District of Singbhum with a slice of Manbhum and the Jhargram Sub-Division of Midnapore. The linguistic basis and its advantages and disadvantages to the mass of these areas have been fully indicated in the fore-going observations.

Here I particularly refer to those people whose spoken language has not been cannot possibly be linked to any culture (Principles of indigenous to them. They are also called Reclamation.) aborigines. If they are to be naturalised they should be made to adopt the language and culture of their environment. They must feel at home with the language in which their primary education should be conducted. One language at school and another at home in the environment, is an absurd theory for reclaiming and naturalising the aboriginal people.

I may here draw the attention of the Committee to the view on the subject expressed by a few aboriginal gentlemen, (Evidence of some who are coming up for public life. I have of Aborigines not no desire to hurt or to cast even the slightest Representative.) reflection on those gentlemen when I feel compelled to observe that they have not been able to see the vision of their personal prospects on the wide canvas and the long perspective of the weal of their Community. I may add, I say this from long personal knowledge. I am confident there will be no difficulty to value such statements for what they are worth instead of taking them for representative opinions influenced by a real race consciousness. Real interest of the race, however, will not be far to seek on a little consideration of details on the lines I have indicated.

In this connection a reference may be made to the caste, customs and racial tradition still distinctively Oriya an supple-

(xi) Considerations supplementary to the Linguistic. For instance, the Kaibartas and Rajus of Midnapore are found nowhere in Bengal. They are Oriya Khandayats and Chasas in family name, customs and manners. The Kaibartas (called Mahisyas from 1901) are the descendants of the officials of the ancient Naval Force of Orissia, who conquered Midnapore in 12th Century and guarded the piracy of the coast since then. The Rajus are the ordinary members of the same Naval Force. The descendants of the Orissa militia are known in the same order as Khandayats and Chasas with the same family names, which still indicate positions in the army and the navy. Marital and other relations as well as imigration from South Orissa to Midnapur and vice yersa, among these castes were going on even during the early period. The Brahmans, Karans, and such other castes of Midnapur are still socially related in Balasore, Cuttack and Puri. The situation in Dhalbhum and Singbhum is practically the same, and the Singbhum Memorandum gives many more instances of social customs, which hold good in the Oriya area of Midnapur. The fact that Oriya Purans and other religious books printed and published in Bengali character, but in Oriya language, by the Nihar Press, Contai, and some other presses in Midnapur District, purchased and used extensively by the people of Midnapore and Dhalbhum is also significant.

Areas claimed in Raipur and Bilaspur District and Raigarh and Saranggarh States of C. P. practically go with Sambapur, area in social customs and marital relations. Ganjam and Vizagapatam areas need not be discussed in this connection, for there these costoms and relations are so pronounced as not to present any great difficulty to any casual investigator. Baster State goes with Vizagapatam Agency and Kalahandi State of Orissa.

As to the Ethnic basis in India, there is no criterion to judge, ethnically even Aryan Oriyas are mostly, if not entirely Dravidian and Austric with a little mixture of Mongol from North East. The same is mainly the Ethnic basis of the population of Bengal, Bihar and C. P. Hence that aspect of the question should be left out of consideration in the present subject.

A minority which cannot be absorbed is, so to say, a curse to the administration. It has been an international problem in the Governments of the world. What to speak of India and her Provinces? Oriya has a history and traditional culture, of which any race may be proud. Therefore as minority he cannot be easily absorbed, and lose his

V. Administration.  
 (i) Creating Strong Minorities—An Administrative Blunder.

identity in the majority. In fact he has not been absorbed, even in the Aryan Bihar, Bengal and the Central Provinces—not to speak of the Dravidian Madras, in 170 years or more. In the days that are coming of warring demand of rights, Oriya minorities will grow more and more disadvantageous and irksome to all administrations, wherever they may be so placed. The majority will be aggressive, and the minority will go on defending itself, till, perchance, a balance is reached, nobody knows when. Even in areas like Midnapore, where the Oriyas, might appear to have been to an extent ruled under strong interested influences, time is not far for the coming trouble to be created by the same Oriyas as minority. A minority interest is always communal. Bengal has already enough of her communal problems to solve, and a fresh one is not desirable. Long ruled Oriyas are everywhere coming up to their own position and stature. Our neighbours may not forget this fact.

Let me give an illustration from home. Only six years ago some Oriya public men waited in deputation on Sir Henry Wheeler, the then Governor of Bihar and Orissa, during his visit to Puri, and requested him to appoint an Oriya Minister—"a third Minister," they said, and not a Member of the Executive Council. His Excellency must have been amused at this preposterous request, for it sought to cut at the very root of the Reform Administration in Bihar and Orissa. Under the Reformed Government, the Governor is bound to appoint ministers from the majority party in the Local Legislature. But morbid minority interests care for no principles of Administration. Narrow self-interest may not be ideal, but it is natural and inevitable. It should not be allowed to grow. Hence minorities, like those formed by the Oriyas, should be avoided as a blunder in the policy of administration. Otherwise such minorities will eat into its principles, as well as details.

If a homogenous Oriya Province is formed without strong minorities within its borders, the foremost advantage that attracts the eye is the convenient transfer of officers from one end of the Province to the other. This will be economic, and will give a living and active character to the entire administration. As a glaring instance, want of this convenience is sorely felt in the present Madras administration. For instance, a fresh Tamil Andhra or Canarese Munsif coming to Aska in Ghumsur is not only money wasted, but a real administrative injustice done to the people of Ghumsur which is Oriya land.

Orissa being a homogenous Province, its administration will afford opportunities to the sons of the soil of conducting and

(b) Co-operation of the indigenous people. serving their own administration—thus basing the Government in any case on the most natural co-operation of the people governed. Otherwise vested interests are more or less inevitable, and these vested interests are not only in danger of exploiting the people and debasing and demoralising them, but are a real drag on the efficient Government of the land. This broad principle covers details of administrative convenience which it is needless to describe. The condition of the Oriyas in connection with administration particularly in outlying areas, may, however, be investigated to afford illustrations on the point. Even in the Orissan Division they are many and vital.

In law courts of Orissa the common Orissan institution or primogeniture has often to struggle against odds. Some estates (iii) Instances of Bad Administration which lost this custom in Calcutta High Court are now split up into shreds of no importance—meaning the ruin of old aristocratic families. **Jyesthansa** (i. e. giving to the eldest brother a little more in share than to each of the other brothers) is a traditional custom in Orissa. This is never recognised in courts of Bengal, Bihar, Madras or C. P. and consequently is responsible for endless litigation in partition. Younger brothers and sisters's sons are generally adopted as sons in Orissa. But our courts can never be made to agree to such adoption, and many homes have been ruined in consequence.

Volumes can be written on language difficulty giving rise to bad administration of justice. For instance **Badi** means either a stick or a garden in Oriya. In Bengali it means a home. How such things can vitiate the administration of criminal justice as well as police work may be better imagined than described.

Settlement operations and land revenue administration, conducted by alien people, who do not understand the local customs and usages and have no innate sympathy with them, need not be mentioned.

Geographical convenience including the convenience of communication may also be taken into account. Kharagpur (iv) Geographical. is the centre of B. N. Ry., from where two of its main lines—one to Bombay upto Nagpur, and the other to Madras upto Waltair Branch out and for more than three-fourths of their distance travel in the Oriya lands. The inclusion of the Midnapore portion upto Kharagpur will undoubtedly be advantageous to the administration of B. N. Ry. as well as to the people for whom primarily the B. N. Ry. is meant.

The Vizagapatam harbour, which will have to develop and drain the Oriya lands to the advantages either of Andhra or of Madras Province has been inevitable. But the advantages of Jamshedpur which is built upon the natural resources of the Oriya land, should be taken full advantage of in the proposed Oriya Province. The new Province had a long past in maritime activities, and are long advantages of coastal shipping and ports will have to be developed at any cost. If practicable the Subarnarekha on which stands Jamshedpur, may have to be dredged to open out into a port at its mouth as of old, or the port at the mouths of Dhamra may not be very far from the Subarnarekha or Jamshedpur for that matter. Steel of Jamshedpur may thus be used in future for ship-building in coasts of Orissa, if anywhere it is so used at all. To make Orissa into a Province and to deplete her natural resources for the perpetual advantages of other Provinces cannot be contemplated.

In this connection it may be incidentally mentioned that ancient Orissa had an Empire over-seas. The people of Orissa had not only Colonies in Burma, further India, and the Oceanic Islands, but the late Mr. R. D. Banerji finds evidence to conclude that the Oriya merchants and missionaries carried their art and culture even to the lands of Peru, Mexico and built up the old Maya Civilisation in Central America (Banerji's 'History of Orissa' Chap. VII).

Generation of dismemberment and bad and unsympathetic administration have ruined our finances. Our national wealth, which consists in vast national resources and skilled labour as well as organised village industry and artisan guild, has never been attended to. Our resources lie dormant. Our labourers who built up the monumental works of art and architecture and a vast over-sea trade and empire, are now plucking, curing and sieving tea leaves in the Assam tea-gardens. All these await revival with an out-look befitting the task.

We demand a Province of our own greatly because of this misery, which is mainly financial. For, otherwise, had the Oriyas been financially well up, and consequently their land and its administration, whatever it is today, been overflowing with finances, their demand for a separate Province would lose half the grounds on which it stands. Oriyas demand a separate Province not because they have more than enough finance, which they grudge to share with their neighbours—, but just because their finances are continually going to ruin out of neglect, the effects of which must be counteracted, the

sooner the better. For it is reasonably apprehended that if this process of hap-hazard administration of the Oriya lands is allowed to continue, their financial position will worsen day by day, to end in course of time in the utter collapse of the race.

Keeping in view this basic aspect of the question I proceed to offer some suggestive remarks on the financial aspect of the proposed Province which may appear to be immediately practical.

The present financial position of the proposed Oriya Province can neither be exactly ascertained nor criticised, nor (ii) Not Essential. is it very essential for the purposes of forming the Province. Though linguistic and cultural basis was never contemplated in forming a Province in the past under the British Raj, Provinces have, nevertheless, been formed. Often they have been begun even with a financial deficit. The formation of Bihar and Orissa is a good instance on the point.

The present finances of the proposed Oriya Province have been in the past ascertained with all possible guess work and (iii) Province may approximation, and within small margins pay its way. either this way or that it has been found even by the Attlee Committee of the Simon Commission that the new Province may pay its way.

But this is not enough. The main problem is future development, for which the Central Government ought to take (iv) Future the responsibility of fostering the Province for Development. some years in the beginning. That the rich and far-flung Province of Orissa has been reduced to this state, is not due to the fault of the Oriya people. It is due to the neglect both of Central and Provincial Governments, and it is proper that Government should help the Province in its inceptional developments. If need be—and there will be need for it—facilities will have to be afforded for productive and even apparently non-productive loans for nation building purposes to this proposed new Province, as to many other existing Provinces.

There are other considerations which are more essential. (v) Exact Calcu- The coming constitution is not yet a fact. lation not possible. We do not know the financial arrangements (a) Depends on between the Federal, Central and Local Future Constitution Governments. Any decision on the subject at present is premature, if not irrelevant.

Boundaries of the Oriya Province have not been fixed, and it is not practicable to calculate the finances of the proposed Province. To include or exclude any (b) Boundaries. area for financial considerations alone is not only undesirable, but is against the very principle on which Oriyas demand their own Province.

We base our calculations on self determination and to adjust our expenditures to our revenues, which are proposed (c) Scale of Expenditure. to expand on very natural and reasonable lines for the building up of the race.

Difficulties have grown up for a long time in all directions, and in my opinion a complete over-hauling of the system of (vi) Certain Changes Suggested. taxation, particularly, for instance, that of (a) In Income. tenure, and system of taxing, land may be immediately required. Orissan system of tenancy based on customs peculiar to Orissa as well as origin and conditions of ownership and other rights regarding land have never engaged the serious attention of any ruler or legislature, and every lawyer and jurist knows that the Orissa Tenancy Act is one of the shabbiest pieces of legislation ever enacted, as I have said in my statement. The settlements of land revenue consequently have proceeded on wrong lines and principles, as indicated, so that the poor pays unreasonably, but with no adequate profit to the State. These and like problems can only be successfully tackled by a provincial Government of the Oriyas run by the Oriyas themselves. But I am afraid this is not the occasion to enter into any detail in these matters. This much, however, I may indicate, by-the-bye, that measures like these may not only work for an expansion of revenue without adding unreasonable burden to the people, but will in themselves go a great way towards building up of the race.

On the expenditure side, too, the outlook may likewise (b) In Expenditure. change. The present Village Self-Government Act, for instance, may be suitable modified to relieve the State of much of the little details of the work of many of the departments e. g. Police, Administration of Justice, Health and Education.

The Province of Orissa will contain Indian States, which extend over the major portion of its area. These Indian States (vii) States and Financial Adjustment. are almost surrounded by areas which will come under the direct Government of the Province. It is expected that some relations particularly financial, may subsist between these two kinds of areas. For instance even today the Bihar Government, as the agent of the

Government of India, has substantial relations with these States, and the Provincial Governments may very probably be required to financially co-operate with each other in matters, particularly, of education, health and public works. Trade relations, too, may require some adjustments. The limited power of some States in administering justice in many cases may also require other adjustments. For even now they use the Deputy-Commissioner of Angul as well as the Political Agent as their Appealing Courts.

The Province will include large tracts hitherto designated as scheduled or backward areas. Whether these areas will be considered backward is to be decided, or some portions thereof may be so treated. In that case whether the baby province will all at once be saddled with the cost of developing these areas, or the Central Government will render financial assistance and if so, to what extent, are questions to be decided.

Last but not the least, is the consideration as to what the Provincial Government will be in its number, pay, pension, including the legislature and the expenditure thereon.

In the circumstances it is useless to enter into any financial calculations of the new Province. Even a statement of the present probable revenue and expenditure will be no indication as to what the financial position will be immediately after the new Province is formed.

Orissa for about six long Centuries was something like an Imperial Power of an extensive character before it fell on account of the shrewd machinations of the Moghul Emperor Akbar the great. I have already referred to the fact that for long Centuries she had her powerful army and navy, and not only held her own against her powerful neighbours viz :—Gour (the present East and North Bengal), Bahamini (the North Eastern prtion of the present Nizam's Dominion and thereabouts) and the kingdom of Vijayanagram (the great Hindu kingdom towards the South of the Krishna River), but on various occasions entered into the very hearts of these kingdoms. In the words of Sir William Hunter "the study peasant militia of Orissa carried their successful arms into the very heart of Bengal (then East and North Bengal, for the South and West of Bengal was always included in Orissa and so has remained mainly Hindu even now) even during the palmy days of the Moghul Empire." It has already been referred to in another connection that the late Mr. Rakhaldas Banerji, in his 'History of Orissa' finds data to prove that Orissa had in ancient times an over-sea empire in

Burma, Further India, and Pacific Islands, through which the Orissan art and culture, travelled to the new world, and formed the basis of the colossal architectural monuments of the ancient Peru, Mexico and Maya Lands. Not only this, Orissa peasant was throughout happy, contented and progressive ; and besides there was surplus money in the State. Art and literature flourished, as they did perhaps in few other places or provinces of India, for the momental public works and the works of art still found all over the land speak well for themselves.

This was Orissa, which has been reduced to the present state on account of long neglect both by Central and Local Governments. Her wailings have so long gone in vain. And if she is again allowed to stand on her own legs as a Province, if may well be hoped that in course of time she may again come to her glory and grandeur as a proud unit in the coming Indian Federation.

P. O. Sakhigopal,  
 (Dist. Puri—Orissa) }  
*The 28th November, 1931.* }

Sd. NILAKANTHA DAS.

## Supplementary Memorandum.

In my Statement and Memorandum already submitted on the proposed Oriya Province I confined myself mainly to principles. As a representative of the Utkal Congress Organisation I did not consider myself called upon to enter into keen controversies regarding the exact border line of the proposed Province. But nevertheless I indicated the line on which matters may be approached so that the lands claimed by the Utkal Congress Committee, may be included in the proposed Province. On the Andhra border particularly, rightly or wrongly, I was under the impression that Congress leaders of the Andhra country had no objection to the principles I indicated. In fact, in my personal conversations with some of them I found they were always amenable to those principles. I almost expected a reasonably amicable settlement of the boundary on the Andhra side to be put before the Committee as an agreed solution of the problem.

But almost a surprise has been sprung on me by a memorandum submitted to you by some Andhra leaders (including Congress leaders like Messrs. Pattabhai Sitaramaya and Nageswar Rao) on behalf of the Andhra Mahasabha.

The memorandum has been published in the press. It demands lands having upto 80% Oriya population to be excluded from the Oriya Province and retained under Madras. It also demands all the Savars and Kadhas to be allowed to be reclaimed by the Andhras. In their demand they have proposed that the Rusikulya Canal System should be divided between two Provinces to give effect to their proposed distributions of lands and peoples. This really amounts to say that practically the reservoir alone should remain in the proposed Oriya Province, whereas almost all the irrigating canals and branches of the system should be given to the Madras Presidency. Such proposals bear not even a face value and I believe that the Committee do not require any criticism of proposals like these. But I feel this creates an occasion for me to state a little more clearly the principle of delimitation on the Madras side.

Our Andhra friends in their memorandums have used the phrase "**Status quo Anti**" as a very convenient way of avoiding argument. But what is the real "**Status quo Anti**" in this case? The British Government will never refuse to agree that they did not form Provinces according to any definite principles. Circumstances of annexation accidentally made our Provinces as they are. It is a matter of accident that

Oriyas have been divided in four Provinces. If "**Status quo Anti**" is to be the guiding principle then the Committee should just pass over the British period and should fix the Oriya boundary just where it was at the end of the first half of the eighteenth Century. I am afraid in that case our Andhra brothers will have to learn to their dismay that the Oriya Viceroyalty of Rajmundry, not to speak of Vizagapatam plains alone, will be included in the proposed Oriya Province. The famous Historian Mr. R. D. Banerjee has unmistakably stated it in his recently published "History of Orissa" from which I have already quoted some relevant passages in my Memorandum.

Phrases like "**Status quo Anti**" therefore, are no argument to cover a land grabbing propensity giving rise to a reprehensible sort of territorial communalism. I am sorry for these harsh remarks on the statement of my Andhra friends. But in no other way can statements like theirs be characterised.

The real guiding principle of delimitation of the Oriya Province on that side however lies deeper. In my statement I had made but a passing reference to the cult of Jagannath which is the living legacy of the land to be formed into a Province—call it either Orissa, or Utkal or even Kalinga for that matter. This ancient and historic land with a vast fleet and mercantile marine, with an over-sea empire, and a vast sphere of influence across the Ocean commanded a unique position between Northern and Southern India and was responsible for the only cosmopolitan cult. I mean the cult of Jagannath in the caste ridden Hindu world of India. Jagannath was originally a Savar God worshipped as the Budha. The cast Hindus attacked it both from the South and the North. Jagannath thereafter was clothed with the attributes of Vishnu, but in essence the Buddhist spirit remained unchanged. Budha became thus an incarnation of Vishnu and the proudest Brahmin had to bow his head to this Savar God where even today Jagannath stands as the God not of Hindus alone but of humanity, and the Pandits and the Parilahs look upon each other as brothers in this common temple of worship. Neither the Andhras nor the upcountry Hindus from Bihar of the bigoted Brahmins from Bengal have been yet able to emulate the spirit of this faith, not to speak of this practice. Neither the Savars nor the Kandhas nor any other like people for that matter will find a more congenial home among the Andhras or elsewhere. Neglected as it is, the culture of the Oriyas still awaits its better days in India and even today the cosmopolitan character of the Oriya mass—the Brahmin and all alike—is an outstanding factor to count and if the Oriya Province is properly formed its contribution to the Indian Nationalism will not only be immense but tangible.

Many people, even castes on our borders have been, in the past cruelly treated. Many like the Sista Karans of Chicacole have been recorded in the Census as Andhras but it does not matter. They have not forgotten the cosmopolitan culture of their father. Though they might have been recorded in the Census as Andhras they have never yet imbibed the Andhra hatred for untouchables or the Andhra sense of Brahmin and non-Brahmin. This is the main fact which should particularly guide the Committee in their delimitation of the provincial boundaries of the Oriya Lands.

Our Andhra friends are willing to take a substantial Oriya minority, I do not know with what grace or foresight. But if any province is required to naturalise substantial minorities on the border lands the Oriyas should be considered the foremost as historically adoptable to such a situation. For the last 170 years Oriyas lie neglected and the English Government has had no occasion yet to test their capacity as an agency of reclamation and naturalisation. I hope this may not prejudice the Committee against the unique and historic culture and the capacity of the new neglected Oriya Race. The Committee also may bear in mind that our neighbours—rather our intermediary rulers, if I may use the phrase—have been and are yet more favourably circumstanced to show of things which may not be real.

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Pro-Chancellor  
Utkal University.

25th November 1955.  
Camp — New Capital  
Bhubaneswar.

To

**Sri B. G. Kher,**  
The Chairman, Official language Commission,  
Government of India.

Dear Sir,

Yesterday, i. e., on 24-11-55, I gave evidence before you. In continuation of that I beg to send the following supplementary note for the information of you and your commission.

If a national literature in Hindi as it is used today be the objective of the Union, many, if not all of the Regional languages, will in course of time come to the position of Maithili and Avadhi in present Hindi, or the language is of the Scotland and wales in Great Britain. Russia is a federation still its unitary tendency has made other languages in the federation including even semitic and Turkey languages—not worth much in World's literature.

The present idea is, in India to give full scope to the Regional languages as well as their literature. To avoid as far as possible, all conflicts and misunderstanding therefore, the following points should be considered carefully.

1. The Hindi as the language of the Union should be exactly like the mother tongue of as few people in India as possible. I mean it should be as far as possible Sanskritised with words and expressions of purely Sanskritic etimological origine, so that every one in India conversent with Sanskrit or Sanskritic languages can make it his own.

2. All words of common use taken from foreign language, e. g. Bench, Table, Lantern, or technical words should either be taken as such or if translated should be strictly according to Sanskritic etimology. No Hindi Prakrit form as such will be allowed in such renderings.

3. As I have said, from the present Khadiboli Hindi, all the gender variations, both in verbs and nouns, as well as the Passive form in, No should be discarded. The script should be Deyanagari in all the Regional languages, as it has been in

Marhatta script moreover, Devanagari, though it is, should be so remodelled as to be usefully and artistically adoptable to a simple key-board of the Type writer, as well as to the breadth of fount in print.

4. In other regions the Hindi language should be taught from Matriculation up words and in such teaching, no particular stress will be given in our Regional Universities for the promotion and progress of Hindi literature. This should be the function of the Universities where Hindi is the medium of instruction.

5. In regions, where Hindi is not the school or Court language literature should be encouraged only in the Regional languages. Scope should be given for translation into Hindi and vice-versa.

6. Neither in Schools, nor in Colleges in all such region should Hindi be made the medium of instruction, but in all such Schools and Colleges, Hindi language should be a compulsory subject.

7. Sanskrit with its grammar should be taught throughout India from Matriculation upwards compulsory. Higher Sanskrit studies should be made compulsory in all Collegiate courses. Post graduate studies and Research in higher Sanskrit courses should be freely encouraged throughout India.

8. In High Court, all business will be conducted in Regional languages and there should be arrangements for translations into Hindi as required. Law reports will be published in Hindi and both in Hindi and Regional languages where necessary.

9. The business of the Supreme Court will be conducted in Hindi. There should be arrangements for translating the required documents into Regional languages (Now, the business in Court is being conducted in English. This will be gradually replaced and the time taken for complete replacement may be 25 years from 1950).

10. The business of the state Legislative Assemblies should be conducted in Regional languages with arrangement for translation into Hindi and the business of the Parliament should be conducted in Hindi except speeches of M.P's in the House, which may be made in the Regional language of a particular member. The proceedings of the Houses should be kept and published in Hindi.

Yours sincerely;  
Sd. Nilakantha Das.