

128  
Bombay, January 14, 1966.

From: Shri G.V. Chitnis,  
Member, ESIS Review Committee.

RECEIVED  
250 17/1/66  
Replied.....  
one

Dear Shri Wadhawan,

While going through my papers I find that our amendment on page 15 of Chapter XV (Organisational Set-up) remained to be raised at our last meeting. Since it is a bit important I am putting it before you.

On the page referred to above the Draft reads:

" This single <sup>argument</sup> ~~organisation~~ should, in our opinion, suffice to require a thorough overhauling of the staffing pattern at the headquarters which should be more Officer-Oriented in keeping with modern thinking on administrative set-up."

Now the experience of the introduction of this "Office Orientation" is unfortunately not very happy. According to a Report, the new Scheme of "Office Orientation" in the Organisation of the Central Government Secretariat in New Delhi is likely to result in reduction of staff strength by over one-third. The Federation of Central Secretariat Employees has estimated that 20,000 out of 55,000 employees will be rendered "surplus."

The new scheme has already been enforced in the Department of ~~Workers~~ of the Ministry of Works & Housing resulting in <sup>rendering</sup> surplus 20 out of 21 assistants and 5 out of 9 lower division clerks.

According to the Federation such experiments had been tried many times in the past without any success since, the schemes could never tackle the basic cause of red tape and the enormous delay in decision-making.

The Federation has held the Scheme as irrational and has launched an agitation against its introduction. Accordingly a demonstration is reported to have been organised outside the residence of the Union Home Minister in the first week of this month.

Since it can never be the <sup>intention</sup> ~~desire~~ of the Committee that its recommendation should bring retrenchment to the staff of the Corporation, a categorical statement to that effect is necessary in the body of the Report.

I would therefore suggest that after the sentence referred to above we add

" This, however, should be undertaken without resorting to retrenchment of the existing staff."

P.T.O.

128  
47  
Bombay, January 27, 1966.

To

The Secretary,  
A.I.T.U.C.,  
NEW DELHI.

Dear Comrade,

200,000 textile workers of Bombay City have decided to go on an indefinite General Strike from February 28th 1966 to win their vital and urgent demands.

The decision was taken at a mammoth rally of workers yesterday organised by the Mumbai Girani Kamgar Union, at Purandare Stadium, Naigaon. The rally was presided over by Com. S.A. Dange, President of the Union.

Previous to this, the Managing Committee of the Union met on 24th inst. to consider the situation created by the apathy and indifference of the State Government in relation to the workers' demands.

The workers had observed a one-day strike on Dec. 29th to protest against the Government policy. Since the Government refused to consider the demands even after the strike, the Union was constrained to move to further action.

Com. Dange attended the meeting of the Managing Committee and guided its deliberations.

42-  
32  
The resolution adopted by the Managing Committee was placed before the Rally for endorsement and was adopted unanimously.

The rally was attended by over 60,000 workers. It was addressed besides Com. Dange, by Coms. Patkar, Gulabrao Ganacharya, Y.V. Chavan, K.L. Desai and Krishna Desai.

While the mass of textile workers was gathering round the flag of the MGKU to fight the great battle ahead, Sjts. S.M. Joshi and George Fernandez of SSP were holding a separate rally of workers at Kamgar Maidan to found a new Union of Textile Workers viz. Girani Mazdoor Union. The new union has Shri S.M. Joshi as it's President and Shri George Fernandez as it's General Secretary. The splitters' rally was attended by some

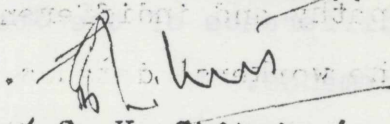
2,000, many of whom were workers from other industries and activists of SSP. Many others had gathered ~~ka~~ just to watch the fun.

In his devastating attack on Shri Fernandes's politics and his role in Bombay T.U. movement, Com. Dange exposed the positions he had taken on various occasions, and his splitting tactics under the garb of militancy. He narrated the history of the movement of textile workers during the forty years past, and ~~k~~ warned that Fernandez would meet his Waterloo in Bombay's textiles.

The "militant" leaders had nothing to say about the great battle the textile workers were entering on February 29th.

With Greetings,

Yours fraternally,



/ G. V. Chitnis /

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

H.M.P. AND THE BOMBAY TEXTILE STRIKE

Sir,

Mr. George Fernandes, the SSP's militant TU leader, has assumed a position of neutrality in respect of one of the biggest strikes conducted in recent years - the textile workers' strike in Bombay. Following the SSP's decision to enter the textile TU scene in Bombay and the formation of a union, rival to both the INTUC and AITUC, it was expected that militancy in the TU field will show a bigger spurt. Mr. Fernandes has disappointed many by his neutralism. The only possible explanation might be the Lohia thesis of "equidistance" and "equal irrelevance" but then Mr. Lohia himself has discarded this thesis for the sake of greater political realism. The SSP dynamism on such questions is, indeed, proverbial, as is the neo-politics of adjustment with everyone and alliance with none.

Evidently, with all the influence at his command over the Bombay working class, Mr. Fernandes could not prevent the strike launched by the communist union and there is also no evidence to show that Mr. Fernandes had a role of benevolent neutrality. He has, in fact, made public a complaint that the sponsors of the strike did not consult him beforehand. When Mr. Fernandes launched many strikes, it is not known, whether he had consulted the other trade unions which had nevertheless expressed solidarity with those strikes. Mr. Fernandes again spoke of the sponsors of the strike not having made enough preparations and he was not therefore keen to be party to a wild adventure. Irrespective of what the sponsors did or did not do, it is now clear that the workers were quite prepared for the game.

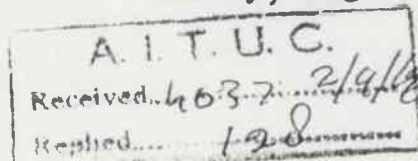
A spokesman of Mr. Fernandes' textile union is reported to have pointed out that "we cannot officially participate in an illegal strike since we are fighting for replacing the RMMS as the representative union in the industry." That is, indeed, an argument which is plausible enough since Mr. Fernandes has certainly the capacity to take on the "representative" status through strictly legal channels, especially after the RMMS has failed to prove its bona fides by preventing the strike. Mr. Fernandes is not however known to have shied away from a strike, on any earlier occasion, the moment it was declared "illegal". But since the SSP is now destined to lead the textile workers of Bombay, Mr. Fernandes' union should take no chances and fail to get representative status in the bargain.

New Delhi  
3 March 1966

M.A. NAIR

47  
Bombay, August 26, 1966.

128  
The Secretary,  
A.I.T.U.C.  
NEW DELHI.



Dear Comrade,

You must have received our telegram sent yesterday about the success of the 'Bandh' action.

Over 11 lakhs of workers are expected to have joined yesterday's action. The INTUC, local congress, Jan Sangh, HMS and a free lance leader R.J. Mehta controlling some Engineering factories strove their best to disrupt the action. They issued calls exhorting the workers not to join the action. Shri R.J. Mehta went so far as to call upon the workers to work for longer hours on the day and to give more production.

The result of this disruption was that the Docks as also several Engineering factories such as Premier, Richardson & Crudas, Alcock Ashdown, Acme, Shaparia docks etc. worked on the day though with reduced complement. In docks the Winchmen were on strike. In Premier over 30% of the complement stayed away.

The 'activity' of the disruptors led to clashes between the strikers and the strike-breakers - the Police as usual seeking to give full protection to the strike breakers. There was firing at two places in Kurla-Bhandup region. In one of these, two workers were gravely injured. There were lathi charges at several places, The police seeking to break the processions of workers. Several workers were injured in these. One of our leading activists Com. G.B. Kadam of Jogeshwari received a severe head injury in a lathi-charge at Majaswadi, Jogeshwari. The Police, in addition made several arrests.

In spite of this repression the Bandh was a thumping success. The entire city was paralysed with all Buses and taxis off the roads and all mills & factories deserted.

A notable feature of this Bandh was participation of shopkeepers and school and college students in large measure. With all shops and bazars closed Bombay wore a desolate appearance.

There was a mammoth rally at Shivaji Park in the afternoon which was attended easily by over 2,00,000. The rally was presided over by Com. S.G. Patkar and was addressed by Coms. S.A. Dange, S.M. Joshi, George Fernandez, Nana Patil, B.S. Dhume, S.Y. Kolhatkar, Pushpa Mahashya (UTUC), Sitaram Kolpe (Socialist Workers' Party) Datta Deshmukh (Dal Nishan) and others.

The Times of India and Free Press group of papers could not come out today on account of the strike. Only the Express Group of papers could see the light of the day.

With Greetings,

Yours fraternally,

*G.V. Chitnis*  
Secretary,  
M.R.T.U.C.

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# MAHARASHTRA RAJYA TRADE UNION COMMITTEE

(of All India Trade Union Congress)

President :

K. N. JOGLEKAR

Gen. Secretary :

B. S. DHUME

Phone Nos. : 63674, 61608

47  
Dalvi Building,  
Parel, Bombay-12. (DD.)

Date **Sept. 2, 1966.**

**Shri N.M. Tidke,  
Hon'ble Minister for Labour,  
Council Hall,  
N A G P U R.**

**Dear Sir,**

**This is to draw your immediate attention to the serious situation created by the lockout imposed by the Management of the Kandivli Metal Works at Kandivli since three months past, and their attempts to break the struggle of the workers to get the factory reopened with full complement through the use of gangster and police force.**

**The workers in the factory had put up forth certain demands concerning revision of wages, gratuity etc. Negotiations ~~are~~ followed and a Draft agreement was signed on 4th April 1966.**

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The workers completed their part of the agreement. But the Management went back on their part. The agreement thus came to an abrupt end. The Management thereafter attacked the workers by removing from service some 25 workers and activists, and when even this would not bring the workers on their knees imposed a lockout on 4th June 1966 - which is still continuing.

Towards the middle of July 1966 the Management offered to reopen the factory, but insisted that they would not take back workers that were discharged by them. They further maintained that they would have nothing to do with the agreement that they had agreed to earlier. Obviously the workers could not agree to this, and the stalemate continued.

The Govt. Labour Officer Shri Bhagwat made efforts to settle the dispute. But his efforts were met with cold sholder by the management. On Friday 26th August Shri Bhagwat made certain proposals which were accepted by the Union. The management too accepted them in principle and wanted to consult their adviser. However, in breach of mutual confidence and an assurance given to Govt. Labour Officer, on 27th and 28th August the management resorted to mass recruitment of 150 professional goondas as black legs.

On August 27th and 28th The workers had naturally resisted this. The Police stepped in to give full protection to the black legs, and an attempt was made to take in lorry-loads of black-legs in an escort provided by the police. In an effort to terrorise and cow down the workers the Police lathi-charged them and resorted to the extreme measure of opening fire. Several workers were grievously hurt in the charge. The police, on top, arrested some 60 workers and have not yet even released them on bail.

The atmosphere in the area still continues to be tense. The factory continues to be closed.

The weak kneed policy of the Government of submitting to recalcitrant Managements has led to this situation. The Government intervention in the dispute has been far from effective. Not only this. When the Management was acting in open violation of their assurances to the Government Labour Officer and thus frustrating his efforts to bring about a settlement in a dispute which they themselves had imposed on the workers, the Kandivli Police Station

Contd.

-3- Maharashtra Rajya Trade Union Committee

was actively helping them to organise strike breaking. We would like to know whether this is in consonance with the labour policy of the Government.

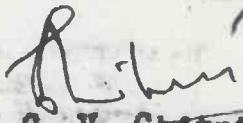
We must emphasise that unless the Government adopt a firm policy of making the Management see reason, the situation is likely to deteriorate further.

We have therefore to request you to look into this personally and intervene urgently and effectively in the dispute so as to bring about a speedy and satisfactory settlement. This is all the more necessary because the handling of the dispute so far has been far from satisfactory, and unless it is given a better and effective direction, it would raise issues of wider context and import.

If you take any action on this, please let us know.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,

  
/ G. V. Chitnis /  
S e c r e t a r y .

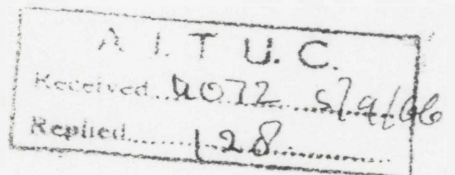
c.c. to:

The General Secretary,  
All India Trade Union Congress,  
NEW DELHI.  
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47  
Bombay, September 2, 1966.

The General Secretary,  
A.I.T.U.C.,  
NEW DELHI.



Dear Comrade,

Enclosed herewith please find a copy of our letter to the State Labour Minister.

As you would see from it the 3-month old dispute in the factory has taken an ugly turn. There was firing on the workers on August 28th, when the Police sought to assist the Management in organising strike breaking. Some 60 workers and activists have been taken in custody subsequent to that.

The Mumbai Kamgar Union is leading the workers in the dispute. We are helping the Union to the extent possible.

But it seems that Com. Tamhane who is the General Secretary of the Union would be bogged down in the dispute at least for the next few days. The situation is a bit delicate and it would be difficult for him to be out of station.

I am writing this because Com. Tamhane was scheduled to leave for his study tour of GDR, next week. Under the new situation that has emerged, it would be difficult for him to leave Bombay.

Com. Tamhane has already written to you in this regard. I hope that you would take the new situation in consideration, and see what you can do to assist him.

With Greetings,

Yours fraternally,

  
G. V. Chitnis /

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114

Maharashtra Rajya Trade Union  
Committee 47

Bombay, September 20, 1966.

The General Secretary,  
A.I.F.U.C.,  
NEW DELHI.

Dear Comrade,

ATTACHED  
US 48 23/9/66

The problems confronting the textile workers are getting more involved with every passing day.

We would just tabulate some of the more pressing of these below:

1. The problem of closed mills and impending closures. Some 40 mills are already closed in the country. In this State alone the number of closed mills is 13. In addition several mills are resorting to retrenchment and lay-offs, cutting the D.A. of workers, refusing to pay even the declared bonus etc. Only last week the President of the Ahmedabad Mill Owners' Association declared that over 40 mills in Ahmedabad would close down "unless the Government rushed necessary relief to the industry." In several centres the closures are continuing for months, with the result that the economy of the whole town has been affected ~~adversely~~ adversely - not to speak of the untold miseries of the workers. The local struggles have not been very effective.
2. The Wage Board has been virtually sabotaged. ~~It is now~~ it is now two full years since it was appointed but it's work is hardly getting going due to the dogged opposition of the Millowners. The Millowners have now declared that owing to increase in the prices of cotton and increased D.A. and controlled prices, a 'crisis' has seized the industry.
3. In the name of the alleged crisis the millowners are urging a 'freeze' on the D.A. and wages.
4. The Supreme Court decision on Bonus legislation and it's repercussions.
5. The Nationalisation offensive.

The question of recognition of unions.

It is necessary that the AITUC unions come together and discuss these common problems and evolve suitable forms of action

In 1964 the General Council of the AITUC had decided to organise a meeting of representatives of textile unions to discuss rationalisation and other common problems. Owing to several difficulties the meeting, however, could not come off. We feel that the AITUC must give some thought to the matter and arrange such a meeting in the near future.

Last week we had some discussions with the representatives of Dhulia, Jalgaon, A<sup>h</sup>chalpur, Sholapur and Nanded textile unions in this behalf. All of them feel that the AITUC must take necessary initiative in the matter.

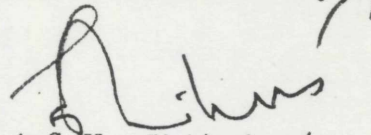
If the AITUC agrees, we can make arrangements for such a meeting here in the first week of November 1966.

We had a preliminary discussion with Com. Dange in this behalf. And he has approved of the proposal.

We would therefore request you to decide on this at your earliest, and let us know. ~~wix~~

With Greetings,

Yours fraternally,

  
/ G.V. Chitnis /  
~~S e c r e t a r y .~~

128  
47  
Bombay, December 24, 1965.

The Secretary,  
All India Trade Union Congress,  
NEW DELHI.

A. I. T. U. C.	
Received	4176 27/12/65
Replied	

Dear Comrade,

You are aware that 350,000 textile workers from this State are going on a one-day strike on December 29th in protest against the Government policies leading to unemployment, cut in wages and high cost of living and to demand particularly -

- 1) take over of closed mills by the Government;
- ii) restoration of cut in D.A. and withdrawal of all notices in this behalf;
- iii) Bonus for 1964;
- iv) effective control of run-away prices;

(2) The Union has launched a powerful campaign to make the strike a complete success.

(3) Shri George Fernandez, whom we had invited to attend the meeting of representatives of textile unions held last month at Nagpur has, immediately on his return from Nagpur, resumed his disruptive activities in textiles and formed a Girani Kamgar Sangharsh Samiti "to lead the action." The only activity the Sangharsh Samiti has done so far is to conduct a campaign of vilification against us through the columns of obliging press, dubbing us as ~~not~~ 'not wanting to fight the offensive of the Millowners and the Government', "not wanting to forge a united front to lead the action" etc. The Samiti has now put up a poster in support of the strike.

Details in behalf of Shri Fernandez's Campaign have been sent to Com. Dange, separately.

(4) The Crisis is breaking up in all industries, and several sectors of workers are going into action. The Kamani had a strike in the beginning of this month. The Estrella workers were on strike on 13th and 14th inst. and Bharat Barrel is on an indefinite strike since this week.

7/1/66

The Executive of the MRTUC met twice this week to take stock of this situation and try to give it a unified direction. The Executive felt that these isolated actions of the working class could be developed into a massive Maharashtra Bandh action if other TU Centres could be persuaded to join in.

The HMP was also watching this situation. They called a meeting of representatives of all TU Centres and several independent unions to meet on 18th inst. at Tambe's Hall. We attended the meeting, and put forth

- 1) That the present offensive of the employers could not be fought unless you <sup>fight</sup> fought the Government policy that helped it.
- ii) That this could best be done by organising a State-Wide action.
- iii) That such action could be only of the Maharashtra Bandh type.
- iv) That this action could conveniently be organised on December 29th since a large and most advanced section of the State's working class was going in action on that day.

The HMP leaders were not ready for such an action on 29th inst. Instead they suggested organising a Morcha and next a conference to consider further action. They wanted a united Committee to be set up, comprising of representatives of all TU Centres (including the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh) to conduct the movement.

There could be no agreement in between us. We however decided to organise jointly a conference of Engineering Workers in the first week of next month to consider the problems confronting the Engineering workers.

(5) Though the HMP is coming in, several unions of MRTUC in other industries such as Engineering, Woolen, Plastic, Press etc. have already taken a decision in that regard.

(6) We would write to you again after December 29th, 1965.

With Greetings,

Yours fraternally,

(G.V. Chitnis)

*have decided to join the action of 29th  
for similar problems in their industries.  
The Kamani Union and the Sarva  
Kamark Sangh*

47

# MAHARASHTRA RAJYA TRADE UNION COMMITTEE

(of All India Trade Union Congress)

President :  
K. N. JOGLEKAR

Gen. Secretary :  
B. S. DHUME

Phone Nos. : 443674, 441608

A. I. T. U. C.		Dalvi Building, Parel, Bombay-12. (DD.)
Received	4593	2/10/66
Replied		
		Date: Sept. 30, 1966.

120

The Secretary,  
A.I.T.U.C.,  
NEW DELHI.

Dear Comrade,

You are aware that the 800 employees of the 'Farmed' group are fighting a Lockout imposed by the Management since 10th inst. Of these about 400 are employed by the Farmed (Pvt.) Ltd. and the rest by Sister Concerns such as ~~W~~nder Farmed, Farmapack, SKM, and Farmed Capsulations - all situated in the same compound.

The Bombay Pharmaceutical Employees' Union which is leading the workers has already sent you, I understand, a detailed report in this connection.

I am further enclosing a cutting of a ~~Paper report~~ news paper report that gives all details in this behalf. You would find it useful though the same is in Marathi.

The Management is adamant and the State Labour Office has been unable to intervene effectively. Encouraged by the weak-kneed policy of the state government, the Management has refused to negotiate a ~~negotiated~~ settlement and are trying to break the workers' unity and their

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*MR*  
*SZ*  
*H. 12*

# MAHARASHTRA RAJYA TRADE UNION COMMITTEE

(of All India Trade Union Congress)

President :

K. N. JOGLEKAR

Contd.

Dalvi Building,  
Parel, Bombay-12. (DD.)

Gen. Secretary :

B. S. DHUME

- 2 -

Phone Nos. : 443674, 441608

Date .....

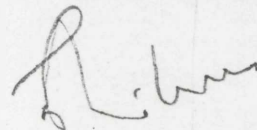
resistance by resorting to black-legging. The Police, too, are ever ready to give protection to such efforts of the Management. In their efforts to help the Management to take out their lorries, the Police lathi-charged the picketing workers on 27th inst. and arrested 49 women-workers. The Union got them released subsequently on bail.

Yesterday, the Security Officer of the Companies opened fire on the picketing workers, <sup>in the process</sup> causing injuries to some seven ~~workers~~. The Union has filed a case against the officer and demanded his arrest.

The MRTUC is helping the Union in leading the struggle. Com. Dange too, had paid a visit to the picketing employees when he was here last.

With Greetings,

Yours fraternally,



/ G. V. Chitnis )

# फार्मिड कामगारांवर मालकांचा

## नि पोलिसांचा जुलूम

दि २५ ऑगस्ट रोजी उपासमार व महागाईवरोधी समितीने दिलेल्या आदेशानुसार मुंबईतील लाखों कामगारांनी सरकारी धोरणाच्या निषेधाथे हरताळ पाळला. या हरताळा-मध्ये औषधी धंद्यातील कामगारांनी मोठ्या एकजूटीने भाग घेतला याचा परिणाम म्हणून भूतपूर्व मुजोरमंत्री शांतलाल शहा याना राजिनामा द्यावा लागला. परंतु त्याचबरोबर काहीं कारखान्यांतील मालकांना कामगारांची ही एकजूट पहावली नाही आणि त्यांनी याचा सूट घेण्याचे ठराविले.

दोबरे-दोनार येथे दि फार्मिड प्रा. लि. या कंपनीतील कामगारांनी दि. २५ रोजी हरताळ पाळला. कामगारांना चिडविण्याच्या हेतूने या कंपनीचे अॅडमिनिस्ट्रेटिव्ह मॅनेजर भुजल यांनी १० महिला व ४ पुरुष कामगार खास गाडीने कामावर आणले. अर्थातच दुसऱ्या दिवशी इतर कामगारांनी या संपफांड्या कामगारांना 'तुम्हाला कामावर घेऊन काय मिळाले?' असे विचारले तेव्हा श्रीमती सुमन ठाकूर यांनी युनियनच्या पुरुष कार्यकर्त्यांच्या अंगावर हातांतील बांगड्या काढून फेकल्या आणि आम्ही शूर आहोत म्हणून कामावर आलो, अशी बडबड करून शिब्यागाळी केली. अर्थातच यानंतर दान्ही भाजूनी बांलाचाली झाली. दि. २६ ऑगस्ट रोजी दुपारी भुजल यांच्या सांगण्यावरून या संपफांड्या महिलांपैकी दोघी श्रीमती सुमन ठाकूर व शीला वसईकर या दुपारी सों. रोझा दशपांडे यांच्या घरी गेल्या. युनियनचे कार्यकर्ते आम्हाला घाणेरड्या शिब्या दत्तात अशी त्यांनी तक्रार केली. युनियनचा आदेश मांडून कामावर गेलो ही चूक त्यांनी कबूल केली. तेव्हा सों. दशपांडे यांनी 'युनियन संकेतरी' श्रीधर शेट्टी यांना फोन करून संघ्याकाळी गेट मिटींग घेऊन कामगारांमधील हा झगडा मिटींगच्या सांगितला. तसेच या महिलांनाही सभेला हजर रहाण्यास सांगितले. दुसऱ्या दिवशी स्वतः रोझा दशपांडे यांनी गेट मिटींग घेतली. या दहा महिलांना सभेला या व आपण आपापसातली भांडण मिटवू असे सांगितले. परंतु त्यांनी न ऐकता कारखान्यांतील इतर मुलींशी भांडण सुरू केले व त्यांना चपला काढून दाखविल्या. वस्तुतः या स्त्रिया युनियनच्या सभासदही नाहीत. तरीसुद्धा सभेमध्ये हे भांडण न वाढविण्याचा निर्णय कामगारांनी घेतला. वास्तविक पहाता मॅनेजमेंटने या भांडणात पहावयास नका होत. परंतु भुजल यांनी या मुलींकडून इतर कामगारांविरुद्ध तक्रारी लिहून घेतल्या.

यानंतर दि. २९ रोजी मॅनेजमेंट व युनियनच्या प्रतिनिधीमध्ये इतर मागण्यांसाठी मिटींग झाली. त्या ठिकाणी पुन्हा हा प्रश्न मॅनेजमेंटने उपस्थित केला. या मिटींगमध्ये सुमन ठाकूर यांनी स्वतः बांगड्या फेकून शिब्यागाळी केल्याचे कबूल केले. तेव्हा त्यांच्याकडून व इतर कामगारांकडून दिल्लीगरी व्यक्त करणारे पत्र लिहून घेऊन हा प्रश्न मिटविण्याचे ठरले. दि. २ सप्टेंबर रोजी भुजल यांनी युनियनला पत्र लिहून युनियनने माफी मागावी अशी मागणी केली व या पत्राचे उत्तर दि. ६ पर्यंत न आल्यास कामगारांवर इलाज करू अशी धमकी दिली. दि. २-४ रोजी शनिवार, रविवार असल्याने हे पत्र युनियनला दि. ६ ला मिळाले. याचा फायदा घेऊन युनियनच्या उत्तराची घाटी न पहाता भुजल यांनी ७ कामगारांना सस्पेंड केले. अर्थात या अन्यायाचा कामगारांना संताप आला. याच्या निषेधाथे दि. ७ व ८ रोजी कामगारांनी वेगवेगळ्या सुद्धा संपघेऊन निघून गेले. तथापि उत्साहाने या

आली. या पत्राचा मसुदा श्री. भट यांच्याजवळ देण्यात आला. दि. १० रोजी सकाळी श्रीधर शेट्टी यांनी गेट सभा घेऊन सडजोड झाली व कामगारांनी शांतपणे कामावर जावे असा आदेश दिला. परंतु आश्चर्याची गोष्ट म्हणजे भुजल यांनी गेट बंद करून टाळेबंदी केली. यामुळे या कंपाऊंडमधील एस. के. एम., कॅम्प्युलेशन, वॉटर फार्मिड, फार्मिड या चारही कंपनींतील कामगारांना बाहेर ठेवण्यात आले. दि. १२ रोजी ही गेट बंद होती. तेव्हा कामगारांनी निदर्शने केली. यावेळी पोलिसांचा बंदोबस्त अपूर्व होता. जॉर्जवरीला जनतेवर अन्याय करण्यात प्रसिध्द असलेले इन्स्पेक्टर गवणकर यांनी मालकांच्या सांगण्यावरून गेटजवळ उभ्या असलेल्या मुलींच्या हाताला धरून बंशरमपणाने खंचाहोची केली. दि. १३ रोजी फार्मिडच्या मॅनेजमेंटने कामगारांच्या 'भावनांना' मान देऊन गेट उघडे ठेवले. परंतु रुस्पेंड केलेल्या कामगारांना आत घेणार नाही आणि प्रत्येक कामगारांनी माफीपत्र द्यावे अशी नोंदीस लावली. त्याचबरोबर कंपनीच्या आतल्या गेटला टाळे लावून ठेवले. सर्व कामगारांनी फार्मिडच्या कामगारांवरील अन्याय दूर झाल्याशिवाय आत जाण्याचे नाकारले. गेले १६ दिवस हा लढा चालू आहे. कामगारांना विधावण्याचे प्रकार पोलिसांची मदत घेऊन होत आहेत. या सहाशे कामगारांपैकी

२०० महिला आहेत. या कामगारांना पाठिंबा देण्यासाठी 'अखिल भारतीय ट्रेड युनियन काँग्रेस'चे ज. संकेतरी कॉ. एस. ए. हांगे यांनी या कामगारांना भेट दिली. गिरणी कामगार युनियनचे संकेतरी आमदार पाटकर यांनीही येऊन आपला पाठिंबा जाहीर केला. गिरणी कामगार युनियनचे पुढारी कॉ. सर्वीजतीसंग व भगवान थोरात हे सतत कामगारांना सर्व प्रकारची मदत करित आहेत. या काळात भुजल यांनी संपफांडे गुंड आणण्याचाही प्रयत्न केला परंतु तो कामगारांनी हाणून पाडला. आश्चर्याची गोष्ट म्हणजे अद्यापपर्यंत सरकारतर्फे फार्मिड मॅनेजमेंटने टाळेबंदी केली याची कसलीही विचारणा करण्यात आलेली नाही. गेले १६ दिवस चाललेल्या या लढ्याची दखल मुंबईच्या लॅबर ऑफिसला देखील घेता आलेली नाही.

आता महाराष्ट्र राज्य फार्मिडकल फेडरेशनने हा प्रश्न हाती घेतला आहे. मुंबईतील औषधी धंद्याच्या कामगारांनी ही अत्यंत सुसंघटित व प्रभावी संघटना आहे. फेडरेशन स्वतः वाटाघाटी करण्याचा प्रयत्न करित आहे. फेडरेशनने या पांचही कंपन्यांतील कामगारांना मदत करण्यासाठी १५००० रुपयाचा फंड उभारला आहे. लॅबर कमिशनर काळ यांना मॅनेजमेंटचे तोंड उघडता येत नसले तरी कामगारांची एकजूट ही काम करील या विश्वासाने फेडरेशनचे कार्यकर्ते कामास लागले आहेत.



MAHARASHTRA RAJYA TRADE UNION COMMITTEE

of

(A.I.T.U.C.)

Dalvi Building,  
Parel, Bombay 12,  
October 10, 1966.

Received 14992 20/10/66  
Replied.....

Circular No.

To: All Affiliated Unions in the Textile Industry.

ENQUIRY CONCERNING THE CONDITIONS OF  
BADALI & WOMEN WORKERS IN THE TEXTILE  
INDUSTRY

Dear Comrade,

You are aware of the deplorable conditions of the Badali and women workers in the textile industry.

The Mumbai Girani Kamgar Union organised a 12 Day General Strike in Bombay Mills in February-March 1966 for demands which included two that sought protection to these two categories.

The State Government had then assured that it would conduct an enquiry in the conditions of these two sections.

The State Government has accordingly appointed on 18th May 1966 a three-member Committee comprising of Shri K.R. Wazkar - Chairman (Registrar, Industrial Court, Bombay) Shri M.S. Warty, Labour Officer, Millowners' Association, Bombay and Shri N.S. Deshpande, General Secretary, Rashtriya Mill Mazdoor Sangh, Bombay to "study the conditions of Badali Labour, Temporary Workers, Apprentices, Learners, Women Workers etc. in the Cotton Textile Industry in the Maharashtra State."

The Committee has been asked to submit its Report within a period of six months.

The Committee has on 1st September 1966 issued its Questionnaire to elicit information from the concerned parties.

The answers to the Questionnaire are to be submitted by 15th October 1966.

We hope that you have received the Questionnaire from the Committee direct, and that it is engaging your due attention.

We would emphasise the need to complete your answers and send them to the Committee by the due date.

We are sending you herewith for your information a copy of the Memorandum submitted to the Committee by the Mumbai Girani Kamgar Union, in reply to the Questionnaire.

The MRTUC proposes to appear before the Committee in this behalf, and state it's views.

- Accordingly we are writing to the Committee today to give us a date when we can appear before them.

Those Unions that want to appear before the Committee independently and stress local features should write to the Committee on the address given below and seek an appointment.

Shri H.A. Sathé,  
Secretary,  
Enquiry Committee - Cotton Textile Industry,  
Commerce Centre, 6th & 7th Floor,  
Tardeo, B O M B A Y - 34.

Greetings,

/ G. V. Chitnis /  
S e c r e t a r y.

128  
47  
14 October 1966

The Secretary,  
Maharashtra Rajya Trade Union Committee of the AITUC,  
Bombay

Dear Comrade,

Please refer to your letter of September 20, on the textile situation. Your suggestion for holding a consultative conference on textile problems was examined by our Secretariat and it was felt that there was not sufficient time for an all-India consultation separately, apart from possible trade level meeting at the time of the General Council meeting.

However, if your STUC at the time of its proposed conference or otherwise can organise a State level consultation on textile problems, such a course would be helpful in assessing the situation and to enable the AITUC to suggest some ~~more~~ concrete steps to tackle the issue.

The developments in Ahmedabad and the unilateral decision of the employers to terminate the D.A. award have certainly brought some urgency in coordinating our action on the D.A. question. The millowners are also threatening to close down some 100 mills and are also creating a big scare about the high prices and shortage of cotton. If your STUC has made any study of the recent developments in this regard, we shall be glad to have your views at your earliest.

We hope it might have been possible for you to discuss the issue with Com. Dange while he is there.

We had written to Com. Patkar sometime back for sending us a note on points for agenda of the Industrial Committee on Cotton Textiles, further to the item on textile closures the AITUC had raised in the Indian Labour Conference. If a note is received from you early, we could call for an early convening of the tripartite to discuss this matter.

In view of the very hostile attitude of the employers and the deliberate sabotage being organised, a point worth consideration is whether any useful purpose would be served in continuing to make our submissions before the Wage Board. We would like to have your considered opinion on this point.

With greetings,

Yours fraternally,

(M. Atchuthan)  
Secretary

128 Telegram From Bombay. 47

Management- Probot- Wanting  
Stop. Today Ordered Driving Trucks  
And Wants Members in Police presence  
stop while Roza and others requesting  
in Police presents ~~Police~~ Company Ordered  
Driving stop first instance One  
girl Fainted second time One  
member seriously Enjured No. in  
Hospital Roza slightly Enjured but  
saved stop Latter Management  
themselves Fired six Revolver rounds  
all afraid stop Gout Labour  
Commission still telling they want  
a Police station and Complaint but  
Police arrested them and Head  
officer and his driver stop  
Big morcha on Sachivalaya  
Planned today stop Members  
moralities got.

Chitnis

## MUMBAI GIRANI KAMGAR UNION

Dalvi Building, Parel, Bombay 12.

## MEMORANDUM

on

## BADALI SYSTEM IN THE COTTON TEXTILE INDUSTRY

The Badali system in the Cotton Textile Industry is perhaps as old as the industry itself.

The " System " has been a source of irritation and friction right from it's inception. Because all along, the Millowners sought to utilise it as an instrument of intensified exploitation of workers.

Earlier History :

As late as 1936 there was hardly any system worth the name to govern the recruitment of Badali labour. Till then the ' Badalis ' were recruited just from those standing before the Mill gate every morning. Several Mills recruited the Badalis through their ' J o b b e r s ' . <sup>which an</sup> ' institution ' of J o b b e r s thus acquired a preponderant hold on the lives of Badalis.

The Jobbers utilised the free hand they had in the recruitment for their personal ends. Not only did they exact handsome sums from the Badalis at the times of recruitment, but enjoined upon them to pay them a regular " Hafta " every Month. Those that dared to question the payment, stood the risk of losing their jobs.

The Badalis were held in such awe by the Jobbers that hardly any one of them complained to the Management against these ' l e v i e s ' , and if ever any body did, hardly any cognisance was taken of his complaint; because the hold of the Jobbers over the Badalis suited their interests, in that the latter could always be used through the jobbers as a strike breaking force.

Aware of the powers of the jobbers, the Badalis usually submitted to their will, but when driven to desperation - resisted. Instances are not wanting of the clashes between the jobbers and the Badalis in the history of the evolution of the system.

We have chosen to be brief in the treatment of the historical part of the system, mainly because it is undisputed. The system and it's abuses ~~have~~ such a scadle that several Committees appointed to enquire into the conditions of textile labour have been constrained to comment on it.

Badali Control Scheme :

First steps towards the regulation of the system were taken when the Millowners were led to introduce in 1936 the Badali Control Scheme. According to this the Mills began to draw up and maintain lists of Badalis. These were based on the expected rate of absenteeism. Badalis were to be recruited from these lists.

This marked some improvement over the earlier anarchy, since all of them were guaranteed some work under the scheme, thus weakening the hold of jobbers on their lives. Actually however the implementation of the Scheme was so faulty that it did not bring much relief to the Badalis, whose grievances continued.

Decasualisation Scheme :

In 1947 the then Bombay Government introduced the broader Decasualisation Scheme which, after initial opposition from the Mill Owners' Association, was implemented in 1950. Under the Scheme lists of workers are kept who have already had some experience in the cotton textile mills or who have been trained for the work. The Mills are expected to recruit new labour from these lists. Thus the imperative principle under the Scheme is that to be a cotton textile worker you must have been one.

The Scheme has thus been in operation for some sixteen years past. Despite this long period the scheme has failed to import any real discipline in the system, which will still suffer from instability and constant friction.

Abnormal Surplus :

The universally accepted principle regarding the Badalis is that their number should have some relation to the expected rate of absenteeism, so that those in the Scheme should stand a fair chance of getting regular employment. The rate of absenteeism in Bombay textile mills is around 8%. Taking the total labour force in the City's textile mills around 1,80,000 the number of Badalis should be around 15,000. Actually however the number is estimated between 35,000 to 40,000. Actually a vast proportion of these can not, by any stretch of imagination, stand a chance of getting even a fairly regular employment. Not only this, the big surplus offers a big scope for favouritism and constitutes a fertile ground for corruption.

Registration and Recruitment :

## Registration and Recruitment :

The Scheme provides that all these eligible and seeking employment in the textile mills must register themselves at the Centres run under the Scheme, and that the Mills must obtain their requirements from these Centres. Actually however, the Managements have devised ways to circumvent these provisions and recruit workers of their choice. We have come across ~~un~~pteen instances where the Managements have recruited workers that were never sent by the Decasualisation Centres in response to the indent of the Mills. This is done by recruiting the worker first and asking him subsequently to register himself at the nearby Centre, and get his name forwarded to the Mill in reply to the Mill's indent. Some times such a worker is recommended by any of the Jobbers or the Head Jobbers or the Officers of the Mill. But on many a occasion this role is played by the " recognised " Union. The union recommends such " reliable " workers, the Management recruits them and the Union then proceeds to get the necessary formalities like registration at a Decasualisation Centre and his name being forwarded by the Centre to the Mill, completed. Sometimes when the Union feels that the act can go unchallenged, even these formalities are dispensed with.

The criterion with the union in recommending such workers is his professed political loyalty. We know of instances when intelligent workers, after remaining unemployed for months together, made contacts with the activists of the recognised Union, and through it got placed in Mills. The only problem before the union in such cases is to weigh the utility of such workers as would-be cadres of the Union and the possible inconvenience or embarrassment the union would be put to if this trickery is per chance exposed.

### Rank Corruption :

The consideration before the Jobbers and Head Jobbers however is at times personal or social, but usually pecuniary. Their services are available to those who can agree to pay them their price in the form of handsome sums and 'haftas' on recruitment. Even some of the activists of the recognised union have been found to undertake such 'unemployment relief service' in return for suitable consideration. After recruitment the recruit has to keep on paying the hafta, else there is a sharp fall in the number of days on which he gets work.

### Confirmation in Substantive Post :

A Badali is supposed to acquire a sort of lien to the substantive post wherein he works as a substitute continuously for a period of three months and more.

We wonder however if in actual practice there has been any lucky substitute worker who has been confirmed in his substantive post after working in it for 3 months as a substitute. In almost every Mill in the City one comes across substitute workers who are working as substitutes for over five to six years, and several Mills can be cited where substitute workers are substitutes for some ten years past.

One would be surprised to know that the substitute workers are kept as substitutes not because there are no vacant substantive posts in the Mill. On the contrary each Mill carrying an army of substitute workers has a number of substantive posts lying vacant for years together. And thus we have a curious contradiction wherein hundreds continue to rot as substitute workers on one side and on the other hundreds of substantive posts continue to remain vacant from year to year.

#### Uncertain Employment:

Further there is no obligation on the Mills to provide work to their substitute workers for any minimum number of days. In some of the agreements concerning the introduction of 4-loom system the Mills have undertaken to provide work to their substitutes for at least 16 days in a month. But even here the agreement is observed more in its breach. For the rest of the Badalis, there is no protection whatsoever and the Mills can hire and fire them according to the sweet will of the Management. An overwhelming proportion of the Badalis get work for some eight to fifteen days in a month, literally hundreds get work on just 4 to five days, and the number of those getting work on just one or two days is not insignificant. We have come across Attendance passes which are literally Blank at the end of the month, and on several occasions we have received complaints from Badali workers that they were not employed even once not only during the current month, but since some three to four months preceding.

One would naturally ask why on earth the Badalis keep their Badali pass under such conditions and visit the Mill every day - only to be told that there is no work for them. The answer is - while the Mills do not undertake any responsibility to provide work to the Badalis, they insist that they present themselves for work every day if they at all want to retain their Badali Passes. A Badali worker absenting himself without previous permission is penalised the day he presents himself for work - the most common punishment being refusal of work for a certain number of days. Further the chances of alternative employment are so dismal that a Badali prefers to carry even a Blank card to going without one.



This being the position of employment, we need not add that the earnings of the substitute workers are always abnormally low. These low earnings condemn them to a sub-standard existence which they eke out in the hope of getting a substantive post some day.

#### Denial of all Benefits :

This weakness of the substitute workers is exploited by the Managements to the fullest extent possible. They provide work to the Badalis in such a way, that a large section of them is deprived of their leave, Provident Fund and gratuity Benefits. This is attained by just seeing that the substitute worker does not in any single year complete 240 days of work. As soon as he approaches the 240 day mark he is ' earmarked ' for refusal of work. In several cases his Badali Pass is cancelled only to be reissued to him in the succeeding year. This provides an opportunity not only to the Mill to recruit him as a ' new ' worker, but also to the middle-man who acts as a go-between to demand again his ' pound of flesh.'

The overwhelming proportion of the substitute workers thus continues to rot for years and years without the meagre benefits that the present niggardly labour legislation provides.

All this is of course to the full advantage of the Mills.

#### No Principle Followed in Confirmation :

Not only the Mills do not undertake any responsibility as regards providing work to Badalis, they do not consider themselves bound to follow any set of principles when confirming the Badalis in their substantive posts. To the out-side world the Mills say that they confirm the Badalis according to their seniority. But actually the principle is more flouted than observed, and what reigns supreme in the field is stark anarchy and nepotism. Here again is a chance to the Superiors and the leaders of the recognised union in the Mill to feather their own nests at the cost of the Badali worker - who is again made to fork out handsome tributes to earn his title to the substantive post. Instances of the credulous Badali being duped by the wily middleman in this behalf are also not uncommon.

#### The Secret Behind Preference for the System :

We have referred above to the contradiction between the vast sections of Badali workers eking out their life on the one hand, and the numerous substantive posts lying vacant on the other. A question then naturally arises why the Mills are averse to confirming the Badalis in the substantive posts?

Is it because that the Mills can utilise the system to save a thousands on the leave salary, P.F. contributions and Gratuity payments that they would otherwise have to make if they had filled all the vacant substantive posts?

This is not the prime consideration with the Mills. The contradiction is a part of a deep-laid conspiracy of the Mill-owners in which the recognised unions in the State, too, have their own share.

Since the second world war the Millowners are trying to step up the pace of rationalisation in the industry. Having squandered away the huge resources that they garnered at the cost of workers and the people during the war - or utilised them to acquire interest in other trades the Millowners could not muster the requisite funds to modernise their Mills - all at once. Also the requisite machinery was not readily available in sufficient measure. They had therefore to hasten slow and fall back on a phased programme.

Now rationalisation leads unavoidably to displacement of labour. Since under capitalist conditions of production this means long periods of unemployment and reduction of earnings when alternatively employed for the displaced workers, labour is vehemently opposed to any move on the part of the Management to introduce rationalisation.

Under such conditions the Badali system came in handy to the Millowners. Because a Badali has no claim to any substantive post and can be hired and fired any time, the Mill Owners found him an ideal prey for their attack. Whenever a Mill needed to throw some workers out of employment in order to enable them to introduce the new methods of Production, they had only to cancel the requisite number of Badali Passes. Even after throwing out hundreds of Badalis out of employment a Mill could claim that it had not "retrenched" a single worker. Because a Badali according to the Mill is just a Badali and not a worker, and his axing not a retrenchment.

Further the Badali afforded an opportunity to the Mill to save big sums that it would otherwise have to dish out by way of retrenchment compensation, and Gratuity to the displaced workers, because a very large section of Badli workers hardly ever qualify for these payments.

Also the existance of a large surplus reserve force helps the Management to beat down the workers' demands. The Badali always operates as a drag on the permanent worker. Being always subjected to reduced earnings and substandard life he is not as enthusiastic as the permanent to fight for new demands. His prime concern is to get permanency and security of employment. All other demands come second to him. Further

being always aware of his vulnerable position he is more susceptible to the pressure from Management and the 'recognised' Union, both of whom seem to feel that they have a special hold on him, and try to utilise it fully to break the workers' struggles. By the very nature of his employment a Badali constitutes the weakest link of his class Organisation and this weakness explains the preference of the Managements for the Badali system.

#### Role of the Recognised Unions :

The plight of the Badalis would not have been this bad if they had the right to act or be represented through a Union of their choice. But as is widely known the Bombay Industrial Relations Act that governs industrial relations in this industry, does not give them this choice. It rather imposes the so called recognised union on them. When such a recognised union acts in league with the Management, the Badali worker can hardly cherish any hope of his legitimate interests being safeguarded.

In all the textile centres in Maharashtra, which are covered by the BIR Act, it is the experience of the workers that the recognised unions have done precious little to defend the legitimate interests of the Badali workers. Not only they have failed in leading the resistance of the Badalis to the onslaughts of the Managements, but they have not cared even to utilise the existing enactments, agreements and conventions to defend the Badalis. In several centres they have degenerated into just agencies of Managements, and continue to exist just on the support of the employer and the BIR Act.

#### Struggles of the Badali Workers :

Even then the Badali worker has not accepted the lot foisted on him and resigned himself to his fate. He has fought to the extent he could - some times individually, at other times as a group. Scores of struggles initiated by the Badali workers and supported by other workers can be cited in instance. Several of them have attained some success and the Managements concerned had to agree to confirm the Badalis in the substantive posts according to some definite principle, or concede them other concessions.

Of late, the Badalis are showing particular awareness of these rights, and are trying to organise themselves on the basis of their demands. The recent 12-day General Strike gave a great impetus to their movement which is slowly but surely, gathering momentum.

#### Instrument of the Managements :

Finally, we have to submit that the Badali System as it operates today is the most abused system. It has become in the hands of profit greedy Mill Owners and unscrupulous

recognised unions a veritable instrument to divide the ranks of the workers, to pit one section of the class against the other with a view to break the unity and the determination of the class, and finally to build up a sort of a strike-breaking force. It has further become a first class grazing ground where on each occasion and at every stage - be it recruitment, re-recruitment or confirmation - a substitute worker can be squeezed to yield to the satisfaction of all - joining in a conspiracy against him. It is therefore of utmost urgency to do away with the present Badali System and introduce in its place a more rational system meant to protect the interests of the workers concerned.

#### Creation of a 'Leave Reserve'.

With this in view we suggest that the Badali System as it is found today, should be abolished altogether. In its place should be created a 'leave reserve' corresponding to the expected rate of absenteeism in the industry. Those included in the 'reserve' would be working, more or less, as permanent 'relievers' and should be treated on par with other permanent workers in every respect. As the quantum of the Reserve is to correspond with the expected rate of absenteeism in industry, every 'Reservist' would stand a fair chance of getting regular employment. As and when a substantive post would fall vacant the seniormost of the 'Reservists' should be confirmed in it.

We would further suggest that all substantive posts lying vacant today should be, immediately, filled up. The Mills should not be permitted to cancel, on their own, any substantive posts. Confirmation in substantive posts should be strictly according to seniority.

#### Abolish the Contract System:

Further the contract system that is raising its ugly head in the Mills should be firmly put down. No contract work, other than of a strictly casual nature, should be permitted within the precincts of the Mills; and the Mills should be prohibited from entrusting any work to a contractor which was earlier done, departmentally.

#### Absorption of the 'Surplus'.

Even after this, a section of the present Badali force would be left over as 'Surplus'. A programme of absorption of this section in the industry, or its rehabilitation in other ways, would have to be drawn up through bi-partite talks between the representatives of industry and the workers. By representatives of workers' we mean, we must emphasise, not representatives of a

'recognised Union' but representatives really enjoying the confidence of the workers. The Government can make available its good offices for such talks, should it be desired by the 'Parties' concerned.

Temporary Labour:

After the creation of such leave reserve, the demand for temporary or Casual Labour would come only from jobs which are essentially of a Temporary or Casual nature. To meet this, a Mill can be permitted to employ Temporary Labour. But even this category would need to be provided with certain safeguards.

Some Suggestions.

Towards this, we would suggest:

- i) Whether a process or job is temporary or otherwise should be decided by the Management only in consultation with the workers' organisations.
- ii) The recruitment to this category should be done only through Employment Centres.
- iii) The working of such Employment centres should be further democratised by associating closely representatives of workers' organisations with their administration.
- iv) A list of such temporary workers, according to their seniority should be maintained by each Mill. If there is no sufficient work to engage all workers on a particular day or during a particular week, the claim of each worker should be decided on the basis of seniority.
- v) The temporary workers, so long as they are employed, should be entitled to get work, or full wages in lieu of work, for a certain days in a month - say twenty.
- vi) With a view to compensate the temporary worker against the insecurity of employment he should be paid at a rate 20 percent higher than that paid to a permanent worker doing the same or similar job.
- vii) If the Temporary work continues beyond one year the same should be treated as part of the normal work of the Mill, and the workers employed as Temporary should be deemed to have become part of the Mill's normal permanent complement.

W O M E N W O R K E R S

The last two decades can be said to be a period of virtual massacre of women workers in the industry. There was a period - not far away - when women occupied a position of pride in the industry. The Labour Office of the then Government of Bombay conducted in 1926 an enquiry into the wages and hours of work in 19 of the city's Mills - a fair cross-section of the industry employing 50,421 workers. The enquiry revealed that out of these 12,072 viz. some 24% were women workers. This proportion of women workers to total workers continued more or less unchanged till 1939. In that year out of a total labour force of 1,30,000 in the city's mills, some 30,000 are reported to be women workers. Further the women workers had access to practically all departments, except perhaps the Weaving and Engineering - though instances of some South Indian Mills employing women workers even in Weaving shed are on record. The same Labour-Office enquiry referred to above gives a Department-wise break-up of the women workers employed in the Mills surveyed. We are giving below the break-up, since it would be found both interesting and useful.

Total women workers (in 19 Mills)	...	12,072
<u>Departmentwise</u>		
Mixing and Waste	...	540
Blow Room	...	8
Carding Room	...	155
Slubbing, Inter & Roving	...	508
Ring, Spinning	...	3,140
Winding	...	4,691
Reeling	...	2,097
Warping	...	15
Doubling	...	7
Bleaching	...	20
Folding	...	20
Engine & Boiler	...	1
Miscellaneous Occupations	...	870
		12,072
		12,072

Report on an Enquiry into Wages & Hours of Labour  
in the Cotton Mill Industry, 1926 Page No. 80 .

In Spinning units the proportion of women workers to the total workers was considerably higher, so much so that women workers constituted practically half of the total complement.

A virtual Massacre : A VIRTUAL MASSACRE

The situation changed radically during and after the second world war. Most of the mills took to shift working, and since women workers could not be employed in the second and third shifts, their proportion ~~TOTAL~~ workers fell steeply.

If the deterioration had been limited only to the ratio one would not perhaps have been so concerned. But not only the ratio but also the absolute number of women workers employed in the industry began to show a rapid fall. The number declined from some 35,000 in 1947 to 16,000 in 1960, to 8,000 in 1963 and to some 5,000 today. The cut has been so pronounced that it can not but be termed a massacre.

A Planned Policy :

We use the term massacre with a full sense of responsibility. It is our contention that the millowners planned the massacre and brought it about in co-operation with the Recognised Union. The 'modus operandi' was simple. The Millowners made it a policy not to recruit new women workers, and throw away the existing ones as fast as they could. Accordingly hardly any recruitment of women workers has taken place in the industry in the two decades past. The displacement of the existing complement was brought about by stepping up rationalisation measures and resorting to compulsory superannuation. In the last two decades the Winding and Reeling Departments which accounted for a major section of the women workers employed, have been largely modernised. Automatic Winding Machines have replaced the traditional Winding machines, leading to large scale displacement of women workers. An idea of the extent of displacement can be had when it is known that six women workers can now do the job in the automatised Department which formerly required over 36.

Other Mills have found out an even more crude method of doing away with womenworkers. They have resorted to entrusting the work formerly done by womenworkers to contractors. Thus several Mills in the City have closed down sections of Reeling Department with a view to get work done on contract basis - many times from the same displaced women. The only difference is that whereas the women worker concerned earned earlier a daily wage of between Rs.6.50 to Rs.7, she is now constrained to work for the contractor for a pittance of Rs.3/- and often for longer hours.

Attack on Earnings :

The Millowners not only attacked the employment of the women workers, but also their earnings. This they did by condemning them to such departments as Reeling, Winding and

Waste, where the wage level is generally low. A few are employed in the Hosiery section where one exists. Except these all other departments are now purged of the women workers.

#### False Propaganda:

The Millowners, and those who speak for them, maintain that the fall in the level of the employment of women workers has to be attributed to their obstinacy, their refusal to change with the times and learn new processes, their refusal to work in Departments which are not their traditional.

Nothing can be further from truth than this. By offering such explanations the Millowners and their spokesmen are only adding insult to injury. We have yet to hear of a Mill that offered to train it's women workers in new processes and whose plans fondered on their obstinacy. On the contrary, we know of innumerable instances where the women workers under the axe were ready to go to any other Department. What they asked for was training in new processes and sympathy and understanding on the part of Management. And this was denied to them for the Management had already made up it's mind to show them the way out.

#### Lack of Training Facilities :

In the textile industry there are no training facilities for women workers. Earlier they used to get their training on the job itself. The Mills used to issue "Learners' Passes" to young girls - mostly relations of their own women workers. And the juniors learned the trade in course of time at the instance of their seniors.

The Mills have long discarded this age-old system-at least in respect of women workers, and have not introduced any new one in it's place. And still they have the cheek to say that the women workers are averse to learn anything new.

A lie to the propoganda of Mills and their spokesmen is given by the growing number of women workers that are finding their way into electrical and pharmaceutical industries. If the textile industry had offered to impart training to women workers, there is no reason why young girls would not have entered it.

#### Why the Massacre?

The fact of the matter is that the Millowners have discovered that it pays more to employ a male worker than a woman worker. Employment of women workers carries with it obligations such as maintainance of creches, payment of maternity benefits etc. Further the Millowners know it from their experience what a militant section the womenworkers in the industry comprise. Taking all this in view they seem to have concluded that the employment of male workers is much more profitable than that of womenworkers, and are faithfully acting on it.



Equal Right to work Negated:

If the Millowners are allowed to have their way, the time would not be far off when there would not be a single woman worker left in the industry. The existing women workers are fast approaching their superannuation, and employment of women workers in the industry would soon become a thing of the past. The basic law of the land bestows 'equal right of work' on the women workers, but does not provide conditions in which the right can be a reality.

Betrayal by Union :

The Recognised Unions at the different textile centres in the State have hardly done anything either to protect the source of livelihood of the women workers, or their right to work. In fact through the various agreements they have signed with the Mills, in respect of introduction of " New Processes " in Winding and Reeling, by acquiescing and at times conniving at the introduction of contract system in sections where earlier women workers found employment, by voicing the Mill Owners' case and thus giving them an alibi and finally by not taking any firm measures in defence of the women workers' rights and interests - they have helped the Mills to push them out of the industry.

Women Workers on the Path of Struggle :

The women workers have, however, not accepted this position lying down. They have tried to assert their right to the extent they could. Also they have, through trade unions loyal to their interests and other organisations like the Committee for the Defence of the Working Women, put their case before the Country and the people. A petition and a march organised in this behalf by the Committee in October 1964 to the State Assembly needs a special mention.

Some Suggestions :

With a view to protecting the right of women workers to work in the industry, we would urge the Committee :

- i) to recommend that at least 20 per cent of the jobs in the Mills be earmarked for women workers, and the immediate recruitment of women workers so as to attain this mark in the near future, and not later than 1971.
- ii) to recommend that immediate arrangements be made in Mills and outside for imparting training to the women workers in the processes in the industry.

Only through measures such as these can the right of the women workers be imparted reality.

APPRENTICE WORKERS

We must also add a word about the apprentices. The apprentice system too, in some of the Mills, is abused to serve as a source of cheap labour.

Normally there is a time limit for which a young worker can be employed as an apprentice. After he completes his term of apprenticeship and passes the required tests, he is either to be employed as a regular worker or discharged with a certificate. But he can not certainly be continued as an apprentice indefinitely. We have however come across instances where the apprentices had completed their terms and were yet continued as apprentices. Though designated and paid as apprentice, they are given work like the other regular workers of the department and subjected to the same rules and discipline.

On our enquiring in one case as to why they did not leave the mill under such conditions, they said that the management had threatened them that they would not issue them the certificate of having completed the apprenticeship should they leave the mill without their permission. Thus under the threat of blocking their certificate the ~~MANAGEMENT WAS~~ management was subjecting them to a worst type of exploitation.

We would request the committee to take a note of such malpractices and recommend measures with a view to put them a stop.

Really  
Need of a Healthy Representative Union:

The suggestions we have made above in respect of Badali and women workers are by no means exclusive, and more can be added. But ultimately the efficacy of all measures must depend on there being a real representative Union - and not just a 'recognised' union in the industry. Only such a union can be counted upon to defend the legitimate interests of these like all other sections of workers. We would therefore, expect the committee to express itself on this, though the subject is not specifically included in its terms of reference.

Lastly, we would emphasise that in order to get a true picture of the conditions of Badali and Women workers, it would not be adequate for the committee to go only through the Memoranda received from the different interests. The Committee must we feel, visit the Mills and centres run under the Decasualisation scheme and examine a fair cross-section of Badali and Women workers if it is to get a first hand account in this respect. In this we will extend every co-operation to the Committee, should it choose to avail of it.

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I. Recognition of unions:

At present there is no statutory machinery either under the Industrial Disputes Act or the Indian Trade Unions Act, making it binding on the employer to recognise a trade union of employees, as under the Bombay Industrial Relations Act. The absence of any provision regarding a single bargaining agent gives rise to the problem of multiplicity of unions. All such unions have to agree to any proposals before it can be incorporated as an agreement or a settlement. In practice, this means the negation of collective bargaining. Any number of unions can function in a concern and complete for the following of the workers with the result that the employer is not in a position to deal with a single union and make lasting agreement with it. This jeopardises industrial peace. It is, therefore, desirable to provide for statutory recognition of an exclusive bargaining agent by the employer on its fulfilling certain conditions, as under the Bombay Industrial Relations Act. The only difference may be that the unit for the purpose should be an undertaking and not an industry.

(2) The Industrial Disputes Act applies to all establishments big and small, whether factories or otherwise, which come within the definition of the term 'industry' which is very wide. It would probably be impracticable to introduce a scheme of an exclusive bargaining agent in every unit covered by the Industrial Disputes Act, but the scope of this provision could be restricted in the first instance to industrial establishments employing a certain number of workers, say, 100 or more.

desirable features of the Bombay Industrial Relations Act should be introduced in the Industrial Disputes Act in order to get over the practical difficulties that are being encountered in the working of the latter Act. Government had also given an assurance on the Floor of the Legislature that it would consider this question in consultation with the representatives of the employers and employees. Accordingly, the proposals for amendments to the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, in its application to the State of Maharashtra, are given in the attached note.

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Memorandum on the amendments to the Industrial Disputes Act in its application to the State of Maharashtra.

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Prior to 1st May 1965 there were three different laws in force in the different areas of the State relating to the regulation of relations of employers and employees and settlement of industrial disputes. The Bombay Industrial Relations Act, 1946, was in the Bombay area of the State of Maharashtra, and applied to certain specified industries such as textiles, sugar, textile processing etc; the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, applied to other industries. The Central Provinces and Berar Industrial Disputes Settlement Act, 1947, was in force in the Vidarbha region of the State and applied to all industries falling within the State sphere, except Saw Mills. The Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, applied to all industries in the Marathwada area of the State. In keeping with the assurance given by the Government on the Floor of the Legislature, and after ascertaining the views of the representatives of the employers and employees, the Bombay Industrial Relations (Extension and Amendment) Act, 1964, was enacted. The Act, which came into force from 1st May 1965, has extended the Bombay Industrial Relations Act, 1946, throughout the State of Maharashtra and has repealed the Central Provinces Act. At the time of undertaking this legislation, the representatives of employers and employees had generally expressed themselves against extension of the Bombay Industrial Relations Act to additional industries, say, for example, Engineering Industry, because, according to them industry-wise application of the Act with a single bargaining agent for the industry as a whole in a local area, would create its own problems. The parties were, however, of the opinion that though the remaining industries could, by and large, continue to be governed by the Industrial Disputes Act, certain

II. Notice of strike and lock out : . . . . .

Under section 22 of the Industrial Disputes Act, no person employed in a public utility service shall go on strike or no employer carrying on any public utility service shall lock out any of his workmen, without giving notice as provided thereunder. However, there is no such provision in regard to non-public utility service and, in the absence of such provision, strikes or lock-outs become fait accompli before Government can think of remedial action. It is proposed that provision may be made, as under the Bombay Industrial Relations Act, ~~xxxx xxxxxxx xix ix~~ **for** requiring the workmen, even in non-public utility service, to give a notice of strike. Similarly, provision may also be made to require an employer to give a notice of lock out. The intention is not to bring non-public utility services exactly on par with public utility services, and Government would reserve to itself the right to admit such disputes in conciliation, and refer for adjudication, as at present. The provision is thought of so that Government would not be caught unawares by sudden strikes and lock-outs in any industry, which, though non-public utility service, is nevertheless of importance.

(2) At present strikes or lock outs in public utility services are prohibited in certain circumstances mentioned in section 22, and if such strikes are commenced or declared in contravention of this section, such strikes or lock-outs are illegal. It is proposed that strikes or lock outs in non-public utility services should likewise be deemed illegal in similar circumstances. Similarly, strikes and lock-outs during the pendency of proceedings before the

Court of Enquiry may also be deemed to be illegal under section 24.

(3) Under the Bombay Industrial Relations Act, as amended recently, it has been provided that if the employer does not agree to submit the dispute for voluntary arbitration during the conciliation proceedings, strike, if any, resorted to by the workers during the pendency of arbitration proceedings before the Industrial Court, should not be illegal.

Corresponding provision in similar circumstances has been made in respect of lock-outs by employers. This has been done to encourage settlement of disputes through voluntary arbitration. It is proposed that similar provision may be made with regard to strikes or lock outs under the Industrial Disputes Act.

### III. Introduction of change:

Under section 9A of the Industrial Disputes Act, no employer who proposes to effect any change in the conditions of service applicable to any workman in respect of any matter specified in the Fourth Schedule, shall effect such change without giving to the workman likely to be affected by such change, a notice of change in the prescribed manner or within 21 days of giving such notice. It is, however, open to the employer to effect change after the expiry of this period if the matter is not in the meanwhile taken into conciliation. It is also open to him to effect the change after the completion of the conciliation proceedings, but before a reference is made to the Tribunal. Under the Bombay Industrial Relations Act, it is not possible for an employer to make any change in any industrial matter where no settlement is arrived at, before the date on which the award of the arbitrator or Industrial Court or decision of the Wage Board comes into

operation. Similar provision existed under the Central Provinces and Berar Industrial Disputes Settlement Act also. It is, therefore, proposed that it should not be open to an employer to introduce the change until there is an agreement or settlement or an award on the subject. However, if on receipt of failure report by Government under section 12(4), Government rejects the reference of the dispute for adjudication under section 12(5), the employer could thereafter be free to carry out the change.

IV. Authority to determine the legality or otherwise of a strike, lock-out or change:

There is no provision under the Industrial Disputes Act whereby an actual or proposed strike or lock-out, or a change can be declared illegal. It would appear desirable to take power for the purpose. The experience under the Bombay Industrial Relations Act, which has provision in this respect, is that such declaration acts as a deterrent to the parties and almost invariably prevents them from launching a precipitate action. There should also be corresponding safeguards, as under the Bombay Industrial Relations Act, with a view to assist the parties to retract their action within 48 hours of the declaration.

(2) Power may, therefore, be given to the Labour Court under the Industrial Disputes Act to declare whether a strike, lock out or change is illegal. Provision may also be made to the effect that the decision or order of the Labour Court in this behalf should not be called in question in any proceedings under the Act. The Labour Court may also be given power to try criminal cases, as under the Bombay Industrial Relations Act, with provisions for appeal



to the Industrial Court, because in the absence of such provision there may be conflict in the decision that may be given by the Labour Court and the decision given by the trying Magistrate in case of prosecution for illegal strikes, illegal lock-outs, or illegal changes under the Act.

V. Appointment of Tripartite Conciliation and Adjudication Boards:

Under the Act as it stands at present, there is a provision to appoint a Board of Conciliation for settlement of a particular dispute, but the Board has to be constituted as and when an occasion arises, and after consultation with the parties. When a strike is imminent, it is not always possible to follow these formalities which result in loss of time. It is, therefore, proposed that provision may be made for appointment of standing Tripartite Conciliation Boards under the Industrial Disputes Acts for quick settlement of disputes. These Boards would have permanent representatives of workmen and employers on industry-wise basis. It is also proposed that provision may be made for a tripartite Adjudication Board on the lines of the Wage Boards under the Bombay Industrial Relations Act to which certain issues could be referred for adjudication.

VI. Modification of award or settlement:

Under the Act as it stands at present, there is no provision whereby a settlement or an award can be modified. It has been held by the Courts that as long as there is a subsisting settlement or award there cannot be an industrial dispute. Under sections 116 and 116A of the Bombay Industrial Relations Act, it is open to the parties to seek modification of a settlement and award, as the case may be, should circumstances so demand. Similar provision may, therefore, be made under the Industrial Disputes Act, also.

VII. Relief in individual cases of dismissal, discharge, removal, retrenchment, termination of service or suspension of a workman:

Under the Bombay Industrial Relations Act, it is open to the individual workman to approach the Labour Court direct, and challenge the propriety or legality of an order passed by the employer acting or purporting to act under the standing orders, relating to discharge, dismissal, etc. of the workman and the Labour Court is empowered to grant reinstatement and other consequential reliefs.

Recently, Bombay Industrial Relations Act has been amended to empower the Labour Court to require an employer to reinstate an employee with full back wages and compensation, in certain circumstances.

(2) Under the Industrial Disputes Act, as it stands at present, a body of workmen has to raise a dispute on behalf of the individual workman ~~xxx~~ and only then the individual dispute assumes the character of an "industrial dispute" and the machinery under the Industrial Disputes Act can be set in motion. The Industrial Disputes (Second Bill, Amendment) ~~xxxx~~ 1964, which is before Parliament, provides that such individual disputes should be deemed to be "industrial disputes" for the purposes of the Industrial Disputes Act, but nevertheless Government will have to refer such disputes for adjudication. It is proposed that the Industrial Disputes Act may be amended to empower an individual workman to approach the Labour Court direct for suitable relief on the lines of similar provision under the Bombay Industrial Relations Act and the Order passed by the Labour Court will be <sup>deemed</sup> ~~xxxxxx~~ to be an award under the Industrial Disputes Act. Alternatively, similar amendment could be made under the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946.