

Tushar Kanti Ghosh who is the Editor of this Amrita Bazar Patrika and also the relevant proceedings of Parliament of the 16th and I am sure—I know Mr. Tushar Kanti Ghosh—he himself will condemn this thing.

**SHRI A. D. MANI (Madhya Pradesh) :** Not condemn, but disapprove.

**SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA :** I do not wish to condemn the press but I wish only to point out to you...

*(Interruptions)*

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN :** You have made your point; that will do.

**SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA :** Let Mr. Tushar Kanti Ghosh say whether it is fair reporting. It is most unfair, tendentious, malicious reporting and this sort of thing should not be done when you report parliamentary proceedings. In their editorial and other columns they can say whatever they like ; I do not bother about it.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN :** Mr. Bhupesh Gupta has drawn the attention of the House to some report that has appeared in the papers which is not correct according to him. If this is true, I feel there should be a fair and correct reporting of the proceedings of the House.

**SHRI G. H. VALIMOHMED MOMIN (Gujarat) :** He has not placed the paper before the House. We do not know what has been written.

**SHRI M. PURKAYASTHA (Assam) :** We do not know what the comments are and how can we say anything on it? How can you accept whatever he has said?

*(Interruptions)*

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN :** I have not accepted anything. That is why I qualified my statement.

**SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA :** In that case allow me to read this.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN :** I have said that if what Mr. Bhupesh Gupta has said is true, then it is not proper; there should be correct and fair reporting of the proceedings of the House. I have not accepted anything.

**SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA :** Sir, this is not the way of protecting a Member. I would request you to direct the Secretariat to send the proceedings to Mr. Tushar Kanti Ghosh and...

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN :** There is a statement to be made by the Labour Minister now.

#### STATEMENT BY MINISTER

#### IV. REGARDING THE CONTINUED STRIKE BY ENGINEERING WORKERS IN JAMSHEDPUR

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR, EMPLOYMENT AND REHABILITATION (SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD) :** Sir, may I lay the statement on the Table ?

**SHRI MULKA GOVINDA REDDY (Mysore) :** If the statement is not long, let him read it. We would like to ask questions.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN :** It is a long statement.

**SHRI MULKA GOVINDA REDDY :** In that case we should be allowed to put some questions tomorrow.

*(Interruptions)*

**SOME HON. MEMBERS :** Let him read it out.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN :** All right.

**SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD :** Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, The House will recall my statement made on the 25th November 1969, on the situation arising out of the strike in seven major engineering establishments in Jamshedpur. According to further information received from the Government of Bihar, efforts made by the officers of the State Labour Department to bring about the resumption of the work of the Tripartite Committee were not successful. Thereupon, conciliation proceedings were initiated and settlements were entered into between the managements and the recognised unions of TELCO, THE TIN PLATE CO. OF INDIA and THE INDIAN TUBE CO. on December 7. A bipartite settlement through the good offices of the Conciliation Officers at Jamshedpur has also since been reached between the management and the recognised union of Tata-Robins-Fraer

[Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad]

Efforts are now in progress to bring about similar settlements in the remaining three establishments.

However, the strike in all the seven establishments is continuing. I am happy to say that, by and large, the strike has remained peaceful so far, although there have been some cases of assault, affray and wrongful confinement. According to information received by us, 90 persons including some workmen were taken into custody in 41 separate specific cases arising out of some incidents in relation to the strike. Some of these persons have already been released on bail.

We are naturally greatly concerned over the continuance of a strike involving a large number of workers in an important industrial centre of the country. As I have indicated above, the State Government have made very diligent efforts to promote the resolution of the dispute and the termination of the strike. We are keeping ourselves in close and continuous touch with the State Government. I understand that the Adviser to the Governor of Bihar is expected to be in Jamshedpur today to continue the State Government's efforts towards a settlement. I hope that with understanding and cooperation from both sides, the strike would soon be called off and work resumed.

SHRI P. C. MITRA (Bihar) : Sir, a month has elapsed since the commencement of the strike involving about 40,000 regular workers and 40,000 more casual workers and the Government say that they are very satisfied with the steps that have been taken by them. The other day the hon. Minister assured us that they would try to see that there was no victimisation but at the same time a large number of persons have been arrested under certain sections of the Cr. P.C. And which are those sections? The Minister says there was no violence and it was all peaceful. At the same time they were arrested under sections 144, 107 and 117 of the Cr. P.C. They have declared everything as unlawful and...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : What is the question?

SHRI P. C. MITRA : I would like to know whether it is not a fact that while the strike was called by a workers' union under the leadership of the Engineering Workers' Co-ordination Committee the

conciliation proceedings took place with persons who had not called the strike. It is a peculiar thing that the persons who actually called the strike were not contacted at all. None of them was present and...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : You put the question.

SHRI P. C. MITRA : And the Minister says that an agreement has been entered into but agreement was entered into with whom? Not with the workers' representatives but with some persons . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : But what is your question?

SHRI N. K. SHEJWALKAR (Madhya Pradesh) : He has asked whether it is not a fact; if it is not a question, what is it? He is asking the question.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Yet this is not the way to go on making statement after statement.

SHRI P. C. MITRA : It is a very important question. Forty thousand workers are on strike.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : That is true and that is why I have given you an opportunity to put a question.

SHRI P. C. MITRA : According to the agreement, the new scales of pay, etc. will be given from the 16th October 1969, but according to the Chairman, Wage Board's recommendations . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Please put your question.

SHRI P. C. MITRA : I am putting my question. May I know whether it is a fact that the new pay scales are effective from the 15th October, 1969 whereas the Wage Board recommended that the new scales should have effect from October, 1968? One year is gone. May I know whether it is not a fact that such an agreement has been reached? My point is . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : No point. You ask a question.

SHRI P. C. MITRA : For one year, for thirteen months, the workers are not being given the increase. May I know whether the Minister will give an assurance that this agreement will be superseded by the

agreement that the Tripartite Committee will make about the wage structure? My point is...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : No point.

SHRI P. C. MITRA : May I know whether the Government is willing...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Why do you not put your question?

SHRI P. C. MITRA : May I know whether the Government is agreeable to refer the disputed matters to the Tripartite Committee and whatever decision the Tripartite Committee will make, I am giving you an assurance, the workers will accept? They will accept that decision. May I know whether the Government is ready to refer all the disputed matters to the Tripartite Committee?

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD : It is true that the strike was called by the Co-ordination Committee. In my reply in this House to Mr. Chitta Basu's question whether the Minister would give an assurance that no agreement would be arrived at between the recognised union and the employers, I said I could not say. The agreement has been arrived at by a recognised union and the employers. Whatever may be the union, it is a very good agreement arrived at in the interests of labour. Labour have never questioned it...

HON. MEMBERS. No, no.

(Interruptions)

SHRI MONORANJAN ROY (West Bengal) : Was it in the interests of the Tata Company, the monopolists, to negotiate with the minority union? The Minister himself has said that the strike was absolutely peaceful and he was happy. Still was it not at the instance of the Tatas that the leaders of the workers were arrested? One after another, ninety of them were put in prison, without any serious charges. Is it a fact that the minority union is recognised by the employers, but not by the workers? That union does not represent the workers and forty thousand workers are on strike. The Co-ordinating committee, including the Congress and four other political parties—the CPI, the Marxist Communist Party, the PSP and SSP are now guiding the strike...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : You put your question.

SHRI MONORANJAN ROY : Is it a fact? My question is why that Co-ordination Committee was not consulted by the Government's Labour Department. Why were they not called to the Tripartite meeting? Why were they not called to the conciliation meeting? Under the Industrial Disputes Act, when the conciliation officer...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : That will do. How many questions will you put? You have put many questions.

SHRI MONORANJAN ROY : I tried to put questions by way of questions, short notice questions, calling attention notice. All were rejected. When the Labour Minister himself has come forward with a statement, I want to know why, when there is, under the Industrial Disputes Act...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : You have already said all these things. You are repeating.

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD : The hon. Member is right. Why is it that the Tripartite Committee was not called and the issue settled there, instead of the issue being settled by the recognised union? That is the question. The Tripartite Committee was set up on the 13th of September, 1969. It held meetings on the 15, 16 and 17th November. While the meeting of the Tripartite Committee was going on, the workers went on strike at Jamshedpur. Then, later on, the workers' representatives withdrew from the Tripartite Committee and so also the employers. We tried our best to bring them together. We could not succeed. In the meantime, when this impasse was there, the employers and the recognised union entered into a settlement. Under that settlement in Teco they are getting Rs. 200 and in another Rs. 190. In many cases... (Interruptions). Let me finish. I am replying. I can reply to all, but let me have my say. I would say that the agreement arrived at with the workers is, in many respects, better than what has been done in West Bengal. The workers are not disputing the agreement.

SHRI MONORANJAN ROY : On a point of order...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Mr. Mulka Govinda Reddy.

SHRI MONORANJAN ROY : On a point of order...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : I have called Mr. Mulka Govinda Reddy.

SHRI MONORANJAN ROY : The workers, the Tatas and the Central Government...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : I have called Mr. Mulka Govinda Reddy.

SHRI MULKA GOVINDA REDDY : I would like to know from the Minister how many workers were suspended and whether steps are being taken to see that they are reinstated and whether he would give an assurance that there would be no victimisation because they went on this strike, though the strike will continue.

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD : In fact, this is the main question. An agreement has been arrived at which the workers do not challenge.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Let him reply please.

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD : The hon. Member has asked how many workers had been suspended. I would say 137 were suspended—103 in Telco, 17 in the Tin Plate Company and 17 in the Indian Tube Company. We are trying to persuade and ask the management that they should withdraw the suspension. They say that after an agreement has been arrived at, they are prepared to pay to the suspended workers their full wage from the day the workers join. Therefore, there are two sides. One side says that the suspension should be withdrawn and the charge-sheets should be withdrawn. Then, they will resume. The management is saying that they are not prepared to withdraw the suspension and the charge sheets. The day the workers join, even the suspended workers will get their full pay. Secondly, their decision is subject to appeal to the Adviser of the Bihar Government. It should be seen from this position. In this position the strike stands. We are trying to persuade them and to reach an agreement. About the settlement, as I said, they have entered into a settlement. The hitch is about the suspended workers and not about the actual agreement which has been arrived at. That is the present position. One important question, about Government's attitude. We do not want after the strike is called off that there should be any victimisation because the strike has been there. That is our attitude.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Mr. Bhadram. That is the last question.

SHRI M. V. BHADRAM (Andhra Pradesh) : The hon. Minister has stated that an agreement has been reached on the 7th December 1969, with a union. But the fact remains that normalcy has not been restored. I want to know whether it is not due to the fact that the agreement was with a union which is a hopelessly minority union. That is number one. Number two, the agreement does not speak anything about victimisation. Number three, there is difference of opinion between the employers and employees particularly with regard to the agreement being enforced with retrospective effect. Further, is it not a fact that all the workers who are charge-sheeted under sec. 107 Cr. P.C.—which means they have to give a bond for good behaviour . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Put the question.

SHRI M. V. BHADRAM : Is it not a fact that workers have been arrested under sections 107, 151 and 188 for violation of section 144? Is it not a fact that four M.Ps. are also charge-sheeted under sec. 188? In view of this situation, will the Government, as I explained last time also, call the parties to Delhi, restore the *status quo* first, and start negotiations in Delhi?

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD : It is a fact that though the agreement has been arrived at, the strike has not been called off.

AN HON. MEMBER : Why ?

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD : Please bear me. I will tell you why. The workers are not challenging about the agreement arrived at. The workers are not talking about retrospective effect. All that they are saying is that now that the agreement has been arrived at the suspension and charge-sheet which had been done during the strike should be withdrawn and then they will go to their work. That is their main contention. About the minority and majority unions, so long as the method of verification exists the union exists. I cannot by my sweet will say that you are no longer a recognised union. That is not under my power. These are the two points I can say. We are trying our best to see that the strike should be called off and there should be understanding between the employers and the employees. That is what we are trying our best to do.

(Several hon. Members stood up.)

SHRI NIREN GHOSH (West Bengal):  
One point . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : You  
have spoken on a large number of occasions. Now I think . . .

श्री राजनारायण (उत्तर प्रदेश) : श्रीमान्,  
इनको इजाजत मिली हुई है।

SHRI C. D. PANDE (Uttar Pradesh):  
This is a very important question.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : There  
is no other business now. We have already  
sat twenty-five minutes more. I think it is  
time for adjournment. I adjourn the  
House till 11 tomorrow morning.

The House then adjourned at  
twenty-five minutes past five of  
the clock till eleven of the clock  
on Friday, the 19th December,  
1969.