

CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS

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PRESS COMMUNIQUE:

2nd June, 1972.

STOP THIS GROSS INSULT
TO INDIAN SEAMEN

Com. B. T. Ranadive, President, CITU in a letter to Union Labour Minister Shri R. K. Khadilkar has urged him to convene a meeting of all the trade unions concerned to discuss the gross insult done to the Indian seamen by the Fair Practices Committee of the International Transport Workers Federation which has categorised Indian seamen as "crews of convenience" depriving them facilities available to other seamen in Western countries.

The following is the full text of the letter dated 1st June, 1972.

"Perhaps you are aware of the decision of the Fair Practices Committee of the International Transport Workers Federation treating Indian seamen as crews of convenience which will deprive Indian seamen of the benefits relating to wages and service conditions available to seamen belonging to Western countries. As the Economic Times dated May 25, 1972 has reported, "This decision, if given effect to by foreign shipowners would mean denial of standard wages or security of employment to Indian seamen. The usual facilities and amenities now being offered to them may also be withdrawn."

"Though it has been admitted that the Indian seamen are having the same standard of work as that of seamen from Western countries this decision of the International Transport Workers Federation amounts to gross insult to Indian seamen.

"We have noted the disapproval expressed by the Government of India of this decision and its proposal to send a deputation to get the decision changed. However, mere verbal expression of opinion will have no impact on the Fair Practices Committee which has deliberately downgraded the status of Indian seamen. We expect strong action from the Government in the matter. No self-respecting Government can accept such an insulting treatment to its citizens.

"What is surprising is that the National Union of Seamen of India which is affiliated to the International Transport Workers Federation has not yet condemned this insulting decision.

"We are further surprised to note that this along with another Union has been recognised by the Government as the sole bargaining agent on behalf of seamen. The Government owes an explanation on this account to the people of India.

"The CITU therefore urges that the Government should immediately launch its strong protest at this gross insult to our seamen and take appropriate steps to ensure that this insult is done away with.

"We also request the Government to convene a meeting of all the unions working among seamen and consider ways and means of counter-acting the anti-Indian steps taken by the so-called Fair Practices Committee."

Secretary.

The News Editor,

_____ for favour of publication.