

Press Handout :

S.Y. Kolhatkar, Vice President, Centre of Indian Trade Unions has issued the following statement :-

" Assembly of more than four persons, meetings and processions have been banned in the Bhandup area by an order of the Commissioner of Police since 1 A.M. Monday July 20, 1970.

The prohibitory order is manifestly aimed at paralysing the activity of the workers of the Ceat Tyre Factory who have been on strike for the last 107 days and helping the management to break the strike.

All the efforts of the Ceat Tyre Management to break the strike through disruption and police harassment having failed, the management has now taken to recruitment of blacklegs through the Kamgar Sona, the labour wing of Shivasena. These blacklegs are receiving heavy police protection and it is to protect them that the prohibitory orders have been issued. The order operates only against the strikers while the S.S. blacklegs are allowed to march in procession to the factory.

It has been declared policy of the Maharashtra Government that blacklegs recruited during a strike will not receive police protection. I have been assured by no less a person than the Labour Minister that this policy continues unchanged. The actions of the Police in Bhandup are just the opposite.

It may be noted that settlement of the strike has been blocked by the obdurate insistence of the Ceat Management on mass-victimisation of workers leaders. It is shocking to see that the authority and repressive powers of the Government are even then being used to persecute the striking workers and abet the management efforts to break the strike.

We appealed to the Commissioner of Police to withdraw the prohibitory orders and let the striking workers exercise their rights of holding meetings, taking out processions and peaceful picketing. The appeal has gone unheeded.

We therefore feel that these prohibitory orders, are a blatant attack on the workers' right to strike and constitutes a challenge to entire Trade Union movement. We therefore appeal to all Central Trade Union Organisations to take up this challenge and help the Ceat Workers win their battle against victimisation and repression. The CITU has decided to start a programme of symbolic breaking of the ban from Thursday the 30th July.

The first batch defying the ban will be led by Com. S.Y. Kolhatkar Vice President of the ~~the~~ CITU on Thursday morning at 8 A.M. at Agra Road Bhandup

We will also place this proposal before the representatives of ~~the~~ Central Trade Unions who will be meeting tonight at 8.00 P.M. at Janashakti Hall, Worli, and seek their cooperation.

Dated 28th July 1970.

(S.Y. Kolhatkar)
Vice President, Centre of
Indian Trade Unions.