

C E N T R E O F I N D I A N T R A D E U N I O N S

President : B.T.Ranadive
General Secretary : P.Ramamurti

172, Lenin Sarani,
Calcutta - 13

Camp: 4, Ashoka Road,
New Delhi-1

5th Feb.1972

PRESS COMMUNIQUE :

Deputation to the President of India
- The CITU demands end of terror in
W.Bengal

A five member deputation of the CITU met President of India Shri V.V.Giri to-day and submitted a memorandum regarding suppression of trade union and democratic rights in West Bengal.

The deputation was led by Com.P.Ramamurti, General Secretary, CITU. Other members of the deputation were Com.Md.Ismail, M.P. (Vice-President, CITU) , Com.S.Y.Kolhatkar (Vice-President, CITU) Com.E.Balanandan (Vice-President, CITU) and Com.M.K.Pandhe (Secretary, CITU) .

The Memorandum pointed out that between the end of 1969 till the end of November 1971 more than 500 persons connected with the trade union, kisan, students and democratic movements were killed, murdered or shot in West Bengal. Among them the number of those connected with trade union movement has already reached 150.

The CITU charged that these murders are carried out by anti-social elements hired by Congress(R) and helped by the Police,CRP and the administration. The Memorandum noted :

" The anti-social elements are recruited by the ruling party in hundreds - they act under the cover of the Chhatra Parishad and in broad-day light attack the workers' residential localities. The police is on the scene to help them.

Fully armed with pipe guns, and bombs and often supplied with police rifles, they let loose a reign of terror in localities and factories under CITU influence. They murder individual workers, dragging them from the buses and public vehicles and prevent them from entering the factories.

They raid union offices, take forcible possession and make it impossible to carry on the normal functioning of the trade unions. They forcibly extract subscriptions and other funds for Congress unions. The situation could not be made worse if you had under an ordinance banned all trade unions functioning in those areas."

The memorandum gave several cases where CITU trade union offices were burnt or forcibly occupied by anti-social elements. The police have also attacked and ransacked a number of union offices.

The CITU leaders attacked the police-Raj prevalent in West Bengal and pointed out the open association of police in these gangster attacks on trade union movement . It stated :

" The police in West Bengal, under the orders from the Home Department of the Government of India, are a party to this orgy of massacres and semi-fascist terror. I have to state with all the emphasis I can command, that the police often accompany the goondas when they raid working class and other localities.

" It is a significant to note that under the pressure of political parties and public opinion, Sidhartha Shankar Roy, Minister-in-charge of West Bengal, had to promise an inquiry into the Cossipore massacre of August, 1971. But because the police officials were assured of a free hand, he withdrew the promise and refused to have an enquiry."

While the anti-social elements are protected the trade union functionaries are arrested under Prevention of Violent Activities Act, Maintenance of Internal Security Act or involved in thousands of false cases, Even when the courts release a person the police arrest him under the Preventive Detention Act. The Congress(R) Government is using political terror under the Presidential regime to intimidate the opposition and coerce the masses into voting for it in the coming elections.

The deputation therefore demanded immediate end to this terror, release of all political prisoners and restoration of freedom for T.U. and democratic movement. It further demanded lifting of emergency and creating conditions to ensure free and fair elections.

The President after hearing the deputation agreed to talk to the Prime Minister in the matter.

.....

To

The Editor/Spl. Correspondent,

.....

.....