

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE
INDIAN BRANCH

C 1903/117

Report for August 1938.

N.B. Every section of this Report may be taken out separately.

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Ratifications.

Sickness Insurance for Seamen: Government Examining
Restricted Schemes. -

According to the Times of India of 2-8-1938, the Government of India is exploring the possibilities of introducing some system of sickness insurance for a particular class of seamen at special centres. The cooperation of the shipping companies, on whom it may be necessary to levy contributions, will be essential in any such scheme. The question is to be finally decided after ascertaining the opinion of the commercial community in the country. It has however, been decided by the Government of India, in connection with the recommendations of the Labour Commission, that the starting of sickness insurance schemes covering all classes of workers is not practicable for the time being.

The Proposal in its restricted form is a sequel to the examination by the Government of India of the possibility of giving effect to the I.L. Convention re. sickness insurance adopted at the 21st I.L. Conference. It will be remembered that in the Statement on the action the Government proposed to take on the Draft Convention and Recommendations of the 21st and the 22nd I.L. Conferences laid on the table of the Legislative Assembly on 1-10-1938, it was stated that the question of giving effect to these this Convention "is still under examination" (vide page 10 of our November 1937 report).

After examining the provisions of the Convention ^{on the subject} adopted at ^{the} ~~the~~ ^{21st session of the} ~~the~~ ⁽¹⁹³⁵⁾ I.L. Conference, the Government of India, according to the note in the Times of India, is of opinion that the institution of a system of compulsory sickness insurance in India for the benefit of all seamen covered by the convention and the grant of cash and other benefits contemplated therein cannot be undertaken except as part of a comprehensive scheme covering all classes of workers. Moreover, in view of the fact that most Indian seamen are part-time agriculturists and also owing to the prevailing illiteracy and unemployment among seamen, Government feels that the establishment of a compulsory system of insurance based on the provisions of the convention is not feasible at present. ✓

Implementing I.L. Convention re. Minimum Age (Industry) (Revised):
Government of India introduced Employment of
Children Bill, 1938.

On 15-8-1938, the Hon'ble Sir, M. Zafrullah Khan, Labour Member of the Government of India, introduced the Employment of Children Bill, 1938, designed to regulate the age of admission of children to certain forms of industrial employment. The statement of Objects and Reasons appended to the Bill is reproduced below:-

The 23rd Session of the International Labour Conference adopted a Convention in which a special Article for India was inserted, fixing the minimum age at which children may be employed or may work in the transport of passengers, goods or mails by rail, or in the handling of goods at docks, wharves or quays, at 13 years. This Bill provides for prohibiting the employment of children under 15 in occupations connected with the transport of goods, passengers or mails on railways, and for raising the minimum age for handling goods in docks from 12, the age fixed by section 6 (1A) of the Indian Ports Act, 1908, to 14, the age recommended by the Royal Commission on Labour. A simple procedure enabling employers to safeguard themselves against transgression of the Act by furnishing themselves with, or requiring candidates for employment to possess, certificates of age, is provided in the Bill.

The Text of the Bill is published at pages 283-284 of Part V of the Gazette of India dated 20-8-1938. ✓

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National Labour Legislation.

The Bombay Industrial Disputes Bill, 1938.

Reference was made at pages 5-7 of our Report for July 1938 to the Bombay Industrial Disputes Bill, 1938. The Text of the Bill is published at pages 446-491 of Part V of the Bombay Government Gazette dated 30-7-1938. ✓

The Bill was introduced in the Bombay Legislative Assembly on 2-8-1938. (The Times of India, 3-9-1938).

Providing Rooms in Factories for Children of Women Workers: Bombay Government Specifies

Names of Factories to make this Provision. →

Reference was made at page 2 of our June 1938 report to the orders issued by the Government of Bombay requiring factories in Bombay Presidency employing more than 100 women workers each to provide suitable rooms in each such factory for the use of the children of its women workers. The Government has now specified at pages 1367 to 1373 of Part IV-A of the Bombay Government Gazette dated 4-8-1938 the names of 150 factories in the Presidency which should provide rooms for children in their factories. ✓

Extension of Bombay Maternity Benefit Act to Gekak Taluka. →

Attention is directed to page 1373 of Part IV-A of the Bombay Government Gazette dated 4-8-1938 where is published a Government notification extending the Bombay Maternity ^{Benefit} Act to the Taluka of Gekak in Belgaum District with effect from 1-9-1938. ✓

The United Provinces Maternity Benefit Act, 1938:
Measure Receives Assent of the Governor.

Reference was made at page 4 of our May 1938 report to the adoption by the United Provinces Legislative Assembly and Council of the U.P. Maternity Benefit Bill on 26-4-1938 and 10-5-1938 respectively. The Act received the assent of the Governor on 2-8-1938 and its text is published at pages 66-69 of Part VII of the United Provinces Gazette dated 6-8-1938. ✓

The United Provinces Trade Union Recognition Bill, 1938:
Labour Minister announces Comprehensive Labour
Legislation Programme.

References were made at pages 5 and 1 of our April and May 1938 reports respectively to the introduction and circulation of the U.P. Trade Union Recognition Bill, 1938. On 5-8-1938 Mr. Raja Ram Shastri, the sponsor of the Bill, moved in the U.P. Legislative Assembly that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee.

Opposition of Sir J.P. Srivastava: In ~~opposing~~ the motion, Sir J.P. Srivastava (Upper India Chamber of Commerce) criticised the provision of the Bill requiring employers to recognise all registered Unions as unwise, since for registration purposes a Union need have a minimum membership of seven only. He warned representatives of labour and the Government against the dangers consequent on impeding the industrial growth of the Province by the advanced a programme of labour legislation.

Views of Hon. Dr. K.N. Katju: The Hon'ble Dr. K.N. Katju, Minister for Labour reminded the House that Government's sympathy with the labour movement was well-known. The Government wanted strong labour organisations in Cawnpore and elsewhere and, at the same time the Government wanted industry also to be well organised. The Congress Government was most anxious to promote cottage as well as large-scale industries. The prosperity of industry was not inconsistent with the prosperity of labour. Government intended to bring forward comprehensive legislation dealing with the entire industrial organisation of the Province, particularly in regard to the method of settlement of industrial disputes. The Select Committee on the Trade Bills (vide pages 1-2 of our January 1938 report), had deliberately suspended their work as the Government did not want piecemeal legislation. He said the U.P. Government would be able to frame a comprehensive bill within two or three months dealing with trade unions as also other aspects of labour problems.

Dr. Katju, however, did not, ~~express~~ at this stage, express the Government's attitude towards the Bill.

The debate on the motion was not over when the House rose for the day. Since the session came to a close on 9-8-1938, the debate will be continued in the next session.

(The Leader, 7-8-1938.) ✓

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The Employment of Children Bill, 1938, introduced in the
Central Assembly: Age of Employment of Children in
Transport, Trades and Ports Raised. +

On 15-8-1938, the Hon'ble Sir M. Zafrullah Khan, Labour Member of the Government of India, introduced the Employment of Children Bill, 1938, designed to regulate the age of admission of children to certain forms of industrial employment. (for fuller details vide page 2 of this report under section "Ratifications".)

The Text of the Bill is published at pages 283-284 of Part V of the Gazette of India dated 20-8-1938. ✓ +

The Employer's Liability Bill, 1938: Introduced in
Central Assembly on 15-8-1938: .

On 15-8-1938 the Hon. Sir M. Zafrullah Khan, Labour Member of the Government of India, introduced in the Central Assembly the Employer's Liability Bill, 1938, which declares that certain defences shall not be raised in suits for damages in British India in respect of injuries sustained by workmen. (For details vide page 2 of our July 1938 report). The text of the Bill is published at pages 285-286 of Part V of the Gazette of India dated 20-8-1938. ✓ +

Persons Employed for Loading or Unloading Mechanically- Propelled Vehicles declared "Workmen" under W.C. Act: Bombay
Government Notification. +

By notification No. 7685 dated 22-7-1938, the Government of Bombay had added to schedule II to the Workmen's Compensation Act, (List of persons included in the definition of ^{the} term "Workman") persons: (1) employed for the purpose of loading or unloading any mechanically-propelled vehicle, or in handling or transport of goods which have been loaded into any mechanically-propelled vehicle; (2) employed in any occupation ordinarily involving outdoor work by any Municipality or by any District Local Board.

(Page 1328 of Part IV-A of the Bombay Government Gazette dated 28-7-1938). ✓

Extension of Certain Labour Acts to British Baluchistan. + 6

Attention is directed to page 1371 of Part I of the Gazette of India dated 13-8-1938 where is published a Notification of the Central Government (No. 200-F dated 10-8-1938) extending the application of the following Acts, among others, to British Baluchistan:

1. The Payment of Wages (Amendment) Act, 1937 (XXII of 1937).
2. The Indian Mines (Amendment) Act, 1937 (XXIX of 1937)
3. The Workmen's Compensation (Amendment) Act, 1938 (IX of 1938)
4. The Trade Disputes (Amendment) Act, 1938 (XVII of 1938).

Safety in Coal Mines: Government of India's Draft Regulations re. dimensions of Pillars and Galleries and Working of Seams.

Attention is directed to pages 1389 to 1391 of Part I of the Gazette of India dated 13-8-1938 where is published the draft of certain amendments (Notification No. M.955 dated 11-8-1938) to the Indian Coal Mines Regulations, 1926. The amendments relate to safety in underground work in mines and regulate the dimensions of pillars and galleries and the working of seams.

The Central Provinces and Berar Factories (Amendment) Bill, 1938:
Levy of Fees from Factories for Inspection.

Attention is directed to page 253 of Part II of the Central Provinces and Berar Gazette dated 19-8-1938 where is published an Official Bill (the Central Provinces and Berar Factories (Amendment) Bill, 1938) which the Government intends introducing in the local Legislative Assembly. The Statement of Objects and Reasons appended to the Bill states that the Sub-Committee of Economy Committee recently appointed by the Provincial Government to make recommendations for retrenchments suggested that a fee should be levied on factories for the inspection of factories conducted by the inspectors under the Factories Act, 1934. In view of the pressing need for economy and of the desirability of making the factory department self-supporting as far as possible, the Government has accepted the recommendation and proposes to give effect to it. +

Two Mining Boards for Bihar set up by Government of India. 7

Attention is directed to pages 1494 to 1495 of Part I of the Gazette of India dated 27-8-1938 where are published two Notifications of the Government of India (Nos. M-1055 (1) and (2) dated 24-8-1938) setting up two Mining Boards in Bihar, one for Coal mines and the other for mines other than Coal mines. The Board for Coal mines consists of seven members: the Chairman and two other members, of whom one represents the interests of mines, nominated by the Government of India; the Chief Inspector of Mines in India as the Ex-officio member; two members nominated by the coalmining industry and one by the Indian Colliery Labour Union.

The second Board also consists of seven members: an Ex-officio Chairman and three other members, of whom two represent the interest of miners, nominated by the Central Government; the Chief Inspector of Mines in India as Ex-officio member; and two nominated by the mining industry. +

Indian Emigration (Amendment) Bill, 1938:

Legislation to regulate Unassisted Emigration of Unskilled Workers

On 6-8-1938, Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai, Secretary, Department of Education, Health and Lands, Government of India, introduced in the Central Legislative Assembly the Indian Emigration (Amendment) Bill, 1938. The Statement of Objects and Reasons appended to the Bill is reproduced below:

Under section 13(1) of the Indian Emigration Act, 1922, the Governor General in Council may prohibit all persons or any specified class of persons from emigrating to any specified country for the purpose of unskilled work. By virtue of the definition of the word "Emigrate" in section 2(1) of the Act the power given by section 13 (1) is restricted to persons under contract or assisted to depart. It has been found that the lack of power to regulate the total flow of emigration for unskilled work, whether assisted or voluntary and whether under contract or not, may operate to the detriment of Indian communities overseas, particularly in times of economic depression. The present Bill is intended to remedy the defect.

Note.- This Bill is the result of the worsening recently of the conditions of service of Indian labourers in Malayan plantation and in Ceylon, references to which have been made in the earlier reports of this Office (vide pages 83-85 of our October 1937 report and page 44 of May 1938 report). In spite of the refusal in

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in October 1937 of the Government of India to accord necessary permission to recruit Indian workers for Ceylon plantations and its orders of May 1938 stopping "assisted" emigration to Malayan plantations, Indian workers in the plantations of these two countries have been alleging that large numbers of Indians have left India for these two countries without "assistance" in quest of work. Such "unassisted" migrants, it is argued, have made the improvement of conditions of workers already in the plantations difficult. The Central Indian Association of Malaya submitted a memorandum on the subject in June 1938 and urged the Government of India to take early measures to control the flow of "unassisted" emigration of Indians to Malaya-(vide page 43 of our June 1938 report).+

The Central Provinces and Berar Unemployment Relief Bill:
Mr. Kalappa gives Notice of Introduction of Legislation.

Mr. V.R.Kalappa, M.L.A (Central Provinces) has given notice of his intention to introduce the C.P. and Berar Unemployment Relief Bill, 1938, in the next session of the C.P. Legislative Assembly to make provision for relief of workers thrown out of employment from industrial occupations. The salient features of the Bill are summarized below:-

Scope. The legislation is to apply to all perennial factories coming under the purview of section 2(j) of the Factories Act, 1934, and to such other factories as the Provincial Government, may, by notification, specify.

Definition of "Unemployed" workers.- An unemployed worker is defined as one who is without employment due to having been discharged on grounds of economy or technical unsuitability for a particular job and registered for suitable employment by a prescribed authority and includes a worker who continues to be without employment for six months or more after the loss of a job for any reason and is registered for suitable employment by a prescribed authority.

Constitution of an Unemployment Relief Fund.- The Provincial Government is to institute an unemployment relief fund to which employers should contribute at the rate of $\frac{1}{2}$ anna per day per worker, towards which he could deduct from the wages of workers at the rate of $\frac{1}{4}$ anna per day per head and the provincial government should contribute every year "such sum as it may deem fit". The Government is to control the management of the fund, publish periodical statements relating to the amount available for benefits and prescribe the scale and conditions of grant of benefits.

Free Public Employment Exchanges to be established by Government.- The Provincial Government may, in consultation with organisations of employers and workers, constitute one or more free public employment exchanges for the purpose of regulating technical training, vocational guidance and recruitment of workers.

S.K.

Restriction on Employers' Powers of Retrenchment and Employment of Substitute. - Employers are not to retrench workers without the concurrence of the recognised trade union concerned, and in case of dispute over this issue, the Government is to order an enquiry on the subject. No employer can without assigning reasons to the Government and the recognised trade union concerned recruit three months before or three months after the date of retrenchment of any of his staff, any worker to the same or similar work that was being done by the retrenched worker.

(Summarised from copy of Bill sent to this Office by Mr. Kalappa.)

(A copy of the Bill was sent to Geneva with this Office's minute D. #/1808/38 dated 1-9-1938.)

Legislation to set up Minimum Wage Machinery in C.P. and Berar:
Mr. Kalappa gives Notice of Bill.

Mr. V.R. Kalappa, M.L.A. (C.P. and Berar), has given notice of his intention to introduce the C.P. and Berar Minimum Wage Fixing Machinery Bill, 1938, in the next session of the C.P. Legislative Assembly to provide for the setting up of "machinery for fixing minimum wages based on a reasonable standard of living for workers employed in industrial establishments, as well as under local bodies and the Public Works Department of the Provincial Government." The main features of the Bill are given below:-

Establishment of Wage Boards. - The Provincial Government is empowered to set up Wage Boards for such areas, trades or industries as it may think fit. The Boards are to consist of an equal number of employers' and workers' representatives, with a Chairman chosen by them jointly or by the Government if they fail to agree on the choice of a Chairman. Each Board is to function for three years.

piece Functions of Boards. - The Boards should fix minimum rates of wages or ~~piece~~ rates payable. In the case of establishments which do not come under the Indian Factories Act, 1934, the Indian Mines Act, 1923, and the C.P. Unregulated Factories Act, 1937, the Wage Boards shall fix the minimum wage on the basis of an 8-hour day.

Employers' obligations. - No employer should pay to a worker less than the minimum daily wage or piece rate fixed by the Board. Further, each employer has to maintain a complete and authentic record of wages paid by him to his workers, and inspectors of factories and mines should have access to such records.

Definitions: "Employer" and "Worker". - (a) "employer" includes an owner, agent, occupier or manager of a factory or mine governed by the Factories Act, 1934, or the Central Provinces Unregulated Factories Act, 1937, or the Indian Mines Act, 1923; and, in the case of a local body or the Public Works Department of the Provincial

Government, means the authority prescribed in this behalf or, where no authority is prescribed, the head of the department.

(b) "Worker" means any person employed, other than in a clerical capacity, in any industrial establishment or in any industry, business or undertaking carried on by a local body or the Public Works Department of the Provincial Government.

(Summarised from copy of the Bill supplied to this Office by Mr. V.R. Kalappa.).

The Bengal Maternity Benefit Legislation:

Bill passed by Legislative Assembly.

Reference was made at pages 10 and 17 of our August and October 1937 Reports respectively to the introduction in the Bengal Legislative Assembly of the Bengal Maternity Benefit Bill, 1937, on 30-9-1937 and its reference to a Select Committee the same day. The Bill, as reported upon the Select Committee, was considered by the House on 22-8-1938 and adopted the same day.

(The Amrita Bazar Patrika, 24-8-1938).

The Travancore Trade Disputes Act, 1938 passed by State Council.

Reference was made at pages 17-18 of our August 1935 Report to the Travancore Trade Disputes Bill, 1935. The second and third readings of the Bill were taken up in the State Council on 19-8-1938. Mr. P.N. Krishna Pillai, labour representative, criticised the Bill as curtailing unduly the workers' right to strike and as lacking in adequate safeguards to protect the workers' interests.

The Bill was passed by the Council the same day.

(The Hindu, 22-8-1938).

(A requisition for ^{two} copies of the Act has ~~be~~ been made, and when received, a copy will be sent to Geneva.).

The Travancore Factories Act, 1938:

Legislation adopted by the State Council.

Reference was made at pages 13-16 of our August 1935 report to the Travancore Factories Bill, 1935, drawn up for introduction in the State Legislature. The State Council took up the second and third readings of the Bill on 19-8-1938. Mr. P.N. Krishna Pillai, labour representative, pleaded for a reduction of the weekly limit of hours of work from 54 to 48. The suggestion was not accepted

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by the Government and the Bill was adopted by the House on
19-8-1938.

(The Hindu, 22-8-1938).

(A requisition for ^{two} copies of the Act has ~~be~~ been ~~made~~, and when
received, a copy will be sent to Geneva.)+.

Conditions of Labour.

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Conditions of Labour in United Provinces Sugar Factories:

United Provinces Government Appoints Committee.

The Government of the United Provinces has appointed a Committee with Mr. D.P. Khaitan as Chairman and Mr. M.K. Kidwai, Assistant Cane Commissioner, U.P. as Secretary. (1) to examine the working of the Sugarcane Rules, (2) to look into the complaints of malpractices in connection with the supply of sugarcane to sugar factories, (3) to enquire into labour conditions in sugar factories and (4) to suggest necessary remedial measures, both as regards the United Provinces, and Bihar if required.

(Communique dated 5-8-1938 issued by the Director of Public Information, U.P.)..

Communist Propaganda in Madras : Government

Decries Violent Methods.

The Ministry of Public Information, Madras, has issued a press Communique on 9-8-1938 warning the people of the Province against certain communist activities in the Province.

Nature of Communist Activities: The Government points out that certain communist pamphlets have been freely distributed in Madras, attacking the National Congress and stating that the Communist Party of India is striving to organise a "national revolutionary strike". This strike is described as follows:-

"The workers shall down tools. The intellectuals shall leave the desk. The students shall come out in the streets. The peasants shall refuse paying taxes and rents. The railways shall come to a standstill. The factories, mills and power stations shall close down. The military and armed forces shall waver and sway. The bulk of the soldiers and armed forces shall be won over, by the revolutionary soldiers' Committees to the side of the national struggle. Bands of these shall fraternise with their striking brethren, disarm their own imperialist bureaucratic commanders and together with the defence corps of the revolutionary people, form detachments of revolutionary militia. The national strike shall grow into a national revolution." "Finally there will be the establishment of a Soviet Republic having the closest of ties with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics."

The methods of the revolution are not to be peaceful and non-violent. Mahatma Gandhi's doctrine of non-violence is attacked and discarded as retarding the progress of the people.

Government's Creed: The Government warns the people that such methods of the communists, if put into practice, will result in anarchy and violence, irretrievable harm to the spiritual and material progress of India and to India's freedom. Moreover, there is no possibility of success for such a programme. But such propaganda and every support given to it " must tend to weaken the forces of the great non-violent movement for social and industrial progress and full political freedom to which the Government is pledged."

Minimum Wages for Certain Categories:

Complete Standardisation found impossible in Coimbatore

Mills: Decision of Government of Madras.

References were made at pages 19 and 15 to 16 of May and July 1938 reports respectively to the action taken on the findings of the Court of Enquiry appointed in connection with the Coimbatore labour strike by the Government of Madras. The Government has now published its decisions on the report of Mr. D.N. Strathie, I.C.S., (Special Officer) which reference was made at pages 15 to 16 of our July 1938 ^{report;} a summary of these decisions is given below:-

Complete Standardisation of Wages not Possible:- In the light of the facts elicited by Mr. Strathie, the Labour Commissioner, the Government is convinced that at present complete standardisation of wages for all categories of workers is not possible in the circumstances obtaining in Coimbatore district. The Court had strongly recommended that the best wages system was to have a basic rate of pay supplemented by a commission depending on output. The Government understands that the employers are also eager to have such a system. But the Commissioner of Labour has reported that it is difficult to devise such a system for the Coimbatore district as a whole. While the Government do not disagree with the principle of the Court's recommendation, it feels that under the special conditions prevailing at present in the district, it is not possible to give effect to it. The Government has, however, drawn up a schedule of rates of wages for all well-defined classes of workers which are common to all the mills and also a large number of the smaller classes of workers, and has recommended these rates to be adopted by employers. In the Government's view the method it has followed in arriving at the rates adopted in the schedule is, taking all circumstances into consideration, not unfair to either the workers or the employers.

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Typical Rates of Wages Recommended:- A few typical ^{monthly} rates recommended by the Government are given below:-

Mixing section.

Mixing coolies - Unskilled - A standard wage of Rs. 12-14-0 if recommended as suggested by the Court.

Blow Room.

Bale Breaker Attendant.-Unskilled - Rs. 11 is recommended as a minimum.

Scutcher.- Government consider he should be classified as skilled. A pay of Rs. 15 is recommended.

Oiler.- Skilled - If employed exclusively as an Oiler a minimum standard wage of Rs. 14 is recommended.

Jobber or Maistry.- Skilled - Uniformity is unnecessary. Those now getting between Rs. 20 and Rs. 30 should receive the 5% increase recommended by the Court.

Revers.- A flat rate of 1a. 8ps. per hank is suggested with the same allowance of $\frac{1}{4}$ production for counts of 10 and $\frac{1}{6}$ production for counts of 40 and over.

Ring Frame Section.

Doffing Boys.- All are adolescents. A standard wage of Rs. 8 is recommended.

Spinners.- The following rates are suggested for full-siders:-

For those working on frames of 300 to 350 spindles	..	Rs. 15-8-0
" " 351 to 400	..	16-0-0
" " 401 to 450	..	16-8-0
" " above 450	..	17-0-0

Government consider however that the rates of Rs. 16-8-0 and Rs. 17/- should not apply to spinners working on counts of 40 and over on single sides. They consider that men working on single sides on higher counts are subject to little strain and that Rs. 16 is therefore a reasonable wage for them.

Bundling and Baling Section.

Paper Boy or Packer.- Unskilled - If adolescent Rs. 8/- is recommended, and if adult Rs. 11/-.

Weigher.- Skilled - A standard wage of Rs. 15/- is recommended.

Knotter or Yarn Dresser.- A standard wage of Rs. 13/- is recommended.

Yarn Pressmen.- A standard wage of Rs. 16/- is recommended.

Baling Pressmen.- A standard wage of Rs. 14/- is recommended.

Minimum Wage of Rs.11/- per month Recommended:- No attendance bonus is included or recommended as from the report of the Commissioners of Labour the Government understands that though the Court recommended such a bonus, both the employers and the workers are of the opinion that an attendance bonus is not desirable. The schedule prescribes Rs. 11/- per mensem as the minimum wage for adult unskilled workers, except for waste-pickers for whom Rs. 7/8/- per mensem has been recommended. In the view of the Government it is essential to improve the standard of living of the workers and it is justifiable to call upon the well-established and organised industries like textiles to give a lead in this matter.

Night Work Rates: While the Government agrees with the principle of the Court's recommendation that extra wages should be paid for workers on night shifts, they consider that a flat rate of Rs. 1/- per worker would be adequate. This increased wage rate for workers employed exclusively during nights is not included in the schedule but is all the same strongly recommended for adoption.

Wage Rates of Weavers under Consideration:- The question of rates of wages for the weavers is still under consideration and the Government hopes to be able soon to announce its recommendations in the matter.

The Government believes that the wages now recommended are reasonable and that, given efficient management, the industry can afford to pay them and yet continue to thrive and provide employment. The Government has also emphasised the necessity for observance by workers of complete discipline within factories.

(Communique dated 6-8-1938 issued by the Ministry of Public Information, Madras.)..+

Deductions from Wages in respect of Savings Bank Deposits:
Bengal Government's Qualified Authorisation.+

In response to an inquiry made by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta, as to the legality under the Payment of Wages Act of deductions from an employee's wages of contributions to a savings bank account maintained by the employer, the Government has expressed the view that in certain cases such deductions are permissible under clause (c) of sub-section (2) of section 7 of the Act, provided the savings banks concerned are maintained by the employers solely in the interests of the workmen, that the latter are at liberty to agree or not to agree to the deduction being made by the employer and that the deposit fund is perfectly secured. The Government of Bengal has also stated that any member of the Chamber requiring permission to make deductions of this type should apply to the Department of

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Commerce and Labour with a copy of the rules or bye-laws of the savings bank as it is necessary that each case be considered on its merits, though Government's attitude will be based on the criteria referred to above.

Conditions of work in Alleppey Coir Factories: Memorandum
of Alleppey Chamber of Commerce to Government Enquiry Officer.

As a result of serious labour trouble, mainly on the subject of wages, in the Coir factories of Alleppey, Travancore, the Government of Travancore appointed some time back the District Magistrate, Quilon, to enquire into labour conditions in the coir factories at Alleppey. The Alleppey Chamber of Commerce recently submitted a memorandum on the subject to the Enquiry Officer; a summary of the memorandum is given below:-

Low Wages: The memorandum refers to the demand of the workers for an increase in wage rates and states that due to competition from up-country coir factories, the Alleppey factories are not in a position to pay higher rates of wages. It is pointed out that a labourer in a coir factory gets on an average income of from Rs. 12 to Rs. 20 and even more per mensem, if there is regular work. The Labour Association also, however, stated that a fully employed labourer earns only Rs. 6/- per month. While admitting that there have recently been wage cuts due to the competition of up-country mills and the low prices coir goods, the memorandum denies that there has been a wage cut to the extent of 75 per cent. as alleged by the workers.

Standardisation of Wages: The Chamber condemns the practice of paying wages in kind prevalent among up-country factories and emphasises the necessity for standardisation of wages. The Chamber, it is stated, is always prepared to agree to the fixing of reasonable rates of minimum wage.

Restriction on Starting of New Coir Factories advocated:- In view of cut-throat competition from the large number of coir factories, started mainly in up-country areas with unsound finances and business policies, the Chamber urges the Government to adopt legislation to restrict the indiscriminate starting of coir factories.

Recognition of Workers' Unions: The Chamber states that it is prepared to recognise the Travancore Labour Association, provided the Association is registered under the Travancore Trade Unions Regulation and establishes its credentials as the sole representative body of all the coir weaving mill operatives of Travancore.

Unions Right to be consulted in Cases of Disciplinary Action against workers:. As regards the Labour Association's demand that it should be consulted in the matter of selection and dismissal

of workers, the memorandum states that, while employers will be glad to consider suggestions from the Association, they are not prepared to share the responsibility in this matter with workers.

Machinery to prevent Industrial Disputes: The Memorandum states that the Alleppey Chamber of Commerce has for long been advocating the establishment of a Government Labour Department. The constitution of a Trade Dispute Board is also declared to be desirable. But all these, it is pointed out, can be achieved only after wages have been standardised and necessary legislation enacted in regard to payment of wages, etc.

Payment of Maternity Benefits: As regards the payment of Maternity benefits, the memorandum states that the difficulties in operating such a scheme are many and that it is desirable to wait for some time more to see how the maternity benefit legislation works in British India and then adopt a similar scheme with necessary modifications to suit local conditions. The State, in common with other parts of India, is, the memorandum states, unripe for unemployment insurance schemes.

Unemployment Insurance: Unemployment insurance, the memorandum points out, besides being quite a new step in India, has not been sufficiently tried even in advanced European countries. The full results of the working of this scheme there are yet to be seen. The Chamber is strongly of opinion that attempting to imitate and follow anything and everything done in the West without adjusting them to suit conditions in Travancore, will be detrimental to the interests of the country.

The Draft Ceylon Wages Boards Ordinance: Executive Committee of Department of Labour, Industry and Commerce (Ceylon Government)

Approves Measure..

Recently the Executive Committee of the Department of Labour, Industry and Commerce of the Ceylon Government approved certain proposals of the Controller of Labour, Ceylon, for the establishment of Wages Boards for trades and industries in the Island.

Constitution of the Boards: The Executive Committee will have the power to make regulations regarding the constitution of the Wages Boards. These Boards will consist of members representing employers and workers in equal numbers, as well as nominated members. The Controller of Labour or his deputy will be an ex officio member, and will be deemed to be an appointed member on these Boards. Women will be eligible to membership of these Boards. No employer shall dismiss a workman, merely because he is a member of a Wages Board, or has abstained himself from work through being engaged in his duties as a member of a Board. The Executive Committee is further of the opinion that no organisation of employers, workmen, or a member of a Wages Board shall assist directly or indirectly any lock-out or strike in respect of which a Board has made a decision. ✓

Functions of Boards: Fixing Minimum Wages, Minimum Piece Rate and Minimum Overtime Rate: Under the scheme, it is proposed to empower the Boards to fix a minimum rate of wages for time work, a general minimum rate of wages for piece work so as to ensure adequate remuneration on a time work basis, and a minimum overtime rate. These rates may apply to an entire trade or to any particular part or process in any trade concerned. When there is no other law applicable to any group of workers, a Board will have power to declare the number of hours that shall constitute a working day, to declare whether an adolescent or a female shall be allowed to work overtime, and if so, for what maximum period, and to declare a day in the week to be a day of rest. An employer may give work to a workman on rest days because of the exigencies of the trade, but he should pay his workmen at overtime rates. If no overtime rate is fixed, payment at time rate and a quarter should be made. The workmen will also be allowed a day of rest on one of the succeeding days as compensation.

The Wages Boards, will also decide the following matters: what maternity benefits shall be given to a female worker, what period shall constitute the period of contract; how often and on what dates wages shall be paid directly into the hands of the labourer; what are the authorised deductions (no deductions at any one time to exceed half the wages earned); the minimum wages below which workmen will not be employed; the number of holidays, not exceeding in any case 14 days on full pay, and to determine the classes of employees to whom this provision shall be applicable; and, whether pro rata deductions shall be made when the full number of hours' work is not worked on a working day.

The Minister of Labour will have power to apply the proposed legislation to any trade which would automatically make employers in that trade liable to pay wages monthly, without within 10 days of the end of the month to pay wages without deductions other than for advances of money or for articles supplied; to keep a proper record of wages paid and to produce such record whenever required by the Controller of Labour or an officer authorised by him.

Penalties: The Executive Committee, it is understood, has suggested that penalties should be provided in the proposed Ordinance for employers, or their agents, infringing the decisions of the Wages Boards which are legally effective, ~~and that power should be given to magistrates to order repayment of deductions from wages for a period of three years, before any complaint is filed.~~ The burden of proof is to be on the employers, who ^{are} to prove to the satisfaction of a court of law that minimum wages have been paid.

Obligations of Employers: Employers are expected to keep a register of the different classes of workers employed, as also records of wages paid, overtime work done, the ages of female and adolescent workers, the maternity benefits paid, the holidays allowed, and the dates of payment of wages as well as the authorised deductions made.

(The Statesman, 4-7-1938). ✓

I.L.O. Textile Inquiry: Difficulties Visualised by Upper
India Chamber of Commerce. *

The attention of the Government of India has been drawn by the Upper India Chamber of Commerce, ^{Cawnpore,} to certain difficulties in the way of holding the proposed inquiry by the International Labour Office into the conditions of work in the world's textile industry.

Too much effort entailed: While appreciating the object of the proposed inquiry, the committee ^{at Cawnpore,} stated that the ^{collection of the} data required in the second part of the questionnaire from various mills would entail much time and labour. Further, as the inquiry is to be an international one, unless all or at least the majority of the textile countries of the world agreed to supply figures, there will be no point in proceeding with it ^{in India.}

Lack of International Co-operation: The committee doubts very much whether countries such as Japan, China and Russia will furnish any information whatsoever on the lines desired by the International Labour Office. In view of the United States of America's refusal to join the International Federation of Master Cotton Spinners' and Manufacturers' Association, since its inception a quarter of a century ago, and that country's general policy of isolation, it was doubtful whether the United States also would co-operate in the inquiry.

Conditional Co-operation of Cawnpore Employers: As far as the Cawnpore textile mills are concerned, the Government of India's suggestion that the period of the inquiry, if one were held, should be in July is not acceptable, as the furnishing of figures by that month, in view of the disorganisation brought about by the seven weeks' general strike, will be impossible. Without committing the Cawnpore textile industry in any way, the committee feels sure that the Cawnpore industrialists will co-operate in the inquiry, provided the Government of India obtains confirmation that Governments of principal textile countries in the world have also agreed to give support to the proposed inquiry. The Cawnpore textile industry will, however, take three to six months to submit all the required data. ✓

(Extracted from a contribution to the Times of India dated 10-8-38 sent by its correspondent at Cawnpore.).

Industrial Dispute in Assam Oil Company, Digboi:

Government appoints Board of Enquiry.

According to a notification of the Assam Government (No.5259-G.J dated 16-8-1938), apprehending a trade dispute between the Assam Oil Company, Ltd., and the Assam Oil Company Labour Union and other employees of the said company at Digboi and Tinsukia, the Government has appointed a Board of Enquiry with Mr. J.C. Higgins, C.I.E., I.C.S., Commissioner, Assam Valley Division, as Chairman, to report on the following:-

Terms of Reference:

1. The demands of the workers of the Assam Oil Company, Ltd., and the replies of the Company in their General Notification No. 62 of the 29th July 1938.
2. The wages paid by the company and the hours of work required for such wages.
3. The manner in which the said hours of work compare with those in force in other industries in the Lakhimpur district.
4. The conditions of service of the employees, particularly in respect of housing, water-supply, conservancy, hospital treatment, gratuity and pension, leave and security of employment.
5. The causes of the apprehended dispute.

Demands of Workers: The following are the more important of the demands of the workers, reference to which is made in the terms of reference.

1. Unconditional recognition of ^{the} "Assam Oil Company Labour Union".
2. Immediate grant of general increment ranging from annas 8 per rupee to workers drawing wages upto Rs. 30 per month to annas 2 per rupee to workers drawing wages from Rs. 100 to Rs.150 per month.
3. Introduction of a graded system of wages with provision for annual increment. In giving increments and fixing grades, due consideration should be given to seniority of service.
4. Forty-four hours a week for all workers, including medical staff, sweepers, production department, chowkidars and bungalow servants.
5. Service rules with provisions for gratuity, old age pension, one month privilege leave, festival leave on gazetted holidays, casual leave and sick leave with full pay.
6. Security of service and adequate compensation in cases of wrongful dismissal; a machinery consisting of representatives of employers and of the union should be set up to deal with suspensions and dismissals.

7. Proper quarters to all workers with due regard to the size of family and with electric light and sufficient water supply.

8. In filling up vacancies in senior posts, first preference to be given to ~~existing~~ workers according to efficiency and seniority of service.

9. Existing system of registering candidates and appointing workers should be radically changed and replaced by ^a competitive examination system.

10. Introduction of profit sharing bonus system.

(Pages 1144 to 1146 of Part I of the Assam Gazette dated 17-8-1938.)

Safety of Workers in Coal Mines:

Legislation Contemplated by Government of India.

The Government of India, it is understood, is planning to introduce early in 1939 a bill designed to ensure better safety conditions for the 250,000 odd workers employed in Indian ~~and~~ coal mines.

Coal Mining Committee's Report, 1937.- The Coal Mining Committee had reported in 1937 to the effect that the danger of premature collapse actually existed in most of the areas in which coal was standing in pillars, and had recommended stowing, or filling the space underground previously occupied by coal with sand or other incombustible material, as the most suitable preventive for subsidence or fire. (For fuller details of the report vide pages 35-38 of the report of this Office for May 1937.)

Government of India's Proposals; Enhancement of Powers of Inspectorate.- The Mines Department should continue to be responsible for safety and Section 19 of the Mines Act should be amended so as to enable the Inspectorate to issue orders requiring positive preventive steps to be taken where there is danger from the crushing of pillars, premature collapse or the outbreak of fire.

2. Fund for assistance of "Stowing".- A fund for the assistance of stowing in the Jharia and Raniganj fields should be provided by a cess which, on the information now available, is expected to work out at four annas a ton on coal and soft coke despatched, with six annas a ton on hard coke; and coal owners should be entitled to a rebate from royalty owners at the rate of half an anna per ton of material used.

3. Rules for Grant of Assistance.- Allotments would be made from the fund to owners in those fields who desired to stow, by a board which would be guided by statutory rules, and assistance would be based on the tonnage of sand used. The rules would provide for allotment on a system of tenders with preference in favour of owners who were ordered to stow for safety reasons.

4. Provision of sand for Stowing.- The right to take sand from rivers should be assumed by the State and assigned by the Board to owners who required sand. Owners should also be enabled to acquire such rights in or over land as were required for stowing purposes.

Financial Effect of Cess.- It is not apprehended that the imposition of the cess would lead to a rise in coal prices to such an extent as to unduly stimulate import into India of foreign coal, but if such a contingency arises, the Government of India will take the necessary action for protecting Indian coal interests. Nor would the proposed cess impose a serious burden on the industry compared to the vital requirements of safety, especially when it is pointed out that in many cases where danger is serious the only alternative to compulsory sand-stowing is for the Chief Inspector of Mines to use his power to order a closing down.

Legislative Programme.- The proposals which are not final have been circulated to the Provincial Governments, which are expected to reply by November 1938. As at present contemplated, the bill on the subject will be introduced early in 1939 and passed into law by 1st April 1939.

(The Statesman, 7-8-1938.) ✓

Working Class Cost of Living Index Numbers for Various Centres in India during June 1938.

The cost of living index number for working classes in various centres of India registered the following changes during June 1938 as compared with the preceding month.

Bombay.- The index number (Base: Year ending June 1934) of the cost of living for working classes in Bombay in June 1938 rose by 1 point to 105. The average in the year 1937 was 106.

Ahmedabad.- The index number (Base: Year ending July 1927) of the cost of living in Ahmedabad in June 1938 rose by 1 point to 71; for 1937 the average was 75.

Sholapur.- The index number (Base: Year ending January 1928) of the cost of living in Sholapur during June 1938 remained unchanged at 71. The average for 1937 was 73.

Nagpur.- The index number (Base: January 1927) of the cost of living in June 1938 remained stationary at 61.

Jubbulpore.- The index number (Base: January 1927) of the cost of living in Jubbulpore in June 1938 rose by 1 point to 56.

(Extracted from the Monthly Survey of Business Conditions in India for June 1938.) ✓

Bombay Provincial Trade Union Congress Congemns Measure.+

At pages 5-7 of our July 1938 report and page 3 of this report are given the salient features of the Bombay Industrial Disputes Bill, which the Government of Bombay ~~intends~~ ^{on 16.2.38} ~~intends~~ introducing in the Local Legislature ^{on 16.2.38} during September 1938. A meeting of the Bombay Provincial Trade Union Congress was held at Bombay in the third week of August 1938 to consider the Bill, with Mr. Jamnadas Mehta in the chair. The meeting was attended by representatives of about 50 unions.

Report of the Sub-Committee of the B.P.T.U.C. on the Bill. The Report of a Sub-Committee appointed by the Bombay Provincial Trade Union Congress to go into the Bill was made available to the meeting. The Sub-Committee, after careful consideration, rejected the Bill in toto as it provided no impartial or fair mode of dealing with trade disputes. The Committee was also emphatically of opinion that, in view of the existing Indian Trade Disputes Act, which has virtually remained a dead letter owing to the failure of the Provincial and Central Governments to put it into force even on most appropriate occasions, a new Bill of this kind could do no good unless it was based on the recognition of certain fundamental rights of trade unions. The Committee urged that in any case the Bill should be circulated for public opinion.

Detailed Criticism: No curtailment of Right of Strike. The Committee having decided to oppose the entire Bill, proceeded to consider it in detail in case the contemplated motion for circulation was lost; it was decided to endeavour to modify the Bill by moving amendments, and to that end the Bill was gone through clause by clause. A few of the Committee's criticisms are summarised below:

1. Certain definitions in the Bill should be removed or modified; for instance, "Labour Officer" should find no place in the legislation.
2. No standing orders should be considered to be settled unless by agreement.
3. The percentage of membership qualifying for registration should not be more than 5 per cent.
4. All complications arising from divisions of trade unions into "recognised", "qualified", "representative", etc., must go.
5. Industry should be treated as a whole and not sub-divided into occupations.
6. Minimum restrictions must be placed on the workers' right to strike.
7. The period during which the right to strike shall not arise should be reduced by six months. (Sec. 62).
8. Nothing shall be prescribed by rules which have not been in the first instance approved by the legislature.
9. There shall be no imprisonment in any circumstance.

10. Obligatory recognition of trade unions alone could be the basis of any legislation for conciliation limiting the right to direct action.

Views of Mr. R.R. Bakhale: In the course of discussion of the Committee's report, Mr. R.R. Bakhale said that he was not very enthusiastic about the Bill. While it was an improvement over the original draft published by the Government some time back and circulated for opinion, it would still hamper all growth of genuine trade unionism and was absolutely unworkable. He further expressed the opinion that in the present condition of the trade unions in this country strikes could neither be prevented nor settled by law. The Bill aimed at fostering only certain types of unions, that is, unions started by the Congress. Unlike, in England, Mr. Bakhale said, the Bill under consideration did not permit strikes while negotiations were in progress. He pointed out that one of the most objectionable features of the Bill, which was detrimental to the interest of the workers in view of the provision for prohibition of strikes during the period of negotiations, was the dilatory arbitration proceedings extending to months together instead of ending them at the most within fifteen days.

The majority report of the Committee was adopted by the Congress.

(The Bombay Chronicle, 24-8-1938). ✓

Violent Picketing Condemned by Mahatma Gandhi:

Attitude of Congress to Capitalism defined.

In certain recent labour strikes, violent picketing of non-striking operatives going to work has been resorted to by strikers. Further, there have ^{recently} occurred cases of certain types of labour leaders reviling capitalists and inciting people to loot them. Mahatma Gandhi ~~has~~, in the course of an article under the caption "Is Violence Creeping in?" contributed to his weekly paper, "Harijan" (issue of 15-8-1938), expounds his views condemning such methods, and asserts that the Congress, so long as it retains non-violence as its creed, will not tolerate violent picketing. The following are relevant extracts from the article:

Violent picketing condemned. "I have been told that in the name of peaceful picketing, picketers are resorting to methods bordering on violence, such as making a living wall beyond which no one can pass without being ~~being~~ hurt or hurting those who make the wall. As the author of peaceful picketing, I cannot recall a single instance in which I had encouraged such picketing."

Class-War not to be tolerated. "There can be no doubt that the British system favours capitalism. The Congress, which aims at securing full justice for the famishing millions, cannot favour capitalism. But the Congress, so long as it retains non-violence as its basic policy, cannot resort to ~~to~~ usurpation, much less allow any class

of persons to be insulted or humiliated in any way whatsoever or allow any Congressman or a body of Congressmen to take the law into their own hands".

(Times of India, 15-8-1938).

Enquiry into Conditions in Government Presses of U.P.:
Committee Appointed.

The Government of the United Provinces has, towards the close of August 1938, appointed a Committee, with Professor S.K. Rudra as chairman, to examine the organisation and system of management of Government presses, in particular from the point of view of effecting economies by putting them on a commercial basis, while securing to the staff reasonable conditions of service.

The Committee will, inter alia, examine questions relating to the conversion of temporary posts into permanent ones, reduction in working hours, wages of piece-workers, etc.

The Superintendent, Printing and Stationary, United Provinces, is the Secretary of the Committee.

(Communique dated 2-9-1938 issued by the Industries Department of the United Provinces Government).

Cochin Labour Problems: Resolutions of Committee of
Cochin State Trade Union Congress.

A meeting of the Executive Committee of the Cochin State Trade Union Congress was held on 4-8-1938 at Cochin under the presidency of Mr. Kesav Dev to consider the immediate grievances of the workers and to formulate an adequate labour programme for the State. The following is a summary of the more important resolutions adopted by the Committee.

Reduction of Hours of Work and Prohibition of Child Labour. It was urged in one resolution that there should be a statutory restriction that factories in the State should employ their labourers only for 54 hours in a week; that only adult labourers should be employed, child labour being forbidden, and that good drinking water should be provided for labourers in factories and workshops. The Government should see that the provisions of the Cochin Factories Act were strictly enforced.

Payment of Wages. The regulation of wages for the employees of the Cochin Harbour Works, the restriction of their hours of work and the supervision of the system of payment of wages to labourers in general were urged in another resolution. It would appear that workmen in factories were not paid the actual wages they signed for and that there was a system whereby the moopans or headmen were depriving the coolies of a portion of their wages every week. The Trade Union Congress favoured the introduction of a bill to regulate wages for special kinds of work and to lay down conditions of payment.

Housing of Workers. Another demand put forward was that the Government should inaugurate a comprehensive housing scheme whereby the workpeople would be provided with suitable homesteads in congested towns like Cochin.

Union Movement in Cochin and Travancore. It was urged that attempts should be made to co-ordinate the activities of the trade union movements in Cochin and Travancore and to convene shortly a joint conference of the workers in both the States.

Unemployment Relief. The Committee expressed grave concern at the acute distress caused among skilled and unskilled labourers as a result of unemployment. It was resolved to request the Government to appoint a Committee to collect reliable data regarding unemployment and suggest ways and means of effectively solving the problem.

(The Hindu, 6-8-1938). ✓

Maternity Benefit Legislation for India:

Conference of Labour Ministers Contemplated by Government of India.

In reply to an interpellation from Mrs. Subbaroyan, Sir M. Zafrullah Khan, Labour Member, stated in the Central Legislative Assembly on 1-9-1938 that Maternity Benefit Acts have been enacted in Bombay, Sind, Madras, the United Provinces, the Central Provinces and Berar, and that legislation had been introduced in Bengal. Sir Mohammad also stated that the Government of India proposed to consider the advisability of calling a conference of Labour Ministers of Provincial Governments to discuss ways and means for uniformity in legislation regarding maternity benefits for women workers and similar legislations. ✓

(The Hindustan Times, 2-9-1938)..

Factories Administration in Madras, 1937*.

The salient features of ^{the} administration of factories in the Madras Presidency during 1937, taken from the annual Report of the Chief Inspector of the Factories for 1937, are summarised below:-

Extension of Factories Act to "Unregulated" Factories:- The Madras Government extended during the year the operation of the Factories Act to (1) all decorticating factories employing 10 or more persons (on 17-2-1937); and (2) all beedi factories employing 20 or more workers (on 7-6-1937). The question of notifying unregulated establishments, such as, rice mills, printing presses and tobacco grading work-places, etc., it is reported, has been deferred till the strength of the inspectorate is strengthened.

Statistics of Factories and Workers. During the year under report there were 1,876 factories of which 1,786 (1,276 perennial, and 510 seasonal) were in commission. The average daily number of workers employed in the 1,786 factories was 186,630 (123,762 men, 47,985 women, 9,374 adolescents and 5,509 children).

Wages: With a view to have more accurate information regarding the wages that are paid to various classes of workers in the following seven important industries of the Presidency, Inspectors were directed to gather particulars from a few selected factories:- (1) ~~rice mills~~ (2) decorticating factories, (3) cotton ginning and pressing factories, (4) printing presses, (5) cotton spinning and weaving mills, (6) sugar works, and (7) engineering workshops. Particulars regarding average daily rates of wages paid to various classes of workers in these 7 major industries in the Presidency are tabulated in the report. It is announced that similar information will form a feature of future reports also.

Government's Review of the Working of the Factories and Maternity Benefit Act:- The Government's review of the administration of the Act, appended to the Report, is an interesting document containing details of the Government's immediate labour legislation programme. The programme includes (1) further extension of the Act to certain classes of "unregulated" factories, (2) tackling the problem of housing workers, (3) legislation aiming at ensurance of industrial peace, (4) grant of holidays with pay, (5) Checking evasions of the Maternity Benefit Act, (6) proposals for the establishment of a Labour Office, and (7) a scheme of unemployment relief.

(for details, see pages 17-18 of our July 1938 report) ✓

*Report on the Working of the Factories Act in the Madras Presidency for the year 1937, Madras, Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Price, 8 annas.

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Employers' Organisations.

Eastern India Committee of Employers' Federation ^{of India} Set Up:
Sir E. Benthall's Speech.

At a meeting of the Employers' Federation of India held at Calcutta on 5-8-1938 an Eastern India Committee of the Federation was set up. Sir Edward Benthall, Deputy President of the Federation, made a speech on the occasion, in the course of which he defined the attitude of the employers belonging to the Federation in respect of important labour questions now attracting attention. The following are extracts from Sir Edward Benthall's speech (extracted from a copy of the speech forwarded to this Office by Sir E. Benthall):

Regional Committees of Employers.- The Employers' Federation of India has now been established for six years during which time it has acquired a membership embracing the more important industrial organisations in India and employing some 17,00,000 workers. Under the presidentship of Sir H.P. Medy, the Federation has done much useful work in co-ordinating the All-India policy of employers, and it is a natural outcome of the present interest being taken throughout India in the conditions of labour that it has been found desirable, in the closest accord with the major Calcutta industrial associations which now constitute the Industrial Legislation Sub-Committee of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, to set up a Committee to co-ordinate employers' opinion and policy in regard to problems arising in the Provinces of North Eastern India. Similar action is being taken in other provinces so that the policy of employers will henceforth be co-ordinated locally in regional committees or federations and centralised through the medium of the President of the All India body. The Royal Commission on Labour in India recommended that every organisation of employers should set up a special committee for the purpose of giving continuous consideration to the improvement of the well-being and the efficiency of the workers in the establishments controlled by its members. The present committee is a development of this idea inas much as they will endeavour continuously to co-ordinate the policy of employers in all industries within the areas concerned - namely, Bengal, Bihar, Assam and Orissa.

Employers and Workers Trustees of Consumers. The policy lying behind the establishment of the Committee is not reactionary, far from it. There is unquestionably among employers a natural instinct to give employees a fair deal and thereby to contribute to the contentment of the community. Mr. Gandhi has said in a recent interview to young labour workers that Capital and Labour will be mutual trustees and both will be trustees of consumers. This is a high ideal to which wise employers will gladly respond.

Need for Discipline.- In times like the present when labour is being stirred into a stage of unrest, there is a natural tendency to follow a policy of expediency, either to grant concessions for the sake of peace or to stand fast for the sake of prestige. I maintain that there is only one policy for employers to follow and that ~~is~~ is to make up our minds what is a fair deal for employees on the merits of the case and to satisfy our consciences not only that no injustice exists, but that as trustees for the industry, consideration for the labour shall rank equally with consideration for the shareholder, and that the rewards of the workers shall not only enable them to live but also to sustain a standard of life which having regard to all the circumstances enables them to maintain their self-respect.

Difficulties of Provincial Ministries.- There is good evidence that this attitude will be respected by Provincial Governments, who will not misunderstand a resistance based upon sound premises, provided it is also based upon sound humanity. Equally it must be recognised by employers that the Provincial Ministries are faithfully endeavouring to carry out their pledges, and I say without hesitation, although I may be severely criticised from some quarters, that the handling of these difficult matters by the Ministries has on the whole hitherto earned the respect of employers. We have reason to believe that they suffer as much as ourselves from the ill-informed and often ill-intentioned pressure of their left wings or of the opposition and it would probably be fair to sum up the attitude of Provincial Ministries by saying that "they intend to fulfil their pledges, but that they will hold the balance between Capital and Labour."

Labour Graft.- But one of the most disquieting facts of the present movement is the discovery by certain so-called labour leaders that "labour graft pays". Who they are is known to everyone except their own victims, the workers. The sooner the graft business in Trade Unionism is killed by Governments, employers, and labour themselves, the better it will be for labour and for industry. Let us hope in the interests of employers and workers alike, for the early emergence of a class of labour leaders who can be relied upon to negotiate on constitutional lines, on the basis of sound and legitimate grievances only; who can appreciate the difficulties of the employer as well as of the employee; and who will sternly set his face against the invasion into trade union activities of seditious and subversive influences such as have not been absent from the "Trade Unionism" we now know. Let us hope also for strong support from the Governments for Unions which conform with this ideal and for equally strong opposition to those which do not.

Recognition of Unions.- A major allegation against employers is that they refuse to recognise Trade Unions even where such Unions have been properly registered and in that sense and to that extent "recognised" by Government. This charge really begs the whole question. To gain recognition the first requisite of a properly constituted Trade Union is that it should be really representative of the workmen. What employers very naturally refuse to do is to admit the right of unions not truly representative of their workers to speak on behalf of these workers. Nor does the fact that in some industries employers do not consider encouraging unions to be that

best way of watching the interests of their labour signify any lack of sympathy with their men. It is not an exaggeration to say that there is hardly an establishment in any of the provinces concerned with this Committee where the manager is not constantly and conscientiously seeking to establish a yet closer touch with his labour.

Compulsory Recognition not desirable.- It is a fact, lamentable perhaps but nevertheless a fact, that in many industries the quality of labour leadership and the backwardness of the labour makes it at present impossible for employers to negotiate with labour on Trade Unions lines, and in consequence the number of recognised unions is small. As the U.P. and other provincial governments have recognised, compulsion of the employers to recognise unions is no solution. What is needed is that unions claiming to speak on behalf of the workers, should not merely be composed of a very substantial proportion of those they claim to represent, but their executive committees and officials should be truly representative of and responsible to their members. This point was well brought out in the Cawnpore Textile Labour Enquiry Report which laid particular emphasis on the reform of the Mazdoor Sabha and the election of its committees and officials by secret ballot.

Example of United Kingdom.- At times like the present it is doing no service to the cause of any industry or of labour itself to tolerate indiscipline, much less violence, in any industrial establishment, and whether such action is instigated by outside agitators or by a small body of malcontents (who often turn out to be the best treated of the labour), it is the duty of all managements having satisfied themselves of the merits of their case, to counteract ~~indiscipline with determination and for owners rigidly to uphold the authority of the management.~~ The recognition of this duty of the employers to maintain discipline is recognised by all parties in the Unemployment Insurance Scheme in force in the United Kingdom, where all benefits are forfeited if a worker is guilty of a breach of discipline or of works rules, or of conduct which is inconsistent with the fulfilment of the conditions of service.

Conciliation and Arbitration.- Government can help by ensuring that the machinery for dealing with trade disputes is adequate to meet the needs of the various industrial areas. Special labour officers such as have been appointed in Bombay and recently proposed for Cawnpore should be of great assistance in bringing employers and labour leaders together. But there is a danger of these officers exceeding their function and generally speaking their function should be that of "go-betweens" rather than (as some think) arbitrators. Arbitration by outside parties, whether Government officials, or others, has its place in the smooth working of the Indian industrial system as one or two cases in Bihar have recently shown. But such cases should be with the consent of both parties and the exception rather than the rule. It follows that employers are likely to be opposed to proposals for permanent Conciliation Boards; still more are they opposed to the proposal that the decisions of such Boards should be binding on both parties. In fact it will be surprising if we do not find that some labour leaders at least will oppose proposals of this latter kind. It is a sound maxim that the only satisfactory agreement between two parties is one that leaves both parties with the feeling that of their own volition they have agreed to something which they believe to be a fair deal.

Wage Fixing.- In common with most experienced students of India's labour problems, the Employers' Federation recognises that

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automatic adjustment of wages, such for instance as works so successfully in the Steel industry, in Great Britain, is not practicable. Whether Wage Fixation Boards will offer a satisfactory solution is a matter for consideration though it is difficult to see how under present conditions in India their awards can be made binding. Certainly if they are to be binding on one party they would have to be binding on the other and employers would certainly oppose any suggestion that Wage Fixation Board awards should be binding on them only. The experiment at Cawnpore will be watched with great interest.

Trade Disputes Act, 1929: a satisfactory measure. Under the Trade Disputes Act, 1929, the Central Government or any Provincial Government may, if a trade dispute exists or is apprehended, appoint a Court of Enquiry or a Board of Conciliation and this has recently been done in several cases. They may do this whether or not both parties to a dispute apply for such a Court or Board but if both parties wish it Government have no option in the matter and must appoint a Court or Board. In addition, the Trade Disputes Act, as recently amended, enables Government to appoint Conciliation Officers either for special areas or for special industries. To suggest, therefore, as some labour partisans have done that the Trade Disputes Act is "a milk and water measure" and hopelessly out of date" does not correspond with the facts.

Unemployment.- Finally, I would observe that in my opinion most of the labour trouble at the moment arises not from the conditions of employed labour but from unemployment itself. The real hardship and the real discontent are very naturally among the workless. In this country where the difficulties in the way of organising Government schemes of Unemployment Insurance and Old Age Pensions are almost insuperable, loss of work bears with great harshness upon the unemployed. The true interest of all those who have the welfare of labour at heart should therefore be to remember at all times that wages and amenities have to be earned and that this can only be done when the wheel-wheels are going round. The truest benefactor of the worker is therefore the capitalist who has the vision and the courage to build up Indian industries and so to provide a living for the unemployed. +

All-India Motor Union Congress - 6-8-1938, Lahore:

Decision to form All-India Motor Transport Union.

A decision to constitute an All-India Motor Transport Union with the object of "organising motor transport workers throughout British India and, further, to carry on intensive agitation to move the Central Legislature to amend and enact the Indian Motor Vehicles Bill so that it meets the legitimate and just demands of the Motor Transport Union", was arrived at at the session of the All-India Motor Union Congress held at Lahore in the first week of August 1938.

Motor Vehicles Bill Unsatisfactory. The Congress expressed the opinion that the Motor Vehicles Bill now before the Central Assembly was not satisfactory as the provisions of the bill "tend to create obstacles for workers plying motor vehicles, afford protection to railways and contemplate affording them control over road traffic."

Need for Organisation of Motor Transport Workers. The conference resolved to invite all provinces in British India to organise the motor transport workers in their respective areas on the lines of the Punjab Motor Union. A provisional committee of 21 members was constituted to draft the constitution, rules and by-laws for the all-India Motor Transport Union which will be adopted at the next all-India session to be held in December 1938.

(The Hindustan Times, 8-8-1938),

Communists Capture Cawnpore Mazdoor Sabha: Congress Socialists defeated in elections to Executive.

The election of new Office bearers and the members of the Executive Committee and General Council of the Mazdoor Sabha, Cawnpore, which took place in the third week of August, has resulted in the capture of the chief offices of the Sabha by the Communist group, and the reduction of the Congress Socialist group, hitherto in power, to a minority.

Out of 30 seats in the Executive Committee, the Communists have captured 20, and out of 120 seats in the General Council they have captured about 80 seats. The Communist, Mr. Muhammad Yusuf, former worker in the Delhi Cloth Mills, has been elected President; he defeated the Congress Socialist candidate, Mr. Hariharnath Shastry, M.L.C., who has been president for the last eight years; the Communist group also captured the General Secretaryship with the election of Mr. S.C. Kapur to the post.

(The Statesman, 23-8-1938).

Economic Conditions.Collection of Statistical Data in United Provinces:Government sets up Bureau of Economics.

The Government of the United Provinces, it is understood, has set up a Bureau of Economics with effect from 1-8-1938 under Mr. D.P. Mukherjee, the Director of Public Information of the Province. The Bureau will be a subordinate branch of the Industries Department and the Industries Secretary will supervise the activities of the Bureau. The Bureau is the result of recommendations made by Messrs. Bowley, and Robertson for an economic census of India.

Activities of the Bureau: The Bureau of Economics will divide its activities under three main heads: (1) collection of labour statistics, (2) industrial survey and (3) collection of data regarding rural economics. The labour branch will be stationed at Cawnpore, and will work under the Labour Commissioner, and the chief investigator will conduct through assistant investigators various researches, and through the help of statistical assistants, these will be collected and published.

Industrial Surveys: As regards industrial surveys, it is expected that seven surveyors, under one chief surveyor, will conduct surveys which will produce data on which industrial enterprises can be based.

Problems of Rural Economics:- Collection of data regarding rural economics will form an important aspect of the work of the Bureau. For the purpose of gauging the effect of economic and social welfare schemes, the rural economics branch will have a system of controlled villages. These villages will be selected at various places at random and their conditions will be analysed periodically to determine the economic conditions of the people and the effect produced on them by policies pursued by the Ministry.

The present scheme is the nucleus of what it is hoped may develop in course of time into a Ministry of Economics.

(The Statesman, 5-8-1938). ✓

Progress of Industrial Research:
Annual Report for 1937-38 of the Industrial Research
Bureau, Government of India.

The Report for the year 1937-38 of the Industrial Research Bureau of the Government of India surveys the activities of the Industrial Research Council, the Industrial Research Bureau and the Research Branch of the Government Test House at Alipore. The Bureau was established on the recommendation of the sixth Industries Conference held in 1934 on a temporary basis in the first instance for three years to develop Indian industrial research, and the present report surveys the third year of its work. In view of the utility and benefit to the country of the work of the Bureau, the Government of India has placed the Bureau on a permanent basis with effect from 1-9-1938.

Industrial Research Council: The Industrial Research Council held its third session in July, 1937, and discussed several important items, amongst which were the allocation of work to laboratories, the programme and progress of research work at the Government Test House, improvement of glass furnaces and glass products, casein plastics, industrial standardisation, and industrial surveys. The Council gave further consideration to the programme of publication of bulletins ~~submitted~~ with the industries of India.

Industrial Research Bureau: Among the principal activities of the Bureau is the collection of technical information on new industrial schemes. In addition to ~~and~~ inquiries about the oil-seed crushing industry and the starch industry, the Bureau has assembled detailed technical information regarding the manufacture of spectacles, bakelite, sealing wax, razor blades, typewriter ribbons, buttons, silver thread, and briquettes from paddy husk.

(The Statesman, 7-8-1938). ✓

Large-Scale Industries for United Provinces:
Possibilities Considered at meeting Convened by U.P.
Industries Minister. +

A meeting of prominent industrialists of the United Provinces convened by the Hon. Dr. K.N. Katju, Minister of Industries and Labour, U.P., was held at Lucknow on 15-8-38, to discuss the possibilities of opening new large-scale industries in the province. Industrial ventures taken up for consideration at

the meeting were broadly classified into two categories: (1) all-India industries, like the motor car industry, (these were resolved for discussion by an Industries Ministers' Conference to be held in the near future), and (2) industries confined to the United Provinces suitable for local development.

Local Industries. The meeting grouped the following industries under the second category: manufacture of cycles, cardboard (a committee was appointed to prepare schemes for the two industries), artificial silk, bulbs, fans and other electrical goods (at present parts of such electrical goods are imported from abroad and assembled locally), glass, starch, caustic soda and sulphur (the manufacture of sulphur in India was hitherto considered an impossibility, but the recent discovery of sulphur deposits near Simla has altered the situation).

(The Leader, 21-8-1938). ✓

Establishment of Unemployment Bureau: Legislative Measure
adopted in Ceylon.

An important ~~piece of social legislation~~ ^{step} taken in hand recently by the Government of Ceylon is for the establishment of a Government Unemployment Bureau, in respect of which arrangements have already been made, with Mr. J. Vincent Mendis as the officer in charge. According to the Emigration Correspondent of the Statesman, the Government of Ceylon has issued a memorandum containing details of the experiment, of a brief summary of which is given below:

Work of the Bureau:- Four types of unemployment in Ceylon would be tackled by this Bureau; firstly, those who are able to work and are genuinely seeking employment; secondly, those workers who were formerly employed but whose services have been dispensed with owing to retrenchment; thirdly, those employees who are temporarily without work because of illness or some other disability; and lastly the skilled or unskilled worker who is unemployed for the sole reason that he does not seek work. The Bureau will primarily deal with the first and second categories of unemployed, as an experiment in the Colombo area. While not pledging itself to guarantee work for those seeking it through its agency, the Bureau does not charge any fee either from the employer or from the worker. ✓

Collection of Unemployment Statistics in Sind.

A press note issued in the first week of August 1938 by the Government of Sind, (published in the Times of India of 6-8-1938 and the Hindustan Times of 3-8-1938) states that the Government has recently ordered the collection, within six months, of statistics in regard to unemployed in Sind, as well as the number and classes of persons employed in various trades, offices and factories. The statistics, it is understood, are required by the Unemployment Committee appointed by the Government of Sind some-time back. ✓

Check to Unemployment in Bengal: Unemployment Advisor
Appointed By the Bengal Government.

The Government of Bengal has recently appointed Mr. Naba Gopal Das, I.C.S., as Unemployment Advisor to the Government of Bengal. This is a newly created office; Mr. Das has been entrusted with the duty of preparing a list of different avenues of employment in Bengal and ^{a statement on} the prospects of absorption of future entrants in such occupations ~~and also~~, and the training necessary to qualify for each occupation, where it can be obtained. It is also understood that

Mr. Das has been specially asked to make a survey of the present position regarding unemployment in the Province and to suggest ~~mean~~ means for its solution.

(The Amrita Bazar Patrika, 15-8-1938).✓

All-India Village Industries Association:

Activities during 1937.

The following information regarding the work of the All-India Village Industries Association during 1937 is taken from a summary of the Annual Report of the Association for 1937 published in the Hindu dated 1-7-1938.

Training of Workers:- The report points out that the acceptance of Office in 1937 by the Congress in the provinces widened the sphere of action and enhanced the responsibility of the Association and this in turn intensified the need for training workers. A plan to train up greater number of workers was adopted and training in the following industries were suggested by the Association. In selecting them the well defined policy of the Association had been followed, as they are industries which supply the primary needs of food, clothing and shelter of the masses which utilise the raw materials available locally, and which require little or no capital in the way of equipment. The Industries chosen were : (1) paddy husking and flour grinding, (2) gur making from cocoanut, date, palmyra and sago palms, (3) bee-keeping, (4) oil pressing by bullock ghanis, (5) paper making from village waste, (6) soap making from sajimati and indigenous materials, (7) tanning and (8) bone crushing.

Nutrition Work: Propaganda was carried on for the use of the unpolished rice, whole-wheat flour, ghani oil and jaggery in the place of the corresponding over-refined products. The Association feels convinced that if progress is to be made in regard to this nutrition should form part of the school curriculum and the evils of consuming over-processed food shall be inculcated in childhood. Soya beans have been sown in various parts of the country with a view to popularising them as an article of diet. Vegetable and fruit seeds have been distributed ~~xxxx~~ by some of the workers to village people in order to enable them to include fresh vegetables and fruits in their diet. Ragi, a very wholesome and strength giving cereal, which was formerly very widely consumed in the South was being popularised. Those who cannot afford ghee were being advised to use pure ghani oil in their food. Hand-pound- ing of rice was being introduced wherever possible and has meant work for a number of women.

Membership: At the end of 1937 there were on the rolls of the Association, ordinary members 312; Agents 40 and certified shops 21. During the year the Association began to publish in English and Hindi a monthly bulletin: Gram Udyog Patrika.

Industrial Apprenticeship Scheme: Five Years' Course started by Government of Bombay.

The Department of Industries of the Bombay Government has recently introduced an apprenticeship scheme in Bombay and Ahmedabad designed to meet the demand for skilled and specialised labour in certain branches of industry by providing for practical and theoretical training of selected youths on methodical and rational lines in the course of a five years' apprenticeship. The apprenticeship is served in the workshops of selected undertakings and is supplemented throughout the five years by technical training outside such undertakings.

Industries in which Training is given. The principal branches of industry in which apprenticeship training is at present available are: mechanical and related trades, electrical and related trades, spinning, weaving, and dyeing and textile mills, printing and book binding.

Administration of the Scheme. The Department of Industries is responsible for the administration of the scheme; the Director of Industries is assisted by an Advisory Committee of which he is the Chairman and which consists of: a representative of the Bombay Millowners' Association, a representative of the Bombay engineering industry, a representative of the Ahmedabad Millowners' Association, three experts, (one of whom is the Principal of the Victoria Jubilee Technical Institute, Bombay) and the Deputy Director of Industries.

Qualifications and Selection of Apprentices. Candidates for apprenticeship must have completed the pre-Matriculation class and not be under 16 or over 20 years of age. They are required to sit for an examination in general education and to supply evidence of physical fitness and good moral character. The final selection is made by the Advisory Committee after a personal interview of those who have taken the entrance examination.

Terms of Apprenticeship. The terms of apprenticeship are set out in writing in a detailed indenture bond, one of the clauses of which provides that apprentices shall, after their period of training is over, so far as possible be absorbed as regular employees by the industrial establishment concerned.

Progress Tests. Provision is made in the scheme for interim examinations which permit of ascertaining the progress made by apprentices, and for a final examination. Employers are required to furnish the Department of Industries and the Technical Institute responsible for the theoretical training with monthly reports on apprentices.

Enrolment conditioned by Employment possibilities. The number of candidates admitted in any one year to apprenticeship under the scheme depends on the opportunities they will have of obtaining employment as skilled workers in their respective branches of industry when the period of apprenticeship is over.

(Bombay Chronicle, 8-8-1938).

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Maritime Affairs.

Reduction of Hours of Work from 10 to 9 per day
of Dock Workers: Madras Port Trust considers
Government of India's Suggestions.

A proposal for the reduction of hours of work for labourers in the Madras Port Trust is now under consideration of the Trust. The Government of India in letter No. L. 1838 dated 4-6-1938 has enquired of the Trust whether a reduction of the hours by one hour to nine per day would not be feasible.

At the meeting of the Port Trust held on 8-7-1938, it was resolved that the views of Steamer agents be obtained on the subject.

(Page 796 of Part II, the Fort St. George Gazette, dated 26-7-1938). ✓

Employment of Indian Lascars in Northern Latitudes:
Government of India removes Restriction for 3 years.

According to a press communique dated 24-8-1938 issued by the Government of India, the Government has, consequent on representations made by certain shipping companies and Indian Seamen's Unions, decided to suspend experimentally for a period of three years, subject to certain conditions, the restrictions on employment of Indian Lascar Seamen in cold latitudes. The communique is reproduced below:

History of the Restriction: under the terms of the form of agreement for lascars sanctioned by the Central Government under section 28 of the Indian Merchant Shipping Act, 1923, Indian seamen are at present prohibited from serving during winter months in certain northern latitudes. These restrictions on employment of lascars were originally imposed in 1893, when several cases were brought to the notice of severe distress and hardship caused to lascar seamen through their being compelled to proceed on voyages to northern ports on the east coast of America. After consulting the shipping companies concerned, the Government of India then undertook a general revision of the conditions of agreement with lascars, and a clause was inserted in the Article 2 (2) limiting the range of service of lascars to 60 degrees north and 50 degrees south latitude, and prohibiting, inter alia, their employment during winter months on voyages in the Baltic or to any port in America north of 38 degrees north latitude. These restrictions have subsequently been modified by successive amendments of the lascar agreement form, but the prohibition on the employment of lascars as deck hands on the east coast of America, north of 38 degrees north latitude has, except for a temporary relaxation during the war, been continuously maintained.

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Reasons for Removal of Restriction: (a) Improved amenities of Ships (b) Increasing employment opportunities: During recent years the Government of India has received several representations from shipping companies and seamen's unions to the effect that this restriction, which was originally intended to protect the health of seamen, is unnecessary at present, as in the modern steamers engaged in the trade between the United States and the East the seamen are accommodated in comfortable quarters with proper heating fixtures, etc. It has further been represented that the existence of this restriction has operated to reduce the opportunities of employment open to Indian seamen, besides causing considerable inconvenience and extra expenditure to the shipping companies concerned, and that, accordingly, the restriction should be withdrawn.

Temporary Suspension for 3 years: The Government of India has carefully considered the question in the light of the various representations made to it, and, with the object of gaining experience before making any permanent change, has decided to suspend the restriction, subject to certain conditions for safeguarding the health of lascars, for a period of three years commencing from the next winter season. During this period lascar seamen will be permitted to sign on for service in the prohibited latitudes, if they are willing to do so. The Government of India has decided not to make any amendments in the lascar agreement for the purpose, and have sanctioned instead a new additional stipulation which may, by mutual agreement, be inserted in the agreement opened in the case of ships proceeding to North America.

(The Hindustan Times, 25-8-1938).+✓

Labour Policy of Bengal Ministry Condemned: Indictment
by Bengal Workers -

Protest against the unsympathetic attitude of the present Ministry in power (non-Congress) in Bengal was registered at a rally of peasants, workers, students and citizens, numbering over 30,000 held at Calcutta on 29-7-1938 under the leadership of Mr. Subash Chandra Bose. (Mr. Bose is the present president of the Indian National Congress). The following resolution adopted on the occasion sums up Bengal labourers' charges against the Ministry of the province:

"The policy of the Ministry in Bengal with regard to labour has been, from the very beginning, one of veiled hostility towards genuine trade unionism. That hostility first manifested itself in the deliberate failure of the Ministry to implement the assurances most solemnly given to the workers on the occasion of the last jute strike. The Ministry has now under the guidance of the Labour Minister, who does not represent any of the eight labour constituencies in Bengal, embarked upon a systematic and ruthless policy of prosecution and persecution of trade unions and workers with a view to crush the movement itself. The indiscriminate application of Section 107 of the Criminal Procedure Code upon labour leaders, particularly upon the leaders of the Sea-men's Union, the promulgation of prohibitory orders under section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code in all labour areas including Kharagpore, externment orders under the Public Security Act, the maintenance of secrecy with regard to the disbursement of the labour welfare fund, the sudden and mysterious appearance of rival unions run by known communalists and reactionaries and prompt recognition given to such paper unions by mill authorities who are pursuing a discriminating policy, in the matter of appointment and dismissal, the recent betrayal of the cause of the electrical workers, all reveal the existence of a deliberate effort to smother the genuine trade union movement in the province.

By such policy and action the Ministry in Bengal, particularly the Labour Minister, has forfeited the confidence of the people and this meeting therefore demands its immediate resignation."

(The Amrita Bazar Patrika, 31-7-1938).

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