

National Commission on Labour

Observation visits to Bhilai, Rourkela and Ranchi

(Camp: Bhilai)

16.1.68

I

Record of informal discussions which some Members of the Commission had with the representatives of workers:

1. Mr. M. Butchhiah ... Bhilai Steel Mazdoor Sabha (AITUCO)
2. Mr. Subba Rao ... -do-
3. Mr. A.D. Paul ... Ispat Karamchari Sangh (Independent)
4. Mr. S.K. George ... President, United Steel Workers of Bhilai.
5. Mr. N. Tripathy ... General Secretary, United Steel Wlr Workers of Bhilai (Independent).
6. Mr. S.K. Biswas ... Joint Secretary, United Steel Workers of Bhilai.
7. Mr. S.K. Mukherjee ... Secretary, U.S.W.B. (Independent).
8. Mr. S.K. Gupta ... General Secretary, United Workers of Mechanical Shops.
9. Mr. G.P. Thomas ... Member, United Workers of Mechanical Shops.
10. Mr. Jibon Mukherjee .. President, Samyukta Khadan Mazdur Sangh (AITUC), Rajhara Mines Branch.
11. Mr. P.K.Sengupta ... General Secretary, Khadan Mazdoor Congress
12. Smt. Indira Nair ... General Secretary, Khadan Mazdoor Congress.
13. Mr. Hemant D. ... General Secretary, Steel Workers' Union, Deshmukh, Bhilai (AITUC).
14. Mr. T.A.Menon ... Secretary -do-
15. Mr. B.B.Vishvakarma .. Treasurer -do-
16. Mr. R.L. Yadav ... Secretary -do-
17. Mr. P.^B.Chakravarthi.. Secretary, Steel Workers' Union, Bhilai Rajhara Branch.
18. Mr. H.C.Gupta ... Secretary, Steel Workers' Union, Nandini. Jt.
19. Mr. A.W.Bhelwa .../Secretary -do-
20. Mr.R.K.Mishra ... B.S.P. Shramik Sangh, Bhilainagar (B.M.S.)
21. Mr. S.N. Sadhu ... -do-
22. Mr. Ram Babu Mishra .. -do-
23. Mr. N. Mishra ... -do-

24.	Mr. R.P. Tripathi	...	President, Bhilai Steel Workers Union (H.M.S.)	
25.	Mr. Deosharan Dubey	...	Secretary,	-do-
26.	Mr. G.R. Singh	...		-do-
27.	Mr. Ram Milan Singh	...		-do-
28.	Mr. R.M. Gupta	...		-do-
29.	Mr. C.R. Goswami	...	Vice-President, S.K.M.S. (AITUCO), Nandini Mines.	
30.	Mr. N.S. Nair	...	Secretary,	-do-
31.	Mr. Gangadhar	...	Treasurer	-do-
32.	Mr. R.S. Tiwari	...	Jt. Secretary,	-do-
33.	Mr. M.L. Thakur	...	Office-Secretary,	-do-
34.	Mr. Shanker Singh	...		-do-
35.	Mr. G.	...		-do-
36.	Mr. J.V. Rao	...		-do-
37.	Mr. S. Chakraborty	...		-do-

1. The Bhilai Steel Plant is covered by the Madhya Pradesh Industrial Disputes Act according to which a union has been recognised but the Mines serving the Steel Plant fall under the Central sphere and there is no recognised union there. The union affiliated to the AITUC moved in the matter of recognition of their union in the mines in 1962; but it was not recognised as the Madhya Pradesh Industrial Disputes Act according to Madhya Pradesh Government superseded the Code of Discipline.

2. The Management discusses issues only with the recognised union. There are no channels of communications between the management and other unions. This is responsible for the agitative approach adopted by other unions.

3. There is a Labour Court at Raipur wherein 1600 disputes are pending. The workers and union representatives are made to go to Raipur. It is very hard on them to get their grievances redressed through this machinery when there are repeated adjournments.

4. The management is retrenching people without caring for what the workers will do or for the consequences of such action on the plant itself.

5. In many cases the management has to take back retrenched or victimised workers when Courts so rule. They have to pay large amounts as arrears in addition to the wasteful expenditure on litigation. This is a loss not to the management but to the public.

6. The safety provisions are not well observed and as a result there are a number of accidents. An instance was cited where two persons were killed only the day before. They were asked to do

work which was hazardous. In another case five or six persons were killed in an open hearth. (The HMS affiliated union promised to supply a statement on the number of accidents and the safety provisions in the plant.)

7. The representative union should be elected on the basis of secret ballot. (This was the opinion of all except INTUC).

8. The contract system is prevalent both in the Steel Plant and the Mines. In Rajhafa Mines out of 12,000 workers, 6000 work on a contract basis. The mines are being worked since 1958 and every time the management pleads that it is only an intermittent type of work. In just under two months four contractors were changed and this has resulted in a break in continuity of the length of service of workers.

9. The management has discriminated against leave and holidays enjoyed by the workers on the basis of their date of joining. The workers who joined prior to 1960 enjoyed better leave facilities as against those who joined later.

10. In the steel melting shop casual workers are brought in to work along with regular workers. The former are paid at Rs. 1.75 per day for doing the same work as the regular workers were doing. They are employed for three months in a year. The casual workers are employed to save on the wage bill.

11. Factory Inspectors are nowhere seen in the steel plant nor the inspectors of mines in the mines.

12. The unrecognised union should be given the right to persue individual cases of their members. (On this point there was a consensus among all the unions: INTUC union preferred to remain silent).

13. The right of discussions with management on general issues should be given to all the unions. Another view was unrecognised union should have atleast a membership of 5 per cent to enable it to discuss issues with the management. But the right to sign the agreement with management should vest in the recognised union.

14. The union affiliated to the AITUC pointed out that the managing committee of the recognised union should have the representatives of the unrecognised union for discussions with management.

15. Steel plants should be taken out of the State sphere for labour management relations.

16. There should be only one labour code for the entire country.

17. For steel melting and other categories recruitment should be made from within the existing cadre of workers instead of recruiting new people.

18. Only local people should be recruited for Class IV posts and the posts of lower ministerial staff.

19. For construction workers there should be ^a regular pool from amongst which persons could be made regular.

20. To compensate for increase in prices a part of the payment to workers should be made in kind.

21. The criteria of trade tests and merit rating for promotion should be abolished. Promotions should be on the basis of seniority-cum-suitability. (The B.M.S. Union will give a note on this.)

22. Labour welfare officers should be under the control of Government and not under management.
23. At present construction workers in mines are not covered under the Industrial Disputes Act. Necessary steps should be taken in this matter.
24. The rate of deductions on account of house rent is very high. At present, no house rent allowance is granted to workers who are provided houses by management. This results in large absenteeism.
25. Accommodations provided to workers is inadequate. Only 50 per cent of the permanent workers have been provided with houses. Private construction is also not allowed in the Bhilai Township; management is not encouraging cooperatives either.
26. The ceiling put on the expenditure on fringe benefits by the Government is causing hardship to workers in steel plants.
27. In Bhilai township education is the responsibility of the Bhilai Management. The State Government is not contributing to it. The other population of the township have no medical or educational facilities. (INTUC to submit a note on this)
28. The management is top heavy. The number of officers have doubled to 2,000 after the 1964 expansion programme from one million tonnes to 2.5 million tonnes, whereas the number of workers has only increased from 26,000 to 30,000.
29. As the plant is working ~~under~~ capacity and the shops and furnaces are being closed, there is ~~no~~ question of increase in productivity. Incentive schemes are also suffering on this account.
30. The INTUC representative - which is also a recognised union - observed that the relations between the management and the workers are cordial. There has been no strike since 1961, and the management has been implementing all the agreements. There was no serious protest against this statement though other unions added their own separate versions about cordiality in relations and absence of strike.

II

Wholesale Consumer Store:

A detailed account is given in the note on Industrial Relations in Bhilai Steel Plant in the appendix.

- (i) No facilities are available from the side of the Government for procurement of essential items of food. The store makes all their purchases from the open market;
- (ii) The overall profit margin including foodgrains is about 2.5 per cent. However, the rate of profit is higher in the Super Bazar which is selling mostly non-essential items of consumption;
- (iii) The income of the cooperative is also subject to income-tax. There is no difference on the incidence of tax on cooperatives and the private sector;

- (iv) All transactions are in cash. This is because credit facilities involve a lot of labour and delay in getting payments. This has been responsible to some extent in the development of private sector shops who give credit to their customers;
- (v) There is a separate cooperative store which deals exclusively in cycles. Only popular makes of cycles - Hind and Raleigh - are kept in the store. The cycles are sold to the workers of the plant on the basis of cycle loan advanced by the plant to the workers;
- (vi) Another store deals in scooter parts and tractor parts though the latter do not have any special significance to labour.

B.S.P. Employees' Cooperative Store:

It has 302 members and a share capital of Rs. 32,800. This was started in 1958 and is the oldest store in the Bhilai Township. It has 9 branches and has a turn-over of Rs. 26 lakhs. The average daily profit is between 3 to 5 percent. The cooperative also runs two petrol pumps where petrol is sold at 2 n.p. per litre less than the market rate. Here again it is the margin on sales of petrol which may be to workers advantage and not so much the petrol which is sold.

17-1-1968

III

Nandni Mines:

The visit to Nandni Mines, the lime-stone crushing plant and the housing colony was led by a group of union representatives.

In the Nandni Mines, the most valid complaint was against non-existence of suitable drinking water facilities for workers. At one place, the water was supplied through a water tank. For several hundred workers, there was only one earthen pot which too the workers alleged was placed there because the Members of the National Commission on Labour were scheduled to visit the area. In other cases the workers depend only on the rain water collected in the ditches.

The drinking water facilities were not adequate at the limestone crushing plant as well. The flooring near heavy machines was slippery. At many places safety provisions were not given proper attention. The workers were not provided with masks. A number of live electric wires and exposed points were also seen.

In the housing colony of the mines the most important complaint of workers was that the latrines provided were never cleaned. As a result, residents of the colony had to go out in the open. It was explained, that the workers were not interested in using these latrines; in some cases they had removed the doors from these latrines. About cleanliness, the difficulty was of getting water. In the colony, there is a cooperative store run by the union. It had on sale some toilet items like face powders, creams, oils, which it was reported were in good demand.

Record of informal discussions which some Members of the Commission had with the following representatives of the Bhilai Steel Management:

1. Shri Purtej Singh, General Manager.
2. Dr. B.N. Zherebin, General Supdt.(Soviet).
3. Shri S.C. Guha Maulik, Addl. General Superintendent.
4. Shri P.R. Ahuja, Assistant General Superintendent.
5. Shri M.S. Lal, Chief Engineer.
6. Shri S.S. Gill, Personnel Manager.
7. Shri S.N. Kaza, FA & CAO.
8. Shri T.S. Krishnamurthi, Chief Power Engineer.
9. Mr. I.M. Matvievsky, Chief Mechanical Engineer.
10. Shri S.K. Dutt, Commercial Manager.
11. Shri C. Kurian John, RE, CEDB.
12. Shri K.K. Sen Gupta, Supdt. O.M.Q.
13. Shri Venkataraman, Controller of Stores & Purchase.
14. Shri C.K. Sundaram, Chief Industrial Engineer.
15. Shri V.M. Goverdhan, Town Administrator.
16. Shri V.K. Rajagopalan, Chief Supdt. Rolling Mills.
17. Shri N.K. Mitra, Supdt. Production Planning & Control.
18. Dr. N.L. Kalle, Chief Medical Officer.
19. Shri R.N. Kaul, Dy.Chief Mechanical Engineer.
20. Shri M. Dinker, Dy.Chief Power Engineer.
21. Shri BrahmaSwaroop, Traffic Manager.
22. Shri R. Muthuswamy, Supdt. Tech. Training.
23. Shri N.P. Dhusia, Asstt. Personnel Manager.
24. Shri G.B. Chavan, Chief Industrial Relations.
25. Shri K.S.S. Murti, Safety Engineer.
26. Shri P.M. Pandya, Sr. Labour Officer.
27. Shri B.K. Naiyer, Asstt. Labour Commissioner, Raipur.

1. Victimization : Normally such a big organisation will not resort to victimization of trade union leaders. But if any union leader misbehaved in spite of warnings, the management is helpless. The management policy is that a union representative will be given some privileges but he should not think that just because he is a leader he will be free from disciplinary action even if he misbehaves. If anyone feels that he is being victimised, there is the forum of the Labour Court where he can establish his case. In a couple of cases, management had to take firm action. About six months back, four persons were sent out, but they were aware of the gravity of their behaviour and for that reason they have not approached the Labour Court. (The Assistant Labour Commissioner mentioned that two or three such cases

had come to his notice, but he was not aware if they have gone to the Court.)

(The management will give a note on the negotiation machinery proposed by the Steels and Mines Minister, Shri M. Chenna Reddy).

2. Safety: Every shop has its own safety officer. Departmental safety meetings are held every week in each shop. Most of the accidents are of a minor nature. They occur because of the carelessness of workers.

There is no uniformity in computation of the rate of accidents in different steel plants. It is not possible to say how the rate of accident compares between the different steel plants. (The management will give a brief note on the number of accidents, during the last five years on construction and production work separately. They will also give a statement on the preventive measures undertaken.)

3. Occupational Diseases: The occupational disease in all the steel plants will be of the same nature. To safeguard workers from any possible danger, they are transferred from one department to another. So that they do not stand exposed to the risk beyond the danger point. There are no occupational diseases peculiar to the steel plants. A study is being made about the industrial noise in the steel plant. A short note will be supplied by the management on the basis of the study.

4. Family Planning: Since 1964, four family planning centres have been operating - one in Rajhara Mines, and three in the Bhilai township. A large number of persons have been approached and the results are encouraging. A large number of persons have gone in for sterilization. They approach pregnant women or mothers who had delivered recently. That is considered the appropriate time for a convincing message. In spite of this, they have not been able to achieve the targets laid down by the Central Government. They will give a statement on different types of operations conducted.

5. Leave Provisions: In the initial stages of the setting up of the steel plant, the leave provisions as applicable to the ministerial staff in the Central Government were granted to all the workers. This was essential because the staff was mostly on the ministerial side. But in course of time, the number of manual workers increased appreciably, and it was thought that the leave provisions available under the Factories Act should be made applicable to the workers of the steel plants. A provision was made in the Standing Orders and was given effect from 1st April, 1960. As a result of this workers who had joined before April, 1960 enjoyed better leave privileges and holidays; the number of such employees is 20% of the total complement. The workers had protested against the curtailment of their benefits, but the High Court had upheld the management action. For administrative convenience, the management would like to have a standardised pattern. What has been done really is to set right the initial mistake. Standardisation has also other advantages in a large set up like the steel plants belonging to H.S.L.

6. Casual Workers: It was wrong to say that large number of casual workers were employed in the steel melting shop. The total number of workers here is 1,460 and the number of mandays worked by casual labour in a full year is only 2,000. The work in the steel melting shop is done by a group of eight persons. The nature of the job is such that if all the people are not present, the work will suffer. In the monsoon season, rate of absenteeism is very high. To fill up the place of persons absent, casual labour has necessarily to be employed. This possibility was always envisaged earlier and a provision was made in the budget also. The casual workers so employed only do purely unskilled

jobs, like cleaning. It is correct that they are paid at the rate of Rs. 1.75 per day - the rate which is the prevalent wage rate in the area. These workers are paid less than the regular workers and they also do not enjoy the facilities that are available to the latter. It is not possible to pay them the same wages as to the regular workers as they do only a part of the job of the latter. Payment of higher wage rates will disturb the prevailing wage rates in the area. The management will give a note explaining the principles leading to a difference between the wages of regular and casual workers.

7. Housing: At present 54 per cent of the workers are provided with houses. The plant has been building two thousands houses per year. But to cover all workers, another twenty thousand houses would be required. In the housing colony, the sanitary conditions are not up to the mark. This is because of shortage of water. A big problem is created by the influx of non-Bhilai workers in the labour camps provided by the Bhilai Steel Plant. In fact 60 per cent of the population of these labour camps consists of these outsiders. As a result, these places are very overcrowded and it has become difficult to maintain cleanliness and proper sanitary conditions. Efforts are being made to encourage cooperative housing. The plant management had not thought of this method earlier. But now they are going ahead with this scheme. The development of land will be undertaken by the plant, and then the land will be leased out to the cooperative society for a period of 99 years. (The management will give a note on the plan for housing in future).

8. Contract labour: There are certain jobs, specially in construction, which are not of perennial nature where contract labour has to be employed. The existence of a large number of contract labour in the mines is due to the fact that the expansion of mines came later than the expansion of the plant. For efficient working, mechanisation is needed in the mines. The plans for mechanisation are ready and within a period of three years, most of the work would be done by machines. In such a case, it will be difficult to regularise all workers in the mines. Since 1964, the management is exercising the control about payment of wages to the contract labour.

9. The advantage of the Madhya Pradesh Industrial Relations Act is that there is one recognised union. The management prefers such a system.

10. The uniformity between the different steel plants in different parts of the country is not that important as the relations with the State authority wherein the plant is located. The State authorities can be easily approached and for this reason the existing arrangements are preferred. The management prefer State jurisdiction in mines also where the M.P. Industrial Relations Act is not applicable.

11. The workers' participation in management is particularly encouraged in matters relating to working conditions. However, it is not possible to associate them in other policy matters.

V

Views of the Soviet Expert Dr. B.N. Zherebin.

The efficiency of the workers and the willingness to work depends upon how much one is encouraged in money terms. The degree of participation depends upon how the work is appreciated. In Bhilai there are no such conditions. In majority of cases wages

are paid uniformly depending on average indices of work done and not on individual performance. The results of persons working better and just ordinary are averaged to form a wage structure. Such circumstances fail to stimulate workers. In Soviet Union the problem of material stimulation is considered of prime importance. Payment depends upon the amount and the quality of work. Where the assessment of individual's work is not possible, payments are made on the basis of the work done by a group of people. To implement such a system, it is necessary to have an evaluation of the job i.e. Work Study. Even a simple approach to such a system would create adequate stimulus in the workers. The management of the Bhilai Steel Plant is busy in improving the system of wage and bonus payment and it is expected to result in greater encouragement to workers.

2. In Soviet Russia every one from top to bottom has a share in the profits of the enterprise.

3. For achieving greater output, efficiency and discipline among the workers, it is necessary that labour laws should be properly implemented.

4. It is not understandable why trade unions here devote very small amount of their effort and activity to the increase in productivity.

VI

The Bhilai administration has ventured on a novel idea. It encourages workers in different shops to form cooperatives for using their spare time in agricultural operations. The land which belongs to the plant has been given to these cooperatives for cultivation without affecting the permanent right of the plant on these lands. The members of the cooperative get together and decide what activity to encourage. The technical know-how for improved agriculture is secured by the management for them but at the instance of the Cooperative. Cooperatives compete between themselves about the best use to which the land can be put. This has resulted in a good number of crop and vegetable competitions, development of poultry, a minor dairy and even horticulture. More important than what all such activities bring to the persons participating in this work in terms of fresh fruits vegetables and grains is the general development of an outlook that makers of steel can also produce agricultural products. The other advantage is that it gives a different appearance to the Plant - a green or a golden yellow belt round the smoking chimneys or red hot iron of blast furnaces or coke formed out of smouldering coal is certainly a relief to the eye when the experiment which is in its early stages develops into something bigger. The idea has now caught on so well that workers whose lands were acquired for the building up of the plant are now clamouring that they should be permitted a share in the similar use of the equivalent of their land given to the plant.

Comments by Member-Secretary VII

Some teachers working in the Schools in Bhilai met me. They pointed out that there is a difference in scale of payment in the High Schools run by Bhilai Management. For Schools which have English medium, the pay scales were better. Teachers who work in the Hindi medium schools therefore develop an inferiority complex. Promotions also are better in Schools which have English medium. I explained to them the manner in which they should send their experience to us. The note which they would send should deal not so much

with their day-to-day complaints but with the principles involved in those complaints. They have agreed to send their representation. If it is not received in about two months, we should send a reminder to them through their Liaison Officer who took us around Bilai.

(Camp: Rourkela)

18-1-1968

VIII

While visiting the Rourkela Steel plant, members were also taken round the Departmentally run canteen. It was surprising to see that they were serving puris and vegetable in tin-plates. / -curry
The furniture provided there also was made of iron sheets. When these points were brought before the canteen manager, he explained that earlier they had been giving vegetables in a pot but there was a large / -curry pilferage. About the furniture, he said that the other type of furniture had been badly damaged by the workers. The canteen serves tea with sacharene as the State Government does not supply any sugar quota. These canteens are given the same treatment as Halwais.

To provide a contrast just on the side of the Departmental canteen, a private canteen was flourishing and was providing tea with sugar at a somewhat higher price than the Departmental canteen, though the upkeep of the private canteen was definitely worse than even the illkept Departmental canteen.

IX

Record of informal discussions which some members of the Commission had with the following representatives of workers:

1. Mr. Bikram Choudhury .. AITUC
2. Mr. Kartick Chandra Sahoo.. Rourkela Mazdoor Sabha
3. Mr. T.N.B. Menon .. Kansbahal Mazdoor Union.
4. Mr. S.N. Naik .. AITUC -Rourkela
5. Mr. B. Mohanty .. Rourkela Steel Mazdoor Union(AITUC).
6. Mr. A.C. Naidu .. Jharsuguda Shramik Union.
7. Mr. Nityanand Ponda .. General Secretary, Rourkela Steel Mazdoor Union.
8. Mr. B.P. Chakrabarty .. Rourkela Steel Mazdoor Union.
9. Mr. Shamsul Haque .. Hindustan Steel Workers' Association (INTUC).
10. Mr. Niranjan Mohanty .. -do-
11. Mr. S.L. Passey .. -do-
12. Mr. R.M. Patnaik .. Ispath Shramik Sangha
13. Mr. L.N. Das .. Ispat Shramik Sangh
14. Mr. Pius Kullu .. -do-
15. Mr. B.D. Panda .. Rourkela Mazdoor Sabha (H.M.S.)
16. Mr. U.K. Saway .. -do-
17. Mr. P.K. Kabi .. -do-

18. Mr. L.N. Behera .. Rourkela Mazdoor Sabha (H.M.S.)
19. Mr. R.K. Samantrai, .. -do-
M.L.A.
20. Mr. K.M. Panigrahi .. Assistant Labour Commissioner,
Rourkela.
21. Mr. S.N. Mishra, IAS .. Deputy Labour Commissioner,
Rourkela.

Number of workers : 27,000 - Organised : 17,000.

H.M.S. Union was recognised in December last. (The INTUC's complaint was that its recognition was cancelled).

The recommendations of the Iron and Steel Wage Board have not been implemented properly. Besides the wage board did not make proper categorisation of workers. The management refused to make revision with the argument that the minimum period for which these recommendations are applicable is five years.

2. Incentive schemes are not based on any scientific study. There are no incentive schemes for over 5,000 persons working on the ministerial side.

3. Bonus is paid only at the minimum of the rate i.e. 4 per cent. The way the balance sheets are made it is very difficult to get more than that. This causes discontent amongst workers.

4. Only 15,000 persons have been provided with company quarters. For the rest the management have made no future programme.

5. The medical facilities provided by the Rourkela Hospital are very good but they do not solve the entire problem. Large number of workers do not come within the purview of these benefits.

6. Different medical standards are laid down for giving medical facilities for workers getting below Rs. 500 per month and above that. Such discrimination requires to be avoided.

7. Leave available to the workers has been reduced; old benefits should be restored. In other countries workers in steel plants are given more leisure and less working hours. This has not been the case in India.

8. There is no scheme of gratuity.

9. Though the rules provide for the first preference to Adivasis and the local people the practice is quite different.

10. Though there are certain rules for promotion a rational promotion policy does not exist.

11. There is a system of maintaining character roll for workers. This does not exist elsewhere. The promotion is made on the basis of seniority-cum-merit or character rolls whichever is in the interest of persons whom the management wants to favour.

12. There is a threat of prospective unemployment as a result of policy of automation adopted by the management. In the Accounts Section they have decided to set up a computer. It is feared that this process will be carried to the production sections also.

13. Management does not exercise any control over contractors as regards payment of wages to workers.

14. The management has been using the labour laws against workers. (INTUC will give a note on the attitude of management).

15. There is^a plethora of labour laws; the number of labour laws should be reduced.

16. In 1960 workers were forced to go on strike on the question of payment of overtime allowance to drivers. The drivers were paid only 6 annas per hour as overtime. When agreement was reached on this issue, enhanced rate of overtime was paid retrospectively from 1956. There is therefore a case for quick settlement of workers' demands.

17. Public sector units have a handicap because of the absence of authority for taking decisions or sharing responsibility and even for implementing quickly decisions at the plant level. The approach by local management is almost timid. For introducing a measure of boldness in management persons more conversant with industrial management should man public sector cadres.

18. The Rourkela unit has not encouraged development of cooperative movement and specially the development of the small scale industries through cooperatives.

19. There should be scope for the growth of a large ancillary sector around a huge complex like the one in Rourkela. Thousands of families up-rooted due to the acquisition of land should have got suitable employment opportunities if the management of the plant had taken care to encourage ancillary units in the area.

20. There is political interference in the trade union movement in the Rourkela Steel Plant. Political influence has led to derecognition of a union which had functioned well after its activities were suspended by force for eight months and another union having political affiliations with the ruling party was encouraged to build up its membership and was ultimately forced on the management.

21. Wasteful expenditure on luxury items for example, cars, conferences and administrative staff buildings was common in Rourkela. This expenditure could have been utilised for more productive purposes. (The INTUC will give a note on luxury expenditure)

22. The standard of houses for officers has been improved; the standard for workers' houses is going down.

23. The management of public sector units should not be entrusted in the hands of I.A.S. Officers.

24. The management of this unit has a litigious attitude. This attitude is displayed especially in case of awards where reinstatement of a dismissed worker was ordered. Private sector approach of management right to 'hire and fire' is subscribed to in Rourkela also.

25. There are three types of houses - one room, two room and three room quarters. As the number of workers increased, cheap type of houses were introduced in 1960. There is no difference in rent as between cheaply constructed houses and those built up earlier. A uniform $7\frac{1}{2}\%$ of pay is charged. The number of

workers without houses is on the increase but officers manage to get accommodation in a short time. In the matter of allotment of houses malpractices are on the increase. There should be a committee of representatives of all unions and the management for this purpose.

26. There are many skilled and educated persons who want to avail of the facilities of promotion outside but their applications are not forwarded.

27. The authority for recovery of wages due should be handed over to labour courts.

28. The State Government have not taken any responsibility for introducing welfare schemes. Even for education and medical facilities to persons in the Rourkela area the State Government looks to the Steel Plant. Normal social service expenditure should not be curtailed merely because a public sector plant is operating in the area and has made arrangements for its own employees.

29. The minimum wage prescribed for the area i.e. Rs. 2/- per day is deplorably low.

30. At present there is only one industrial tribunal. As a result the number of cases pending is increasing. There should be at least one more industrial tribunal for that area.

31. They prefer direct reference of disputes to adjudication without the interference of the labour department.

32. The decisions of the works committee are not being implemented by the management.

33. In one year about 10 to 12 persons were dismissed. Even when a case was pending in the court, the management discharged a worker through domestic enquiry. (The HMS union will give a note on the cases of dismissals).

34. In all cases, clearance from the Head Office at Ranchi and on occasions from Delhi are sought. This causes unnecessarily delays. There should be decentralisation of administration.

35. Two types of canteens work along side in the plant - one run by the department and the other run by the private contractor. The works committee decided that the privately run canteen should be closed but this part of the decision of the works committee has not been implemented.

36. Two types of buses are running for the workers coming to the plant. One bus is exclusively for the use of the officers. In public sector plants at least such discrimination should not exist; transport is very inadequate.

37. The fertilizer plant has been tossed from one authority to another. This has happened two or three times in the last few years. This has created a sense of insecurity with regard to the benefits to be derived by the workers. (AITUC will give a note on this).

Record of informal discussions which some Members of the Commission had with the management of the Rourkela Steel Plant:

1. Shri M.V. Madiman,
Deputy General Manager (Personnel).
2. Shri C.R. Krishna Murthi,
Financial Adviser & Chief Accounts Officer.
3. Dr. P.L. Agrawal,
Assistant General Superintendent.
4. Shri A.K. Moitra,
Assistant Personnel Manager.
5. Shri P.P. Balakrishnan,
Senior Personnel Officer (Industrial Relations).
6. Shri C.M. Mohapatra,
Chief Welfare Officer.
7. Shri S. Parida,
Senior Personnel Officer (Plant).
8. Shri R. Sankaran,
Junior Deputy Controller of Accounts (Budget).
9. Shri V. Radhakrishnan,
Assistant Controller of Accounts (Cost).
10. Shri P. Subramanian,
Personnel Officer (Recruitment).
11. Shri S. Pande,
Personnel Officer (Industrial Relations)
12. Shri S.N. Das,
Personnel Officer (Plant).

1. When the Wage Board for Iron and Steel made its recommendations the representatives of all the unions had a meeting with the management and there was a complete agreement about these recommendations and the manner they were to be implemented. All the recommendations of the Wage Board have been implemented.

2. In each Department, according to the requirements, a few posts are kept as casual; this is for ensuring the smooth running of the plant consistent with minimising the regular employment. The management discourages casual employment of workers. Four years ago, there were about 1000 casual workers but now they have been largely absorbed. At the same time new casuals have come on the scene.

3. Before 1960, leave rules as applicable to Central Government employees were made applicable to the workers in the Steel Plants. With the increase in the number of workers it was thought that the leave provisions laid down under the Factories Act should be made applicable to workers in the Steel Plants. The leave provisions under the Factories Act had put the workers to a disadvantage. But this was inevitable.

4. It is not possible to reduce the existing working hours. This would mean increase in the labour strength which is already much higher in our country.

5. The system of 'helpers' has been responsible for creating a large number of minor jobs which could have been avoided. In other countries, the skilled workers do not hesitate to do sundry jobs like keeping their own machine in good trim to the extent possible. But here the skilled workers need a helper even to bring a tool which is near at hand.

6. The management had formulated a clear promotion policy as early as 1964 and this is a cyclostyled document which could be available to all those who desire. Along with the criteria of merit and seniority, the system of maintenance of character rolls is the usual Government procedure which has been adopted with necessary changes to suit the requirement of the Plant. (The point, however, remains in the workers' mind that in matters of leave, the Factories Act provisions have been adopted because they are less advantageous to workers and in their case the procedure adopted, whatever its merits has been merely for conforming to Government practices.)

7. There is a real difficulty of effective communication with workers. The management had convened a seminar on the subject but nothing substantial could be achieved. Different shops, however, have shop committees and some of them have worked well.

8. The ancillary industries around Rourkela Steel Plant have not grown as in Durgapur or Bhilai. To look into the matter a Committee with the General Manager, Rourkela Plant, as Chairman, was set up and it made some suggestions. The type of spare parts that are needed for the plants had been shown in various exhibitions but private enterprise has not been forthcoming. (The Management will give a note on the scope of development of ancillary industries in Rourkela).

9. At one point, non-implementation of labour laws was a serious issue in Rourkela. This is not so now. Every attempt is made to conform to labour laws not only in its letter but also in its spirit.

10. There are, on an average, 6 dismissals in a year, on account of indiscipline and misconduct. The Management seeks a compromise in such cases in the first instance by paying compensation but this does not work.

11. Labour laws in this country have been designed to avoid and settle disputes which arise on the shop floor. This results in some patchwork and if a dispute is settled and the differences remain agitation starts in some other form.

12. In a huge complex like that of the Steel Plant, maintenance of industrial peace is very necessary. The Commission should consider the Yugoslav system where any person found misbehaving at the shop floor is immediately suspended. Thereafter, a three-tier system of examining the nature and extent of misbehaviour and the amount of punishment consequent upon the established extent of misbehaviour is settled.

13. In the matter of housing, medical facilities, etc. it would be better to have uniformity in all the public sector steel plants. The management is very much hampered when it has to approach the Head Office even for small matters. When the workers make any demand like increase in wages or allowances, in any one department, the Head Office has to be consulted. (This is a matter to be discussed with the

Ministry. There is also a feeling that in many cases the powers available with the General Managers are not used).

14. The management would prefer only one union to deal with all matters. They are put to difficulty when agreements reached with the recognised union are not honoured by other unions. Some principles should be evolved about the rights and responsibilities of these ~~other~~ unions when there is a representative and recognised union.

15. The works committee did good work between 1963-65. This was due to the interest taken by the main spokesman of workers. But when in February 1966, he expired, a new works committee was elected and the troubles started since then. They want to discuss all the subjects in the works committee. The meetings of the works committee have become a scene of tension and quarrels. The management has been implementing almost all the recommendations of the works committee. (The management will give a statement on the number of recommendations of the works committee and how many of them have been implemented. It will also state in how many cases of nonimplementation the matter was brought up again to the works committee to inform members why implementation was not possible).

16. They have no preference about the jurisdiction of the State or Centre over labour matters in the steel plants. But they would like uniformity of conditions in all the steel plants, whether in the public or private sector.

17. The workers in Rourkela under the HSL management are covered by three different wage boards - Iron and Steel; Mines and, Fertilisers. This creates problem for the management if the recommendations of these wage boards are different for different workers covered by them, as regards their pay scales etc. Workers will understandably seek to improve their position by demanding what is most advantageous and management will offer what is most to its advantage.

18. It is wrong to say that all officers have been provided with houses. A number of officers are without houses because they joined late. There is no discrimination as between officers and workers in house allotment. However, the staff is put in different categories for the purpose of house allotment as is done by the Central Government, and the number of houses in different types differs. The argument from workers' side can be that there are insufficient houses for them because the management have spent more money for officers' houses and relatively there are more of such houses.

19. A separate officers' bus has been operating from the beginning. At one time the management wanted to do away with this distinction but some officers represented that the workers try to bring their grievances on the shop floor to the bus; arguments ensue and it becomes difficult to travel together.

20. The policy of the management is not to permit private canteens. Only if the Departmental canteens are impossible, will there be private canteens.

21. The Departmental canteens are run on the basis of meeting the cost of raw materials; other costs are borne by the company. The private canteens are able to supply tea with sugar because they can buy sugar in the open market without any vouchers. The

Departmental canteens cannot go in the open market for such purchases because no vouchers are available with black market rates; and vouchers are essential in the interest of accountability.

(Camp: Ranchi)

XI

19-1-1968

Record of discussions which some Members of the Commission had with the representatives of the workers of the Heavy Engineering Corporation:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|----|---|
| 1. Mr. B. Yadava | .. | Hatia Project Workers Union(INTUC) |
| 2. Mr. S.K. Bahadur | .. | -do- |
| 3. Mr. D.N. Singh | .. | -do- |
| 4. Mr. Surendra Shankar Singh | .. | Hatia Project Workers Union. |
| 5. Mr. Harihar Pd. | .. | -do- |
| 6. Mr. Mohindra Pd.Singh | .. | -do- |
| 7. Mr. N.K. Singh | .. | Heavy Engineering Mazdoor Union. |
| 8. Mr. Lal B.N. Shabdno | .. | H.E.C. Employees Union. |
| 9. Mr. Sharangdhar Upadhyaya | .. | President, H.E.C. Employees Union Thurwa, Ranchi. |
| 10. Mr.M.R. Singh | .. | -do- |
| 11. Mr. S.N. Singh | .. | Hatia Mazdoor Union, A.I.T.U.C. |
| 12. Mr. Ishwari Prasad | .. | H.E.C. Mazdoor Union (U.T.U.C.) |
| 13. Mr. Parkan Ram | | |
| 14. Mr. B. Kumar | | |
| 15. Mr. C.P. Singh | | |
| 16. Mr. A.P. Sinha | .. | President, HatiaShramik Sangh (B.M.S.). |
| 17. Mr. C.B.Sharma | .. | General Secretary, Hatia Shramik Sangh (B.M.S.). |
| 18. Mr. S.P. Tewari | .. | Hatia Shramik Sangh (B.M.S.) |

1. The selection of the representative union should be on the basis of secret ballot.
2. Promotion policy is not proper. The management takes their own men. Adequate arrangements for training do not exist.
3. In 1959 a decision was taken that Graduates working since 1959 would be promoted as UDCs. A few persons were promoted and after that the policy was given up.

4. Sufficient medical facilities are not available. Medical facilities to the workers depend upon their salaries and wages. According to the rules laid down in the Dispensary Token Card, persons getting above Rs. 500/- p.m. are entitled to more medical facilities.

5. The management supports the ^{political} party in power. A case where some facilities were provided by the management for an R.S.S. meeting was cited as an instance.

6. The INTUC representatives complained that though their union was recognised, the management did not discuss the matters with them.

7. Contrast labour is prevalent with all its bad odour. Management encourages the system.

8. Workers would prefer a common labour code for the country.

9. As in the case of mines, Central laws should be ^{made} applicable to steel plants also. That would avoid political influence in settlement of industrial disputes.

10. A time limit should be put for settlement of cases in labour courts.

11. The Registrar of Trade Unions should conduct the election of the executive of the union. (This point was made as there was a good deal of intra-union rivalry in the INTUC camp).

12. There are two types of workers in the plant - construction workers and production workers. They are subject to different working conditions. This creates difficulties with the unions and though there may be valid arguments in favour of two sets of working conditions, it is difficult for unions to persuade workers to accept the proposition if the conditions are widely dissimilar.

13. The method of interview for promotion for in-cadre employees is not proper. Their record of service would be able to show the results better. The interview method may be appropriate for others. A percentage, say, 10% should be promoted on merit basis.

14. The interim relief recommended by the Engineering Wage Board has not been granted.

15. The management has been granting ad hoc advance increases to their own men without any basis or policy.

16. The dearness allowance granted by the Central Government has been given on ad hoc basis. As a result it is not counted for P.F. contributions.

17. There are no proper rationing arrangements for supplying essential items of food to workers.

18. Production incentives do not exist.

XII

Record of informal discussions which some Members of the Commission had with the following officers of the Hindustan Steel Ltd., Ranchi:

1. Mr. A.N. Bannerjee,
Deputy Chairman,
Hindustan Steel Ltd.
2. Mr. R. Sinha,
Adviser,
Personnel & Manpower .
3. Mr. V. Manohar,
Joint Chief,
Industrial Relations.
4. Mr. M. Parthasarthy,
Secretary.

On being asked the reason ^{for} dissatisfaction among the employees in the public sector the management explained that in terms of facilities they could compare with some of the best in the private sector.

2. In spite of this the workers are dissatisfied. This is because there is a tendency to compare each facility in comparison with the best elsewhere. The fact that 75% of the workers have been provided with houses is not appreciated but the complaint will be about 25% of them not being provided with houses.

3. The same is in regard to promotion. Promotions in the initial stage have been faster but the same rate cannot continue. A large number of people of the same age-group have been recruited at one time. Some will be promoted and others will remain i.e. get their chance later because of the tapering pyramid.

4. Even those who are promoted find that promotions are not to the extent they aspired. Promotions depend upon the development of the plant. If more steel plants come up, then the promotions could be earlier. And even then it may not be possible for all to get promotion. This dissatisfaction about promotion is at all levels.

5. Displaced persons and the local people, as laid down in the Government Rules, are given top priority in recruitment in respective grades subject to their satisfying the qualifications and standing competition. Sometimes, however, this argument is carried too far. There is real difficulty of defining who are the local people.

6. The management themselves would like to have local people for administrative convenience. For example the local people may not press so much for housing facility, education facilities could be provided with less cost and so on. In a vast country like ours it would be wrong not to call a person coming from 500-600 kms., though belonging to a different State, a local man.

7. Sometimes the area of the 'local' people is very much restricted as representing a particular culture or belonging to a linguistic area or belonging to a particular subdivision. Whole problem is of sharing of a few jobs by too many people. Such tendencies require to be avoided in the broader national interests.

8. The argument that with Central jurisdiction over the Steel plants, the law and order problem would become complicated is not tenable as the Railways all over India are a Central subject. If Central control is extended then the law and order would be simpler and free from the State political influence. (Railways were a Central subject long before Independence. The Constitution has merely recognised this. But to turn an industry which is now in the State sphere into a Central subject for any purpose would mean inviting trouble in the present political context).

9. At every place they are having one English-medium school for the facility of the children of the staff in the steel plants. All other schools follow the State Education Board curriculum. English-medium schools are not subsidised by the management and there is no bar on any one to join them. They are run to facilitate the children of those persons who have to go on transfer from one State to another where the medium of instruction is the local language.

10. It will be better if uniform standards are enforced for provision of welfare measures for the workers in different plants under the H.S.L. For running the canteen, Durgapur Plant gave a lump-sum subsidy; in Bhilai it is run on cooperative basis and in Rourkela it is Departmental. Durgapur got a favoured treatment from the very start. They give a subsidy of Rs. 12 lakhs and the canteen has got all electrical gadgets.

11. It is most unfortunate that two types of buses - one for officers and the other for workers - are operating. There were fears in the minds of officers that they would be heckled if they used a common bus. It is recognised that this situation is anomalous in the current context but it cannot be helped in view of what was pointed out to the members in Rourkela. The situation does require a review.

XIII

Record of informal discussions which some Members of the Commission had with the following employees' representatives of the N.C.D.C.:

1. Mr. J.K. Bose,
President, N.C.O.E.A.
2. Mr. Abraham Mathew,
General Secretary,
National Coal Organisation Employees' Association.
3. Mr. B.P. Sinha,
Joint Secretary.
4. Mr. B.N. Singh,
Member, Executive Committee.
5. Mr. S. Bagal.

1. The National Coal Organisation Employees' Association Union has a membership of 32,000, including workers in mines and the ministerial staff. The Union has been recognised but is not affiliated to any Central Organisation.

2. The management preferred INTUC Union from the very beginning. This is because there is a leader of the INTUC on the Board of Directors. This is against the wishes of other unions. As the NCOEA Union has been

recognised, it should be given the opportunity to nominate its representative on the Board.

3. Over the last 10 years, 5 union leaders have been victimised. (The Union promised to give a note on the victimisation of union leaders)

4. Management does not respect labour laws. This is partly due to frequent interference of the Ministry in the day-to-day affairs of the management. On one occasion, when the management was about to concede to the demands of the workers, the Ministry advised the management not to enter into any agreement; as a result the case has been referred to the tribunal.

5. In 1961, the management made certain agreements but all the time it has been making excuses for not implementing them. (The Union will give a note on the non-implementation of the agreements signed by the management).

6. The N.C.D.C. management is reported to have made certain service condition rules but this is kept as a confidential document.

7. Recruitment is made always by advertisement. But it is only an eye-wash.

8. For piece-rated workers, the management do not give the required facilities for finishing the quantum of work. As a result, these people get low wages.

XIV

Record of informal discussions which some Members of the Commission had with the following H.S.L. employees' representatives. The Union represents the staff at the Headquarters and it is recognised:

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|--------------------|--|
| 1. Mr. C.S. Prasad | .. Vice-President,
Hindustan Steel Employees Union, Ranchi. |
| 2. Mr. S.P. Sinha | .. Secretary, Hindustan Steel Employees
Union, Ranchi. |
| 3. Mr. H.L. Bhatia | .. Treasurer, -do- |

1. There are no facilities of schooling for the children of the Headquarter staff. For the area, there is one English-medium school which they are unable to afford. There is another Central school where first priority is given to the staff of the Accountant General's Office.

2. The staff at the Headquarters do not enjoy the same fringe benefits as are enjoyed by plant workers. The Wage Board has also discriminated against them. Mention was made particularly of the canteen facilities and uniform for school-going children which is supplied to the children of the plant workers but not to the children of head office staff.

XV

1. Discussions with N.C.D.C. Mr. Rao, the Chairman of NCDC and Mr. Ranchor Prasad, Managing Director were present.

2. The two main problems of workers which very often come to the

NCDC are food and housing. Food is general complaint and about housing some efforts are being made through Coal Mines Welfare Fund. This obviously is inadequate.

2. The management would prefer to deal with one union. The difficulties however are that because of politics workers are divided and even within a union weaknesses have developed. The Commission will have to find a way out.

3. The NCDC encourages the setting up of the workers' canteens in places where workers are not unionised or the unions are so weak that they have not approached the management for recognition or even when such approach has been made they are not recognised because of their inherent weaknesses as established by independent authorities. (Labour Department).

4. Communication is referred to as something which will solve all problems. This is an over-simplification. Apart from the communication there will have to be many positive steps which the management has to take. Some of these are within their competence, others are outside their reach. In the past two years, for instance, things have been made difficult because of rising prices.

5. To discipline workers has become difficult recently. In coal mines particularly an element of nervousness has developed on the side of management particularly in certain areas.

6. Secret ballot will be the best way of settling the ^{representative} character of unions. Voting right should be given to all workers since their decision taken by a union which gets recognition through secret ballot will affect all workers.

7. Works Committees should be activised where unions have not been established or secured recognition.

8. Both for workers and management continuous induction in management practices will be necessary. Workers do not have adequate knowledge of the changing structure of the Company from time to time. This information is not available even at the level of junior officers and difficulties arise at the first floor because of this lack of knowledge.

9. At every stage in the hierarchical management the meeting of minds is necessary. How has this to be achieved is a matter which should be considered. The experience over the last 10 years has shown that miners have now been living better. This is not merely an imperialistic view but it could be established with facts and figures.

NOTE ON

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS IN BHILAI STEEL PLANT

GENERAL:

Industrial relations in Bhilai Steel Plant are governed by the Madhya Pradesh Industrial Relations Act, 1960. Under this Act, a registered Trade Union which has the largest membership is declared as the Recognized Union of the industrial establishment concerned, and the Management has to conduct all collective bargaining in respect of the workers with that Union only. In respect of Bhilai Steel Plant, the Steel Workers' Union (affiliated to Indian National Trade Union Congress) was declared as the Recognized Union by the Government of Madhya Pradesh on 30th July, 1960, and since then it has continued to occupy that position. The management of the Plant is not at all concerned with the recognition of the Union as the membership of each registered Union is verified by the Registrar of Trade Unions, M.P., and then recognition given accordingly.

2. There are 8 other registered Trade Unions of our employees functioning in Bhilai Steel Plant. The more important of these Unions are Bhilai Mazdoor Sabha (Affiliation: AITUC); Bhilai Kamgar Sangh (Affiliation: H.M.S.); Bhilai Steel Plant Shramik Sangh (Affiliation: B.M.S.), etc., etc. There is some inevitable inter-union rivalry amongst the Unions functioning in Bhilai, though its effects have not been as harmful as in some other industrial undertakings.

3. Even otherwise, Bhilai Steel Plant has managed to maintain a record of harmonious industrial relations over the years. The following paragraphs contain a brief account of the various organs and agencies through the smooth functioning of which it has been possible to maintain a climate of peaceful industrial relations in this plant:-

4. (i) JOINT COMMITTEE: The M.P. Industrial Relations Act provides for the constitution of a Joint Committee consisting of the representatives of Management and the workers (nominees of the Representative Union). This Committee is mainly concerned with the following subjects:-

- (a) Conditions of work such as ventilation, lighting, temperature and sanitation, including latrines and urinals;
- (b) Amenities such as provision of drinking water, canteens, dining rooms, medical and health centres;
- (c) Safety and accident prevention, occupational diseases and protective equipments;
- (d) Administration of welfare and fine funds;

- (e) Adjustment of festival and National holidays;
- (f) Educational and recreational facilities such as libraries, reading rooms, cinema shows, sports, games, picnic parties, community welfare and celebrations;
- (g) Promotion of thrift and savings.

5. The Joint Committee meets every month under the Chairmanship of a senior officer of the Plant and discusses all matters concerning the above subjects which are raised by the representatives of the workers or the Management. Prompt follow-up is ensured on all the decisions taken by this Committee and the progress made in this behalf is reviewed at every subsequent meeting.

6. (ii) PRODUCTION COMMITTEES: Production Committees for each unit of the Plant with representatives of workers and Management as its members have been constituted to review every month the production problems of the unit concerned and evolve mutually agreed solutions for enhanced production and other allied matters. Central Production Committee under the Chairmanship of the General Manager also meets every month where all-Plant production problems are discussed by the representatives of both the sides and decisions taken not only to increase production but also to improve the working conditions of the employees.

7. (iii) GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE: To ensure prompt attention and redressal of the grievances of our workers, three-tier grievance procedure has been implemented. At the first two stages, the worker seeks redressal of his grievance at the level of his department and after that he approaches the Grievance Committee which is presided over by a senior official and where Union representatives sit with the representatives of the Management. Here the case of the aggrieved worker is advocated by his own colleagues. The Management has voluntarily agreed to accept all unanimous recommendations of the Grievance Committee as binding.

8. If the concerned worker is still dissatisfied with the decision of the Grievance Committee, then there exists a provision for filing an appeal against it before the General Manager. Grievance procedure in Bhilai Steel Plant has been greatly instrumental in providing speedy redressal to the aggrieved workers and thereby resulted in reducing industrial disputes to a great extent. The success of this institution can be judged from the fact that out of more than 6000 cases filed during the last 5 years before the Grievance Committee, (Stage III), the workers had the occasion to appeal against its decisions to the General Manager only against less than 10% of the cases.

9. (vi) OTHER BIPARTITE COMMITTEES: Some of the other Committees where the representatives of the Management and the workers sit together and take mutually agreed decisions concerning various aspects of service conditions and welfare of the workers are :

Plant Level Committee on Wage Differentials;
Medical & Health Advisory Committee;
General Safety Appliances Committee;
Education Advisory Committee;
Departmental Safety Committees;
Accommodation Advisory Committee;
Sports & Recreation Council, etc., etc.

10. Workers' representatives are also associated with the review of the six-monthly merit ratings of the workers so as to ensure proper moderation of the assessment of an employee's performance by his immediate supervisor.

11. All the above-named Committees have been constituted in one form or the other in most of the big industrial establishments in the country. The only special merit that can be claimed for these Committees in Bhilai Steel Plant is that here all of them are live and active organizations and their harmonious working is an indication of the extent to which workers' participation in management of the Plant has been realised in actual practice.

12. (vii) INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS IN THE MINES: We have two important mining townships, i.e. Rajhara and Nandini, and industrial relations in these Mines are governed by the Industrial Disputes Act. There are 4 Registered Trade Unions functioning in Rajhara and 5 such Unions function in Nandini.

13. As none of the Trade Unions in the Mines enjoys the status of a Recognized Union, collective bargaining and settlement of industrial disputes presents a greater difficulty in the Mines as compared to the Plant. But so far we have been able to settle most of our major disputes by discussing the same across the table with the representatives of these Unions or through the good offices of a Conciliation Officer. Delay in the publication of Mines Wage Board Award for Iron Ore and Limestone and Dolomite Mining industries did give rise to considerable unrest in the Mines, specially as the Iron & Steel Wage Board Award had been implemented earlier for the Plant employees. But, ultimately, due to a special concession given by our Head Office to extend the benefits of Iron & Steel Wage Board Award to our Mines employees also, the problem was solved to a considerable extent. Now only the date from which this Award should be made applicable and the question of continuance of Mining Allowance are pending in Adjudication.

14. The employees of Bhilai Steel Plant enjoy a fairly good standard of amenities like subsidised housing, free medical treatment, practically free education, subsidised transport, recreation centres, etc., etc. Brief notes on the more important of these amenities are given below:-

WELFARE AMENITIES
PROVIDED TO THE
WORKERS

(i) HOUSING: We have nearly 32,000 regular employees on our rolls in Bhilai and so far the management has constructed 18,360 quarters for their accommodation. Allotment of quarters is made according to the seniority of workers in their respective categories.

Besides, we have nearly 9,000 Workcharged employees on our rolls, but due to the temporary nature of their work, they are given a low priority for allotment of regular houses. They mostly live in Tubular Sheds and Labour Camps.

It has not been possible to put up more quarters due to shortage of funds. Consequently, nearly 8,000 of our Regular employees also live in Labour Camps in huts made of bamboo matting. The balance of nearly 6,000 Regular employees live in Durg and the adjoining villages.

A large number of non-B.S.P. employees are also living in these Labour Camps which have acquired all the ugly features of shanty colonies.

A subsidised rent of 10% is charged from all employees residing in permanent quarters except those whose pay is below Rs. 150/- per month, and they pay only 7½% of their pay towards house rent.

So far, water has been made available in all these quarters to the workers free of cost.

15. (ii) MEDICAL FACILITIES: Free medical facilities of a high standard have been provided to all Plant employees and their dependents. Besides this, we have one more hospital, 3 Health Centres, 3 dispensaries, one mobile dispensary and 4 first-aid posts functioning in Bhilai to look after the health of our employees. Family clinics have also been attached to our hospitals and Health Centres.

16. (iii) EDUCATION: The Management is running 4 Higher Secondary Schools, 2 Middle Schools and 27 Primary Schools in Bhilai. Most of these schools run in two shifts and education is free up to the Primary stage and after that the fees charged are only nominal. We have 20,600 students on our rolls in these schools and free mid-day meals are supplied to the children

of all B.S.P. employees except the children of Plant executives. In Primary Schools, these children also get two pairs of school uniforms and a pair of shoes per year free of cost, and in the Middle and Higher Secondary Schools two sets of uniforms are supplied at 50% of the cost to the children of parents whose income does not exceed Rs. 200/- per month.

MERIT SCHOLARSHIPS: To provide facilities for prosecuting higher studies in Engineering subjects to meritorious children of our non-supervisory staff, the Management awards 6 Scholarships of Rs. 150/- per month each for study in Engineering College for a Degree and 6 Scholarships of Rs. 80/- per month each for study for a Diploma in Engineering.

BAL MANDIRS AND PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOLS: There are 4 Bal Mandirs run in our Camps and they are looked after by our Lady Social Workers. Eight pre-Primary Schools are also run in 8 different Sectors of our township.

ADULT EDUCATION: Classes are run by our Community Development Department in the Camp areas. Six such centres are at present functioning in the Labour Camps. Besides, adult literacy classes are also conducted inside the Plant for our employees.

17. TRANSPORT FACILITIES: The Plant has a fleet of 50 buses to provide subsidised transport to its workers for coming to the Plant at a nominal charge of Rs. 6.25 per month. Nearly, 6,500 workers attending different shifts make use of this facility.

18. RECREATION CENTRES: In the township we have five Recreation Clubs for our workers in 5 different Sectors of the township and various facilities for recreation are provided in these Clubs. The Plant has also established two Recreation Centres in the Camps for the same purpose.

19. SPORTS & RECREATION COUNCIL: Our Sports & Recreation Council is the central organ which organizes all the sports and cultural activities in the township. Under this Council there are nearly 20 Clubs for various sports and games like foot-ball, hockey, volley-ball, athletics, cricket, music, arts, dramatics, etc., etc. All other clubs started by individual effort are allowed to get affiliated to the main clubs and their activities are subsidised out of amenities funds.

20. A large number of tournaments, matches, festivals, cultural programmes, etc., are organized under the auspices of the Sports & Recreation Council to provide our employees with adequate avenues of relaxation and recreation in their sparetime. Two modern stadia have been provided for holding various matches, tournaments etc., and the Nehru House of Culture is the hub of most of our cultural activities.

21. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES: Our Community Development Department was organized mainly to provide a focus on communal life to such of our employees who lived in the Camps and being dispersed here and there, found it difficult to come together and engage in creative pastime. Besides, by starting small-scale cottage industries like book-binding, cane weaving, tailoring, manufacture of stationery articles etc., it was also intended to provide the wives of our workers an opportunity to supplement their family income.

22. This department not only organizes these cottage industries for the dependents of our employees, but also runs Bal Mandirs, Adult Literacy classes, recreation centres, etc., etc.

23. MAHILA SAMAJ: The Bhilai Mahila Samaj is the largest organization of ladies residing in Bhilai and wives and dependents of Plant employees are entitled to become its members. A branch of Mahila Samaj functions in each Sector of the township and the activities of this organization are mainly oriented towards opening avenues of welfare activities for the wives of our- low-paid employees. Besides, it also serves as an exclusively ladies' club and the Sector branches organize social gatherings quite frequently.

24. The co-operative movement is more fully developed in Bhilai than, perhaps, any other comparable township in the country. On the distribution side, Bhilai Wholesale Consumers' Co-operative Stores Ltd., distributes controlled goods and other important items of daily consumption through its 74 affiliated Primary Consumer Stores which, in turn, have 115 branches spread all over Bhilai as well as the mining townships of Rajhara and Nandini. Besides foodgrains and other essential commodities, these Primary Co-operative Stores retail general merchandise, cloth and bicycles, and 3 stores have their own flour mills. More than 15,000 of our employees are the members of these Primary Co-operative Stores.

WHOLESALE AND
PRIMARY CONSUMERS'
CO-OPERATIVE STORES

25. With a share capital of over Rs. 2 lakhs and a working capital of Rs. 11 lakhs, the total sales of the Central Wholesale Consumers' Co-operative Stores Ltd., stood at Rs. 1,45,00,000 during the last co-operative year. The Store made a gross profit of Rs. 2,73,000 and a net profit of Rs. 1,53,000 over this period.

26. With a view to holding the price line and catering to a wider range of consumer needs, the Super Bazar was inaugurated in Civic Centre, Bhilai, on 25th January, 1967. Its popularity was instantaneous and it forms the premier shopping centre in the township. There are six counters in

Super Bazar retailing school books, toys, general merchandise, electrical goods, crockery, stainless steel utensils, plastic goods, cloth of all varieties, tinned and bottled foodstuffs, confectionary items, eggs, bread, etc., etc.

27. The Super Bazar, Bhilai, is managed directly by the Central Wholesale Consumers' Co-operative stores Ltd., and is the only Store of this type in the country which was established without obtaining any loan or grant from any source whatsoever.

AGRICULTURAL
COOPERATIVE
FARMS

28. The vigorous and fast growing co-operative movement was given a new dimension by the General Manager, Bhilai Steel Plant, when he conceived the idea of bringing under cultivation all the cultivable waste land lying on the outskirts of the township of Bhilai. Nearly 5,000 acres of such land was readily available and there was also sufficient waste water which could be immediately used for purposes of irrigation.

29. Department-wise Agricultural Co-operative Societies of our employees were formed and sizeable plots of land were allotted to each society on short-term lease for purposes of cultivation. The Plant incurred the cost of providing fencing around these farms and water for purposes of irrigation at a point of command. Funds for cultivation were generated by the societies by raising share capital from their members.

30. Though this scheme is only 8 to 9 months old, yet 22 departmental Co-operative Agricultural Societies have already come into existence and nearly 1,000 acres of land has been cultivated and brought under Kharif crops. The area under Rabi crop is still larger.

31. Some of these Agricultural Societies are already selling the produce of their farms like vegetables, 'Bhuttas' (Corn Cobs), paddy, rice, fodder, etc., and the prices of vegetables prevailing at this time are nearly 50% of what they were last year. The funds generated by the sale of this produce will enable these Agricultural Co-operative Societies to considerably expand their activities and it is hoped that most of the land allotted to Co-operative Farms will be brought under the plough within a year or so.

32. With fenced farms and water for irrigation available around the year, it is hoped that within a short period, these co-operative farms will be able to meet to a large extent the requirements of B.S.P. employees for foodgrains, vegetables and fruits through intensive, efficient and scientific farming.