CHAPTER - IV
VARIOUS WORKING CLASS MOVEMENT

Nationalists in the Awakening of Labour Movement and
Emergence of Modern working class in shattered Indian Economy

The subordination of India under colonial regime into a raw material supplier and a market for British goods had far-reaching effects on the emergence of Working Class movements in the country. With the ruination of the artisan industry and village handicrafts coupled with the new land settlement, a large majority of the working population belonging particularly to lower castes were delinked from their traditional occupations. They had to stay back in villages however. While the Indian economy was shattered, it was not replaced by the capitalist economy as it happened in Europe. Colonial rule in India, in the process of penetrating into the economy, was forced to take steps which objectively rendered the growth of capitalist economy however slowly and painfully it was. The railways and the ancillary industries and the communication networks inaugurated in India were the arena which along with the shipyards, the cotton mills and the plantation provided the ground for the emergence of modern Working Class in India. It was as compradores that the newly emerging small class of Indians entered the capital industry. Growth of large industrial units and expanding commercial interests by the end of nineteenth century caused the growth and modernisation of provincial capitals wherein developed the organised Working Class.
In Tamil Nadu the labour movement has a chequered history in the context of the national movement. With its many but scattered port-towns, cotton growing regions and hilly areas for the growth of plantations, the Working Class was scattered. Added to this was the caste antagonism splitting the labour and the usual aversion of nationalists to take up the real fight. If the early nationalist leadership did anything in the field, it was to use the labour force whenever the leaders wanted to embarrass and bargain with the Government or else their perception was typically lacking. If they demanded anything it was to stop granting lands to low caste men for if all were made landowners and go over to Christianity who would work in the fields of Zamindars.¹ They asked the Madras Mahajana Sabha and the Congress did not want the labour force to migrate and urged the Government to ban migration to help the Mirasidar with cheap labour.² The Governments of Princely States were the worst oppressors for they did everything in law to protect the capitalists by binding the labour in perpetual slavery for a pittance.³

Labour movement and its ban

One thing that needs to be cleared is that the nationalist leadership in Tamil Nadu, while it organised the labour against the Colonial Government, it refused to take up labour struggles against the native capitalists and managements. Whenever the unemployed and half-fed rural labour mi-
grated, it even asked the Government to ban movement of labour. They prayed that "orders might be issued requiring the coolies to produce from the village officers a certificate to the effect that they were not, at the time of leaving their master’s service bound by any contract to continue to serve under them".

Two kinds of Stand against labour clan

When the Government refused, the nationalists denounced it as partiality and charged that "if European planters had asked, the Government would have complied with it". That the Indian feudal lords should be allowed the same rights to oppress the labour as their European counterparts is clear and to that extent they claimed equal rights for Indians. Given the social base of nationalism in Tamil Nadu, this stand does not seem to be strange for the leadership. It was in the hands of the landlords and the educated class which belonged to the upper castes as against the labour force belonging largely to lower castes.

Swadeshi movement and disorganization of Working Class

The growing hold of European capital on Indian economy naturally was an eye sore to the nationalists. Also as Indians were becoming aware of the evil effects of foreign capitalism on the condition of Indian masses and economy, they advocated Swadeshi and Boycott of foreign goods. The Indian compradore class and native capitalists actively supported the
Swadeshi Movement. All those who had some grievance against the foreign capitalist and alien Government promoted the movement. In Tamil Nadu the Swadeshi message though was well received by the middle classes, Swadeshi enterprises as it developed in Bombay province did not develop resulting in the scattered nature of Working Class being continued. Further most of the unskilled workforce with family ties in the villages remained unsettled. Whenever these ties pulled and monsoon and agricultural conditions did better they kept them shuttling between their ancestral home and the urban centres. There was a dearth of labour in the upcoming labour-intensive concerns, it was largely due to the low wages fixed on the basis of the outdated living index of the rural areas. The divisions in the ranks of workers based on castes, language and skill kept them disorganised till the 1920s.

**Awakening and assertion among the labour**

The workforce did not meekly tolerate the oppression of the managements. In fact from the 1850s, the labour in Tamil Nadu often protested collectively and on occasions violently whenever their wages were cut. The managements with the active cooperation of the Government, black legs and the European and Anglo-Indian official superiors successfully suppressed the movements. On occasions in desperation the workforce
turned violent and attacked their opponents. The nationalists of Tamil Nadu were only surprised to see the awakening and assertion among the labour.\textsuperscript{7}

**Unorganize labour become organize by VOC**

The Congress refused to take sides saying any expression of opinion would amount to partiality. The nationalists in Tamil Nadu were not prepared to 'comment' even as late as 1913, though they stoutly defended the privileges of landlords as against the exploited workers.\textsuperscript{8} It is interesting to note that in Tamil Nadu, it was not that section of the nationalist leadership that held hegemony over the Congress which tried to organise and bring the labour into the nationalist movement as it happened in Bombay or Bengal, but it was the leaders from the periphery. The growing influence of Swadeshi and of the extremist movement induced two men from Tuticorin to organise the mill workers and of the shipping company owned by Europeans. These leaders tried to politicize the workers.\textsuperscript{9} V.O. Chidambaram Pillai, one of them definitely had some vested interest also for he had been a partner and managing director of the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company which owned overseas passenger ships and competed with a British owned firm in Tuticorin. He organised the ill-paid workers and regularly held meetings preaching Swadeshi which were considered seditious. It led to considerable unrest and culminated in the murder of the collector. The anti-imperialist spirit was so widespread among the people of
the region that the Europeans and their native henchmen boycotted and the washermen and barbers of Tuticorin even refused their services.\textsuperscript{10}

**Indian labour victory became victory for the Indian nation**

Despite being terrorized, the strikers did not relent and the management of the mills had to give in and concede to many of their demands ultimately. However, the significance of the victory was not properly understood by the nationalist leaders though 'Bandemataram' the extremist mouthpiece from Calcutta rightly pointed out that "every victory for Indian labour is a victory for the nation".\textsuperscript{11}

**The first political strike of the Indian working class at Tuticorin**

The most remarkable action of the Working Class in the context of the Indian national movement was the solidarity they exhibited when nationalist leaders of Tuticorin were arrested and imprisoned on the eve of the celebrations of the release of Bipin Chandra Pal from jail. Not only the labour force working in the foreign companies but even Jutka drivers, sweepers and butchers of Tuticorin stopped work and normal life was paralysed. Writing about this strike Thankappan, a scholar observes "this was the first Political Strike of the Indian Working Class. Unfortunately this has not found its rightful place in the history of Indian Trade Union Movement." He laments that credit is given to the Bombay labour by all. However, be he added that the objective conditions were such that the
working masses had started awakening to the imperialist exploitation all over India by then. Under the leadership of the Calcutta Printers Union, the Workers there went on Strike in June 1906 and such leaders as Tilak were invited from Bombay to address them and this is a testimony to the rising political consciousness of the Working Classes.\textsuperscript{12} While the workers paid the price for identifying themselves with the nationalist cause, the nationalist leadership simply failed to make use of the growing awakening. Even the extremist leadership in Tamil Nadu withdrew from the labour field perhaps because the terror unleashed by colonialists was enough to scare them away. Given their class character, it was difficult for them to stand such agitational politics. The recognised extremist leader G. Subramanya Iyer who had been tried in the sedition case in early 1908, was let off following a compromise amounting to humiliation-seemed so much terrorised that he was one of the only 30 men that participated in the meeting convened to make arrangements to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the Queen's proclamation.\textsuperscript{13}

**Railways of South India strikes 1913 and its merciless suppression**

Nevertheless, collective bargaining as an effective tool in the hands of the labour had come to stay though it was not recognised by the capitalists. The capitalists who became more vindictive following the strike wave of 1908 harassed the workers under one pretext or the other. In 1913 started a series of strikes in the railways of South India when orders with a provision to reduce the wages or to dismiss a worker for resorting to strike was passed,
and workers were forced to sign the agreement to the effect. Those who refused to sign were summarily dismissed. The absence of leadership and the anger of the workers naturally resulted in violence. Every white officer was chased, but on firing being resorted to by the management some workers were killed and ultimately the leaderless, unorganised strike was mercilessly suppressed.\textsuperscript{14}

**The reaction of the nationalists**

The moderate paper, *Indian Patriot* while vaguely sympathising with the workers declared "we have absolutely no concern about Mr. Anderson (the General Manager of Southern Mahratta Railway Company) and his one hundred thousand subordinates (the workers) having a week's or month's try of war", but it wanted a "settlement because His Majesty's subjects' mail are exposed to danger".\textsuperscript{15} The one time staunch supporter of 'extremists', *Hindu’s* reaction only betrayed its ignorance of the awakening among the labour. It observed that "the strikers seem to have organised themselves and made their preparations on a scale which is certainly surprising in a country like India."\textsuperscript{16} When the strike was suppressed and the Government reported normalcy with black legs, it further remarked “these efforts have met with success to such an extent that the company is now able, without the strikers returning to work to make a fair approximation to normal service (and) we must not omit to make more than a passing reference to the strenuous
efforts." The nationalist opinion if there was only too moderate to support the workers. Their perception was that, due to strike the general public suffered and if the public were not to suffer, there should be no strikes.\textsuperscript{18}

The nationalist leadership largely stayed away from labour but for a brief interlude by B. P. Wadia of the Home Rule Movement in 1918. With Besant breaking from Gandhi, Wadia was the first nominee of the Colonial Government in the International Labour Organisation.\textsuperscript{19} However, it must be reckoned that Wadia was the organiser of the Madras Labour Union that heralded the birth of meaningful trade unionism in India. Any worker in any industry including a rickshaw puller could become a member of this union though the mill workers were in a majority. But Wadia, it must be pointed out, was a reformist, too blindly attached to imperialism and was against strike.

It was after the First World War and with the deterioration in the living conditions of Labour coupled with increasing exploitation labour came under heavy stress. As in the arena of both peasants and the labour, all political groups tried to organise the workers. The year 1918 witnessed strikes in the textile mills all over South and Congress leaders had no interest in labour affairs. It was the Congress and the Justicites who were now in the forefront of Working Class organisations and on appeals by managements the Governments promptly arrested or banned the leaders.\textsuperscript{20}
The managements and the Government detested most was the 'outside' leaders, 'politicians' organising the workforce. However, the wave of labour that swept the country forced the managements to increase the wages in 1919-1920, besides reducing hours of work from 12 to 10. But the managements which refused to recognise the labour union felt safe in dismissing the union leaders. The nationalist leadership following Gandhi's organisation of the Ahmedabad mill workers tried to take interest in labour affairs and when Gandhi came to Madras, he was taken to a mill workers meeting by Rajaji. Otherwise, generally they took little or no interest in labour affairs. Even moderate leaders were so upset with the reluctance of the dominant Congress leadership that it urged that "Congress should take concerted measures about relieving the labourers from the oppression of capitalists without confining their attention solely to a discussion of the reforms." It is true that individuals here and there did think that it was the Sudras comprising labourers that will rule over the world hereafter and so the labour should act boldly and honestly, but the Congress leaders in Tamil Nadu did not believe in such interpretations. Men who held such views in Congress could not stay there and frequently shuttled between the non-Brahmin party and the Congress. It is interesting to note that two individuals of the same group - Varadarajulu Naidu and T. V. Kalyanasundara Mudaliar, edited Desabhaktana and of the Rajaji group - holding different views on labour. The latter saw the strikes as
"inconveniences to public." Similar were the views of the Andhra nationalist Konda Venkatappaiah.

While the Government considered it a problem of law and order, the majority of the dominant leadership considered it a question of public convenience. This attitude of the leaders became much more pronounced when transport workers and municipal workers went on Strike and Non-co operation Movement. It was not only unsympathetic but hostile. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar was horrified at the violence indulged in by the strikers against black legs. Nevertheless the non-cooperation movement and the increasing labour strikes all over the country convinced a small section of the nationalists who lamented that adequate coverage was not given to the strikes in the press at the same time maintaining its usual stand that strikes meant "much hardship to the Public and Government" and interestingly not appreciating the plight of the Working Class. The 'Gandhians' so-called were worried "whether the contemplated all-round strike may occur during the visit of the prince of wales". Thus, while Gandhi himself was contemplating the boycott of the visit of the prince, the Gandhians in Tamil Nadu were worried about the strikes during the visit. At this stage, it must also be noted that the nationalist leadership was intolerant of the rising labour unrest and in fact even made use of Gandhian non-violence to criticise the labour leaders and unrest. It was a question of non-violence and any attempt at bringing in the exploited sections meant violence and more
importantly change in the form and content of the struggle and the movement which was disliked by the leadership.

**Caste Antagonism to join union between low caste workers and higher caste men**

The attempts of different political interests to use the workers led to division among the workers. This was most pronounced during the non-cooperation year when workers belonging to depressed classes and others came to blows and indulged in burning down houses. The workers belonging to depressed classes were led astray by M. C. Rajah, who was nominated to the Legislative Council. He was opposed to the non-cooperation movement and workers' strike during that period. When none took care of the workers' interest when they needed it utmost earlier, why should the non-cooperators make use of them for political purposes seemed to have been the logic of men like M.C.Rajah. Both the Congress and the non-Brahmin party unable to understand the phenomena, clearly took an anti-depressed class stand forgetting their mutual antagonism.³⁰

But the antagonism between the depressed class and other workers had its roots in the non-admission of the former in the unions led by the nationalist and Justice Party leaders. The Government noted, "The low caste men have never been brought into the unions which consists almost entirely of the higher castes". But when for political agitations their strength was
needed, they were invited to join the unions. The colonial Government with the help of depressed class leaders naturally disuaded them and consequently the low caste workers refused to join the union now or to accept the view that their interests were identical with those of the higher caste men.\(^{31}\)

**Infiltration of the leftists**

In 1920 the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) had come into being. The onset of Khilafat and non-cooperation movements certainly stirred the emaciated labour, into strikes. The leadership in Tamil Nadu for the most part considered the labour problem not only as one between Foreign Capital and Indian Labour, but also as a racial issue. It is true that till 1920, native capital had not entered the labour market in a substantial way at least in Tamil Nadu\(^{32}\) and this was perhaps the reason why they saw it thus: “It was the gradual infiltration of the leftists that gave real life to the Labour movement in the late 1920s. It was the Government who more than the nationalist leadership noticed the phenomena and felt that if organised labour will one day and that possibly not very far distant play a considerable part in the politics of this presidency.”\(^{33}\) M. Singaravelu Chetty, S. R. Chate, Jeevanandam and P. Sundaraiah were the new leaders. Saklatwala, the British communist, also visited Madras.

The Government was alarmed because of the general dissatisfaction among the workers in the mills, railway, electric supply corporation and
sporadic strikes were also launched.\textsuperscript{34} With the entry of Communists, the liberal leaders were sidelined. Singaravelu even attempted to form a 'Labour Political Party' on the lines of the British Labour Party to capture the Madras Corporation.\textsuperscript{35} The labour situation in Madras seized the opportunity, but the managements worsened during April 1927 and Singaravelu refused to recognise him. But the workers also refused to negotiate with the management without their leader. There was a stalemate, but union activists were victimised. P. Sundaraiah organized the press workers. Now the Congress nationalists, as if they had awakened convened a workers meeting but they "found themselves heckled and hooted by labourers. Sami Venkatachalam Chetty and Satyamurthy who came to address the meeting chose discretion and quietly withdrew."\textsuperscript{36} As the influence of the communists among workers grew, the Government prohibited Singaravelu the leader from holding strikes.\textsuperscript{37} The nationalist leadership was alarmed and convened a meeting of the labour leaders and broached the subject of organising the workers within Congress. But Singaravelu categorically declared that Labour Unions would have nothing to do with these negotiations and told Srinivasa Iyengar (then president of the Indian National Congress) to leave the labour alone alleging that Congress leaders stood for "landlordism, capitalism, private ownership, etc., and its interests are opposed to those of labour".\textsuperscript{38}
Impact of the antagonism

Labour Movement grew steadily in this period in the south, not of course outside Congress. Despite his criticism of Congress leadership, Singaravelu continued to be in the Congress but tried with like-minded men to turn the Congress to his line of thinking.\(^{39}\) It was this integrative role of the Working Class leadership sympathetic to Communism that kept Tamil Nadu free from the Hindu-Muslim riots that swept other parts of India in the years after the suspension of the non-cooperation movement. Even the casteist-sectarian Brahmin-non-Brahmin controversy remained dominant in the period without any axes to grind. And if the civil disobedience of 1930-1932 met with any success in the Tamil Nadu it was more due to the active participation of these classes and its leadership than the Swarajist dyarchy backing Congress leadership. While the Colonial Government rightly understood that the relationship between the dominant Congress leadership and labour was not cordial, their belief that “the more active labour leaders appear to be antagonistic to the Congress” was misplaced. And their (the Government’s) expectation that due to this antagonism the labour leaders will not allow the workers to go on a general strike as part of civil disobedience also proved wishful.\(^{40}\)

Working clan strikes Integrated into Nationalist movement

. In the period between non-cooperation and civil disobedience, the Trade Union Act of 1926 recognised trade union activity. Also the Royal
Commission on Labour in India to enquire into the working conditions had been appointed in 1929. These were no doubt due to the exertions of the labour. Still the managements consistently refused to recognise the unions under the pretext that they were led by outside leaders.

V.V.Giri General Secretary All India Railway men’s Federation

Civil Disobedience movement naturally attracted the workers and practically all establishments were affected. V. V. Giri, a moderate labour leader, opposed to Communism (the extremists) and who supported the Colonial Government against the leftist organised labour strikes had become the General Secretary of the All India Railway Men's Federation.\(^\text{41}\) Trade Depression and its consequents The Depression had affected all and the capitalists under the pretext of trade depression resorted to indiscriminate retrenchments, wage freeze etc. The labour force naturally struck work all over the country and the Tamil Nadu was no exception. A casual perusal of the fortnightly reports of the Madras Government point to the growing unrest and strikes and the provocative attitude of the capitalists and the Government.

Labour strike under stayamurthy

The nationalist leadership with Satyamurthy at its head when the workers were on strike demanding succour exhorted the retrenched labour to join the band of picketers and go to jails.\(^\text{42}\) It is remarkable that the
nationalist leadership which seldom took interest in the labour problems and tried least to politicise them could call upon the workers to picket and go to jails and it only betrays their perception of how the working classes could be integrated into the nationalist movement. It clearly points out the cleavage between the labour and nationalist leadership in Tamil Nadu.

**Madurai Mill strike 1937**

It is also interesting to note that by 1930 native capital started flowing into the labour intensive industry. It was in 1931 that the Congress in its Karachi Session adopted its labour welfare programme. Despite the programme and the labour participation in the civil disobedience movement, the nationalist leadership in South refused to reciprocate when the labour unions requested them for support. The only case in which the Congress sided with workers in South decisively was in the Madurai Mills strike when Congress was in power in 1937.

**Congress Government with Colonial Government**

The Government intervened in the dispute and forced the management to agree for a court of arbitration. However, it should be borne in mind that the strike was led by one of the proteges of Rajaji (then Premiere of Madras) as against the Communists. It is possible that the anti-leftist Rajaji Government with the anti-Communist labour Minister V. V. Giri, in order to discredit the Communists, supported the strike led by
another anti-Communist Varadarjulu Naidu.\textsuperscript{44} Generally the Congress stood for 'internal settlements' as against 'external settlements'. Thus, it did not differ from Colonial Government in its perception of labour demands vis-à-vis capitalist exploitation.\textsuperscript{45}

**The role of communalists**

True to their belief, the Congress leadership promoted liberal leadership. But the long-term effects of it on the nationalist movement proved negative for their labour leaders like Varadarajulu Naidu, whom it supported were Hindu Communalists and disliked by Christian, Muslim and low caste workers.\textsuperscript{46} Earlier Wadia had been roped in by the Colonial Government. This naturally weakened the Congress controlled labour unions. And as the nationalist leadership in Tamil Nadu did, their labour leaders also refused to take the struggle in the anti-colonial, national integrating direction. In fact the leaders became one with the exploiters and refused to support the workers’ demands at times.\textsuperscript{47}

As the Congress leadership in South shuttled between the Congress-Hindu Mahasabha-Communalism and casteism, so was its labour leaders. Varadarajulu Naidu was a justicite-a Congressite-a Hindu Mahasabhaite and took a communalist position by abusing the Muslim, Christian and low caste workers.\textsuperscript{48} As Congressmen led by Rajaji withdrew from Congress and Quit India movement, these labour leaders identified themselves more and more
with Hindu Communalist organisations. This resulted in the degeneration and demoralisation of the Labour Movement not only led by them but the general labour movement. But it should be pointed out that the socialists and Communists supported the strikes led by liberal nationalists because for them unity was important.

**Working Class strikes and suppression of congress Government**

Nevertheless, the anti-colonial spirit was rising and it even affected the police force in Tamil Nadu and after a series of struggles, it obtained recognition of its right to form an Association. Though the Congress Government at Madras agreed to recognise their union, it refused to allow 'outside' leadership and only a Gazetted Police Officer could be the President of the Union and not any other lower grade officer. The Congress ministry promptly suppressed the socialist-communist-led unions and strikes. The entry of the leader of the Nellikuppam Distillery workers was banned from entering Nellikuppam, and they were arrested and jailed. When the Indian Express workers at Madras went on strike, the Rajaji Government on being requested by the management arrested the socialist leaders, tried and they were convicted. The European Chief Secretary to Madras Government reported rather ironically that "the Indian Express normally a vigorous exponent of unbridled civil liberties and direct action and supporter of workers cause and a sneering critic of Government in respect of their
measures to preserve order since the strike gives expressions to ultrarightist opinion on the subject of industrial relations and wise labour leadership".\textsuperscript{52} It is illustrative of the attitude of both the nationalist press and the Congress Government towards labour problem.

After the resignation of the Rajaji Ministry in deference to the CWC decision on 26 October 1939, the British Government continued its unbridled repression. Strikes continued to rise and suppression and victimisation followed. Now both the right wing Congress leadership and Colonial Government attacked the labour and their leaders. The combination was more in evident in Kerala. The trouble was serious. It was largely political. The Congress press “gave substantially the police version of the disturbances.”\textsuperscript{53}

**The labour issues of Mysore**

In the native states the labour faced much more serious problems. There were no doubt labour strikes in the states.\textsuperscript{54} But it was not until the mid-1939 that the labour could take a collision course against the feudal-colonial exploitation. These exploiters enjoyed indemnity of the National Congress in states particularly and under that cover dealt severely with the labour leaders. That such 'a political' liberal leader as V. V. Giri was banned entry into Mysore explains the ruthless attitude of the feudal states.\textsuperscript{55} But the labour in the late thirties at least Organised itself as a class. Especially in
Kerala the Movement under the left leadership shook itself off the rightist control so far as the anti-capitalist struggle was concerned, though it cooperated with it in the larger anticolonial struggle such as the Quit India Movement. The All Kerala Trade Union Congress came into being in 1935 with socialist leanings. When the AICC refused to allow the subjects of native states to agitate under their banner, the nationalists organised 'State Congresses' and thus came into being the Mysore State Congress, Travancore State Congress and the Hyderabad State Congress in 1938. But it must be noted that except in Kerala, the nationalist movements in Mysore and Hyderabad largely remained under the control of the right wing and similarly the labour and peasant organisations. Yet these movements defied the leadership and launched struggles after 1938.\(^{56}\) Congress was banned in Travancore and Mysore but still the working masses continued their struggle unruffled. Because of the repressive policy of Mysore Government, the Labour Unions started meeting in the neighbouring Chittor in the present Andhra.\(^{57}\) Despite Gandhi's praising, the native states, including Mysore, were as repressive as the British Government were. In fact, Gandhi's write up in *Young India* in which he had praised Mysore as a 'Model State', 'Ramarajya' and the ruler as 'Rajarshi', was misused by the Mysore Government to rebut the criticism of the Mysore nationalists. The Deewan Mirza Ismail printed tens of thousands of copies of Gandhi's write-up and
distributed them freely all over the state besides arranging for its reading in public places to reach the illiterates.

**Congress and Nationalists antagonism to Labour Movement**

Thus, the Congress and the nationalists were averse and even antagonistic to labour movement in Tamil Nadu. Naturally the question of the integration of labour into the nationalist movement will have to be tackled in this background. As in the case of the peasantry in the labour arena also, the right Congress leadership wanted unconditional support whenever it wanted them to extend it. But when the reverse was sought the leadership not only declined it but joined the colonialists to oppose it. Nor was the left leadership who led the labour spared from the colonial-Congress right harassment and oppression. It is remarkable that there was no leader of some stature in Tamil Nadu, who supported the labour cause. This is again in contrast to Bombay, Bengal and United Provinces wherein they were supported by men like Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose, though they did not approve of all the actions of left labour leaders. Jayprakash Narayan was so much disappointed by the anti-labour policies of the Rajaji ministry that he wrote that it was better to "deliver them (labour force) to the employers. We are faced with the real danger of Indian industry being made synonym for Indian Nationalism." Thus, the Congress leaders in power in Tamil Nadu considered that any strike in any industry was against Indian
nationalism and deserved to be put down is clear from what Jawaharlal Nehru himself had to say about the issue. Nehru wrote that the excesses of the Madras Congress ministry against labour and peasants were simply a "negation and reversal of fundamental Congress principles and policy."\(^{59}\)

With the dominant leadership turning its face against the Working Class and with non-Communist socialists too weak to shoulder the burden, it fell to the lot of the Communist to lead the labour against heavy odds. Still the labour and general working Classes never were sectarian and it continued to participate in the anti-colonial struggle under the left leadership. The fact was that the anti-feudal struggles of these classes ultimately forced the native states to join the Indian Union, not just because the Congress leadership wanted them to join. It clearly illustrates the integrative role of the Working Classes in the nationalist struggles. This was despite the fact that the leadership holding hegemony over the nationalist movement never wanted these classes to take to agitational path and despite they taking the stand that the princes were friends of Indian nationalism. The Working Class and the left who always argued for combining anti-feudal struggle and anti-colonial struggle ultimately proved right, at the same time proving the Congress right wing which refused to combine the struggle-wrong. Though nationalist India was assured of freedom from shackles of imperialism by 1945, it could not feel free from the danger of some feudal chieftains going astray. It was Punnapra-Vayalar
in Travancore, Telengana in Hyderabad and in Mysore, the 'Mysore Chalo' movements that forced the Maharajas and the Nizam to yield and integrate the states and the people therein into the new Indian nation.

**Post war developments**

The post-war developments in economic and political spheres led to frequent labour struggles against capitalist exploitation and greater response to the popular anti-imperialist movement. There was also an increased awareness among the industrial Working Class. This class had not only fought its battles against the exploitation of both Indian and foreign capitalists but it also expressed its solidarity move with other social classes in the struggle for the freedom of India through various channels such as demonstrations, and by attending the political meetings in Tamil Nadu.

The stable growth of the labour organizations further consolidated the bargaining position of industrial Working Classes, but quite often the adamant and apathetic attitude of the foreign capitalists and the British Government resulted in the increased industrial violence. Moreover, the rural background of the labour employed in the industries, and the obligation on the Government to maintain 'Law and Order' in the industrial field and finally the intra-class and interclass differences which were exacerbated by racial, linguistic, and social differences were considered to
be responsible factors for the increase of industrial strife in the industries in colonial India. Apart from the above mentioned factors, there were also other reasons for the increased industrial conflicts. These were the economic unrest and the rising awareness among the industrial Working Class. Industrial strikes, important feature of labour history, were chiefly due to the demands made by the workers in regard to increase in wages, grant of bonus, rice allowance, reduction in Working Class hours and additional holidays and etc. It is therefore relevant to observe that there was a phenomenal rise in the number of industrial strikes in Madras Presidency during 1918-1920. The intensity and extent of the strikes of this period for Madras in particular and for different industrial centers in India in general can be grasped from the following table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Industrial Centres</th>
<th>Men Out</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nov 4 - Dec 2, 1919</td>
<td>Woollen Mills, Cawnpore (Kanpur)</td>
<td>17000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 7 - Jan 9, 1920</td>
<td>Railway workers, Jabalpur</td>
<td>16000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 9 - 18, 1920</td>
<td>Jute Mills, Calcutta</td>
<td>35000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 2 - Feb 3, 1920</td>
<td>Bombay</td>
<td>2,00,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 20 - 31, 1920</td>
<td>Mill workers, Rangoon</td>
<td>20,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 31, 1920</td>
<td>British India Navigation Company, Bombay</td>
<td>10,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Period</td>
<td>Location/Company</td>
<td>Workers</td>
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<td>----------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 26 to February 16, 1920</td>
<td>Mill worker, Sholapur,</td>
<td>16,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 2-16, 1920</td>
<td>Indian Marine Dock Workers,</td>
<td>20,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 24 to March 29, 1920</td>
<td>Tata Iron &amp; Steel Workers,</td>
<td>40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 9, 1920</td>
<td>Mill worker, Bombay</td>
<td>60,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 20-26, 1920</td>
<td>Mill workers, Madras</td>
<td>17,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1920,</td>
<td>Mill workers, Ahmedabad</td>
<td>25,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This tremendous upsurge of labour movement was due to the deteriorating conditions prevalent at the close of the World War and to the forces of the revolutionary spirit released worldwide by the success of the Russian Revolution in 1917-.18. Thus, the economic and political conditions alike contributed to this new awaking.63

**Various studies regarding working class in the National Movement**

The labour movement coincided with the on-going National movement in India. Therefore, it is against this background that the labour movement and the movement for India's liberation helped each other. In a detailed study, Rajat Kanta Ray has shown how the Industrial Working Class in Bengal was mobilized into the freedom struggle by the nationalist leaders.64 Lajpat Jagga has also demonstrated a similar process in the case of Railway workers.65 Sumit Sarkar has obviously demonstrated the role of the
Complication nature of the nationalists & capitalists

The relationship between the industrial workers and the capitalists both the Indian and the British and the Indian nationalist leaders was an extremely complicated one. The nationalist leaders in Tamil Nadu had adopted some sort of an ambivalent attitude toward the struggles of industrial workers against the native capitalist class. But, at the same time, they fully extended their unstinted cooperation and support to the labour struggles against the British capitalist class. They also explicitly criticized the indifferent attitude shown by the British rulers toward the problems of the industrial labour.

Dual stand of the Nationalist leaders

In the early stages of the labour movement in Tamil Nadu, the ideology of the labourers was to a great extent moulded by the nationalist leaders heading the labour organizations. Therefore, the British capitalist class and the British Government grew apprehensive and warned the nationalist leaders for their active involvement in the labour problems. But, on the contrary, many groups of industrial workers looked upon the nationalist leaders as their leaders. They trusted them and scrupulously followed their
advice. Some of the leaders of the labour organizations were active members of one or the other political parties viz., B.P.Wadia, a member of Home Rule League and a member of the Theosophical Society, N.S.Ramaswamy, a member of Theosophical Society at first and later a supporter of an Annie Besant factions among the nationalists. Some of the nationalist leaders considered the labour unrest mostly an opportunity to embarrass the British Government. Hence, the political leanings of the labour leaders had influenced their approach to the labour problems. This naturally resulted sometimes in retreat of labour from the struggles against the capitalists or the British Government finally to the loss of labour interests. They maintained thus a dual-stand in their approach.

**Congress leaders views on labour problems**

The approach of the nationalists to the problems of the Working Class was thus at times not unambiguous. But some of the Congress leaders made clear their views with regard to the labour problems. For instance, Satyamurthi, an active nationalist leader, speaking to the labourers of Buckingham and Carnatic mills on 29 July 1918, said: Strikes and lock-outs were the special features of trade union organization in the western countries but the labour in this country did not wish, nor would the leaders of the movement here advise them to copy the Western mode of agitation resulting in strikes. A Congress member, K.S.Padmanabha Pillay, lectured to the
labourers thus: If a particular employer refuses to raise wages, it is indiscreet to strike work. Such a strike will end in misery to all concerned, especially the Labouring Classes. Strikes will create great industrial disorder injurious to the country and fatal to the Working Classes. If there is a strike, you cannot hold on more than a week, and what is the use of doing such a foolish thing.68

**Buckingham to Carnatic mills lock out and its end**

Thus, the workers were asked to be inactive and submissive in their approach. And the impact of this infusion of cautious thinking could not be denied on the workers. The workers were to lose some of their interests due to the moderate or cautious stand taken by the nationalist leaders or the heads of the labour organizations. For instance, lock-out was declared in Buckingham and Carnatic Mills in the year 1918 and it was on account of fixing of the time for returning to work. The men remained out of work from 21 October 1918 to 30th October 1918. It was on B.P.Wadia’s advice that they reported to work again. Wadia, the leader of the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills' workers, told them:

“Some months ago, I told you that as long as the war lasts as long as these two mills are engaged in Government work, so long our duty will be not to have any strike. If the mill authorities wanted you to be present at 6'0 clock, go at 6'0 clock”.69

It is obvious, that Wadia had adopted a stand that was disadvantageous to the labour. But at the same time, it is also interesting to note in this context the statement of Wadia to the labourers that "Home Rule is the big problem. Your problems are
included in it, are a part of that big problem. If we gain Home Rule, all your labour problems will be solved". A lock out was declared in Buckingham and Carnatic mills on 27 November 1918 and lasted till 16 December 1918. The immediate causes for the lock out were the suspension of a jobber in connection with an assault on the Weaving Master of the Carnatic Mill and another assault on the Manager of the Buckingham Mill on the same day. The issue came to an end when an agreement was affected between the labourers and mill authorities with the mediation of C.F.Andrews. At this time too, it proved disadvantageous to the labourers because the mill authorities declined to take back the dismissed men and agreed only to grant six days pay for the lock out period as an act of grace.

**The nationalist leaders dual approach**

Some of the nationalist leaders happened to be organizers of the labour, followed a dual approach toward the British capitalists and their oppression of native labour as against the native capitalists and their exploitation in respect of native labour. Some of the nationalist leaders adopted a moderate stand in respect of the capitalist class, irrespective of their racial identity, but some made very clear their stern opposition to the British capitalist class. In general many of the nationalist leaders vehemently condemned the British capitalist exploitation and opposed their attacks on the conditions of the Working Class. But they were very soft toward the native capitalists.

**Southern Maharatha Railway section**

The approach of the nationalist leaders toward the capitalist exploitation could perhaps be better understood by analyzing the specific instances wherein it was very clearly expressed. In fact, whenever there was
a trouble between the labour and the capitalist class (foreign), it was assumed to be the work of one or the other nationalist leader. British Government openly warned the involvement of the nationalists. A case in point is the occurrence of a strike in the Madras and Southern Maharatha Railway section and it was attributed to the involvement of T.K.Ramaswami lyengar.\(^7\) The cause of the strike was the dismissal of a coolie. T.K. R.Ramaswamy Iyengar and P.M.Audikesava Naicker, both local members of the Congress in Madras wrote thus:

> “How long our labour to suffer like this under the agents of foreign capitalists who have no sympathy with thousands of labourers under them. We do not know Why the Government should go out of its way to help the railway authorities against the poor labourers.”\(^7\)

The idea that the foreign capitalists were exploiting the Indian labour aided by the British Government had further been made clear to the labourers. The leaders of the workers, thus, took the inflexible stand against the foreign capitalists and their indifferent attitude was severely condemned. But at the same time, the indigenous capitalists employing Indian labour "were not fired upon"\(^7\) and were left out of their scathing attack simply because of the fact that they would have to learn many lessons from their European partners. And they were also tolerated on the pretext that indigenous industrial development was to be fostered and nurtured.
Stand Towards Native Capitalists

For example, the study of the struggles of the Tisco workers revealed that the interests of the Working Class were, to a considerable extent, sacrificed for the cause of indigenous industrial development in India. Teja Singh, a leader thrown up from the ranks of the workers, claimed publicly that he met Gandhi in connection with Tisco workers strike, but the workers were advised by Gandhi to "suffer in silence for Indian industry." Thus, the workers were deliberately asked to sacrifice for the sake of Indian capitalist development. This evidently illustrates the stand of the nationalist leaders with regard to the native capitalist New India of the 18th November 1920 wrote rebuffing the Madras Mail thus:

Bombay Mills Tisco workers 1920 :

“Our contemporary refers to enormous profits of Bombay Mills owners and calls for retaliative action. We agree but why punish the Indian employer of labour in Bombay and let go the foreign ones in Calcutta or Madras in Cawnpore or Coimbatore. Does our contemporary know of the condition under which some of the labour in this city live. The advocacy of the interests of native capitalists as against the foreign capitalist class further reiterates and reinforces the fact the native capitalists were to great extent left out of the attack by even by the newspapers.

Attack on Indian Capitalists

But, not every nationalist leader supported this idea of sacrificing the interests of the Indian workers for the sake of the industrial development in India and Indian capitalists were also targeted for attack. It is relevant in this regard to record the unequivocal stand taken by B.P.Wadia, the leader of Madras Labour Union. He said:

"the capitalists, European and Indian alike exploit labour and we must put a stop."
All this further strengthened the belief of the British capitalists and British Government that those industrial concerns which were financed by European capital or managed by Europeans had been especially marked out for concentration by the labour organisers. Thus, the British capitalists had come to believe that the intense labour activity in their concerns was more due to the contribution of racial element. Hence, they concluded that the labour conflict or unrest was more due to the racial and political factors and had no bearing on the labour problems. The argument of the British Government was that in many Tamil districts, where labor was employed on a large scale, but where political agitation had not been systematically carried on, as it was in Madurai and Madras, no strikes had occurred. However, a critical examination of the facts reveals that the argument of the British was not free from any flaw.

Attention of the Nationalists

Choolai Mills workers

The nationalists had mostly focused their attention on the factories owned by the British capitalists and left the factories owned or managed by Indian capitalists out of their attack. For example, the problems of the workers in the Choolai Mills owned by Indian capitalists in Madras city had not attracted the attention of the nationalists but at the same time, the workers in Buckingham and Carnatic mills had strong union to represent their grievances. Gandhi spoke out against the exploitation of Indian labour by the British capitalists and declared that there should be no concessions to
the British capitalists. At the same time, he wished to protect the Indian capitalist class. He also observed that "We seek not to destroy capital or capitalists but to regulate the relation between capital and labour. We want to harness capital to our side." This brings out the fact that the workers in the industries, owned by indigenous capitalists were not so strongly organized and represented as it was in the case of the British concerns.

Thus, the nationalist leaders adopted a friendly attitude as far as the indigenous capitalists were concerned, while at the same time the foreign capitalists were not spared from their bitter attack for their predatory exploitation of Indian workers. Thus, because of the involvement of the nationalist leaders in the workers movement for better conditions, the struggles between the Indian labour and the British capitalist class always took on an anti-British and anti-imperialist character.

While the British capitalist exploitation of Indian labourers was bitterly opposed by many of the nationalist leaders, the Indian capitalists remained out of their attack. All this was particularly due to the reason that the Indian industry should be helped at all costs. Another reason was that the nationalists wanted to draw the Indian capitalists into the fold of the nationalist movement. Despite of the ideological support extended by the nationalists to the Indian capitalists, the response from them to the ongoing political movement was very little or nothing during the period, 1918 and 1921.
Dual Approach of the Nationalists

The nationalists adopted a dual approach in their attack on Indian and British capitalists. The fierce attack of nationalists on British capitalists during the course of struggles between indigenous labour and British capital indicated that the Indian nationalists were making use of the opportunity available to them to stir up anti-British feelings among the labour. Nevertheless, the lenient approach to the indigenous capitalists provoked a lot of criticism from the British capitalist class. Thus, while the involvement of nationalist leaders directly or indirectly in workers' struggles gave enough scope for the British capitalists as well as the British Government to ensure them for their involvement and to go for disciplining the labourers with repressive measures.

Direct Support of the Nationalists

The strike that occurred on 20 June 1921 in the Buckingham and Carnatic mills was a striking instance of direct support extended by the nationalist leaders to the cause of the labourer’s fight against the British capital. The strike took place due to various grievances of the labour, which had not been redressed by the capitalists. A public meeting was held on 10 July 1921 to express sympathy for labourers, who were on strike. Rajagopalachari, local Congress leader, moved a resolution urging the public to sympathize with the workmen of the Buckingham and Carnatic mills in their suffering and fight against the capitalists. Among the
nationalists, who participated in the meeting of the labourers and addressed them, were Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, A. Ramaswami Iyengar, Satyamurthi Iyer, T.V. Kalyana Sundaram Mudaliar, Singaravelu Chetti, Chakkarai Cetti and Subramanya Iyer. They drew the attention of the workers to the public sympathy shown in their favour and they promised their unstinted support to the workers cause.84

The direct involvement of the nationalist leaders in labour problems gave a moral boost to the working class and it also clearly intensified the conflict between the working class and British capitalists and the British Government. But the strike took an ugly turn, when the British Government and capitalists supported a faction of the labourers viz. Adi dravida and the nationalists backed the other faction viz: the caste Hindus. In fact, it was the British rulers who, using devious means, divided the workers. This split began to work upon the labour movement and it started to fizzle out. In October 1921, P. Thiagaraya Chetti, President of the Madras Labour Union, advised the workers to resume the work lest they should lose their jobs. The workers returned to work but 3000 labourers did not get back their jobs. The gratuity of all the labourers, who were on strike, was also forfeited. Such was the harsh treatment meted out to the labourers, when the nationalist leaders backed up their struggles. The fight of the indigenous labourers supported by the nationalist leaders against the British capitalist exploitation and the British imperialism, a common feature in a subjugated colonial
country, resulted in the defeat of the former only because of the power of
the colonial state. 85

**Government’s Favour to Capitalists:**

*Navasakti* of 8 July 1921, had this to observe: "Ever since the
birth of Madras Labour Union, the capitalists have been trying
hard to destroy it. Whomever may try, the labour movement in
India will never die". 86 The impression that the British
Government was staunchly supporting the British capitalists had
been firmly rooted in the ideology of the workers. A contemporary
newspaper also brilliantly captured this view and it referred to it
thus: "As the capitalist happens to belong to the ruling race, the
labourers say that the Government favours the capitalists." 87

Thus, the nationalist leaders opposed the British capitalists and
British Government while leaving the indigenous capitalists out of their
attention. The workers obeyed scrupulously the advice of these leaders
and never went beyond their suggestions. Moreover, they were also made
aware of the fact that the British capitalists and the British Government,
as aliens, were entirely indifferent to their problems. Thus, the labour
struggles in Madras had mixture of various elements viz., anti-British
capitalist, anti-imperialist and to some extent, anti-Indian capitalist as well.
In fact, the fight between the indigenous labour and capital was never as
profound and vigorous as it was in the case of the British capitalist and
the native labourers.
Labourers’ Response to Gandhi’s Call:

The struggle for national liberation had manifested itself throughout India and the spirit that was touching the various social classes had also touched the Industrial Working Class. The whole of India was agitated against the British policies. Gandhi's overall assessment of the situation of India after 1918 ran thus: “We are faced with despair everywhere. It was confidently hoped that, at the close of the war, India would get something substantial, but the hope turned out to be false. We ought to know that the reforms may not come. Even if, they do, they will be worthless. We have to wait and see. The Punjab has been a scene of most revolting episodes. Innocent lives have been lost. The gulf between the ruler and the ruled has been widened”.88

India, having expected reforms from the British rulers, was frustrated and this had further heightened the prevailing discontent among various sections of Indian society. This general discontent seemed to threaten the very existence of the British imperialism in India. So, there was no alternative for the British except to resort to repressive measures to destroy the rising popular associations. The realization of imminent threat to the very foundations of the British rule had necessitated the introduction of a most oppressive law in the form of the Rowlatt Bills to thwart the popular uprisings. The Rowlatt Bills were introduced on 6 February 1919, and on 7 March 1919. Gandhi said that: “The bill themselves have arisen out of violence. The only alternative was Satyagraha or civil disobedience of the law of the Government and enduring all the sufferings such dis-obedience might entail.”89

Gandhi, sensing the popular mood, had proposed a general hartal on 6 April 1919 to be observed throughout India. Consequently, protest meetings were held throughout India on 3 January 1919. A protest meeting was also observed in Madras and it was presided over by Kasturi Ranga Iyengar. Gandhi had visited Madras on several times in connection with the propagation of his proposed 'Hartal' on 6 April 1919. Gandhi, speaking at Nagapatnam said that: “I have suggested that all men, women and labourers and moneyed men and everyone who has Indian blood in him should fast for 24 hours from the last nights meal.”90 And it was decided that the Satyagraha against Rowlatt Bill was to be observed on 6 April 1919.
Workers strike 1919 and its consequence

The industrial labour in Madras was simmering with discontent. The prices, the prevailing low wages and the unbearable oppression in the factories further aggravated the labour's discontent. The workers of the Tramways decided to go on strike from 10 March 1919. The main demands of the workers were: an increase of 2 annas per head in wages and reduction of the hours of work from 9 to 8 hours. The response of the management to the demands of the workers was unhelpful. Instead it thought that there was no shadow of grievance to be found in any of their demands and it considered that the demands were not put forward by the workers, but by their irresponsible advisors. The newspaper, *Justice* supported this capitalist notion and also held the strike to be the work of outsiders indeed saw the hand of ‘Bolshevik Propaganda’. The newspaper further blamed that the strike in Tramways was the work of outsiders, who were termed as 'wirepullers' and also it saw the influence of Bolshevik propaganda in the prevailing unrest. The strike was conducted under the Presidentship of A Kumaraswami Chettiar. The Tramway men's strike generated wide sympathy and public interest in Madras. The local Congress leaders like C.Rajagopalachari, Subramani and Wadia, the leader of the Madras Labour Union, asked the workers “to be unanimous" in their struggle against the capitalist class. B.P.Wadia told the workers that "you are fighting not only your battle but you are fighting the cause of the poor labour in the
Wadia, while speaking at a public meeting convened to express sympathy for the Tramway workers spoke of the new spirit that was animating the labourers and Mrs. Besant too asked the labourers to be aware of their strength.

Two points are clear: first labour troubles in Madras caught and attracted the attention of the nationalists and also evoked sympathy from the public; and second, the address of the nationalists furthered a sense of awareness among the industrial workers in Madras city. The surging tide of the national movement also to a great extent contributed to the rise of awareness among the workers. As the day for observation of "Hartal" approached, the ground was prepared well. It was reported that almost all the districts in the Madras Presidency observed the Satyagraha day on 6 April 1919. A public meeting was held on the day of 6th April 1919. Satyagraha day was attended by people like V.Ramadoss, Venkatram Aiyar, Subramania Sastry, Chidambaram Pillai, Ramamurthy, Satyamurthy and T.V. Kalyanasundaram Mudaliar. The Madras Times, 7 April 1919 reported: “All the bazaars practically were closed yesterday:

none of the processions were of any particular danger, barring one of over a thousand mill hands which came down from Buckingham mill area through wall tax road and passed down southwards. The men carried cymbals and the party. was to some extent, what is known locally, 'bhajana'. However, though the crowd was excitable, police precautions prevented any lawlessness.”

The meeting was attended by about a lakh of people. Separate platforms were arranged at the wings for the industrial
labour. Commenting on the Satyagraha day, *Madras Times* wrote thus: “In view of the conflicting opinion about the importance of the day, it was not astonishing that thousands of people mostly of the labourers and trading classes began to assemble on the beach opposite the Presidency College long before the appointed hour.”

**Communists infiltration in Congress 1934-1940**

During the freedom struggle, the Communist International directed the Communist Party of India for favouring Indian nationalism against British Imperialism. In fact, the Communist Parties of the whole world acted according to the lines drawn up by the Communist International from Moscow. Jayaprakash Narayan, contended that the Communists professed internationalism by which they were subservient to the dictates of Soviet Russia. The Communist movement in India drew not only its inspiration but also detailed guidance from Russia. Accordingly from 1928 to 1935, the Communists followed a hostile attitude towards the Congress Party. The rise of Hitler in European politics, however, changed its policy. In 1935 the Communists first extended co-operation to Hitler when he was against Socialist Democrats in Europe. Based upon these recent trends, the Communist Party of India developed a pro-Congress tendency and anti-British policy which they followed till 1942. The ban on the Communist Party of India made Jeevanandam not to join the Communist Party openly. Alarmed at the rapid growth of the Communists and the threat of a nationwide strike, under the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1904, the Government of India on 28 July, 1934 declared the Communist Party together with twelve other trade unions as illegal. The Communist Party
of India which went underground during this time, appeared in the scene again, when the Congress Socialist Party was formed.

Meanwhile, dissatisfied at the policies and programmes of Gandhi, the left wing of the Congress formed the Congress Socialist Party in October, 1934 with Acharya Narendra Dev as president and Jayaprakash Narayan as secretary. In a bid to avert a split in the Congress, Gandhi allowed the Congress Socialist Party to work as a group within the Congress. This leftist wing of the Congress wanted the Congress to adopt a more radical, social and economic programme, so that the end of national struggle will result in socialism. For strengthening their wing, they admitted the Communists into their fold. Under the leadership of Jeyaprakash Narayan, the party resolved to strengthen its hold all over India,

For propaganda and for starting the party units in the South, Jayaprakash Narayan along with Desai toured the Madras Presidency. At a public meeting in Madras on 27 July, 1934, he explained the party's goals. The support to the new party was not encouraging due to lack of funds and leadership. It was only in 1936 that the Congress Socialist Party was expanded in the province on a wider scale under the leadership of Jeevanandam.

Starting his career in 1930 as a Congress propagandist, Jeevanandam changed his policies to the ideals of Communism since 1932. Then onwards
Communism became the axis of his political life. When he found it difficult to promote Communist ideals in the Self-Respect League from within, he decided to leave it. The internal politics in the Indian National Congress and the developments in the Communist International favoured the Communists to infiltrate into the Congress. Therefore, in 1936 he joined the Congress to impose Communist ideals from within and the same was the reason for his expulsion.

**Favourable Factors to Join Congress**

Jeevanandam joined the Congress on many grounds. They are policy of the Communist International, ban on the Communist Party of India, dissatisfaction with the Self-Respect League, formation of the Congress Socialist Party, and dissolution of the Self-Respect Socialist Party.\(^{110}\) His immediate cause to join the Congress Socialist Party was the inspiration and inducement of S.A. Dange. On 1 November, 1936 the Self-Respect Socialist Party convened a conference at Trichy under the presidency of M. Krishnasamy.\(^{111}\) In his inaugural address, S.A Dange advised Jeevanandam and his supporters to join the Congress Socialist Party rather than starting a new regional party.\(^{112}\) Jeevanandam, then disbanded the new party and joined the former. In a meeting at Salem under the presidency of Thinakaran Metha in November, 1936 he was elected the Secretary of the Madras Congress Socialist Party.\(^{113}\)
Madras Congress Socialist Party and Jeevanandam

Jeevanandam played a significant role in the Congress Socialist Party. However, he was subjected to criticism for changing the party. Parthasarathy, his close associate and the editor of *Samatharman* did not favour the idea of Jeevanandam requesting the Socialists of the Self-Respect League to join the Congress. Parthasarathy recalled an incident of Jeevanandam as member of the Self-Respect League. While answering the question of joining the Congress, Jeevanandam replied that socialism in Congress and in Self-Respect League were the same. This happened when Jeevanandam convened the working committee meeting on 1 October, 1936 at Marx House, Thiyagaraya Nagar, just one month before he joined the Congress Socialist Party. There he uttered that his idea was to gather the socialists of the Self-Respect League and that no Congressman or Justicite would be allowed to join the Self-Respect Socialist Party. This change of policy within a month was due to the new turn in the policy of the Communist Party of India. Jeevanandam's strong faith in communism made him follow the lines of party decisions in spite of criticisms from his personal friends like Parthasarathy. The Madras wing of the Congress Socialist Party had been in existence even before Jeevanandam joined it. But it was not active and it suffered from lack of funds. Jeevanandam’s entry into the Congress Socialist Party gave a new lease of life to it although Communist element dominated the ranks. As a member of the Madras
Congress Socialist Party, Jeevanandam organised Lenin Day Celebration in Madras on 21 January 1937. Among the students, he successfully formed the Madras City Students Organisation with certain objectives. They are planning out schemes to relieve unemployment, promotion of swadeshi and rural re-construction.¹¹⁹

**Hostile between congress of congress socialists**

On the other hand, the provincial Congress Committee considered the Congress Socialist Party as a militant body based on violence and not as a sister organisation. S. Satyamurthy, a prominent Congress leader, contented that the Congress Party had not accepted Socialism and that socialism implied violence, abolition of private property, class warfare and the dictatorship of proletariat. On the other hand, the Congress believed in non-violence, private property subject to nationalisation of large and key industries and the taxing of the rich for the benefit of the poor. C.Rajagopalachari considered the Socialists as trouble makers.¹²⁰ Hence, a hostile attitude developed between the Congress and the Congress Socialists.

**Election of 1937**

In the meantime, as per the Government of India Act of 1935, which ensured provincial autonomy, elections were held for the provincial legislatures in 1937.¹²¹ The Congress and the Justice Parties contested the election.¹²² The Justice Party had E.V.R. as its fervent supporter while
Jeevanandam worked for the Congress candidates against the Justice Party. The election speeches of Jeevanandam attracted the Congress leaders who included him as a member of the Congress Working Committee in conference at Battalagundu in Madurai District in 1937. The eloquence and popularity of Jeevanandam strengthened the Congress Party in Tamil Nadu especially the Socialist wing of the party. In the Battalagundu conference, he was given the responsibility of Congress propaganda in Tirunelveli District. He was elected as a representative to the All India Congress Conference from Vikramasingapuram in 1937 and from Palayamkottai in 1938.

In the elections, the Congress captured majority seats both to the Legislative Council and to the Assembly. Out of forty six seats to the Legislative Council, the Congress secured twenty six and the Justice Party won five seats. In the Legislative Assembly out of two hundred and fifteen seats, the Congress captured 159 seats while the Justice Party secured twenty one. On account of the Congress victory, the Governor called upon C.Rajagopalachari to form the ministry. He refused to form the ministry alleging the interference of Governors in exercising discretionary powers. In such case, he contended that the provisions of provincial autonomy would be nullified. The Congress Socialist Party at this time wanted the Congress to boycott the new constitution. It did not interfere in the Congress involvement in elections. However, it argued that the Congressmen should not accept ministership but should invade the constitution in order to wreck
In accordance with the Party decisions on 25 March, 1937, the executive committee of the Tamil Nadu Congress Socialist Party passed a resolution demanding the Congress not to form ministry.

When the Congress Socialist Party was so much bent upon wrecking the constitution, Satyamurthy met Lord Erskine, the Governor and assured the Congress stand, not to wreck the Constitution. The Governor remarked that the Madras Congress leaders were panting for office. At the same time, the Government wished the Congress to accept office. This decision was mostly motivated by the Government's idea to strengthen the party's right wing against the left. The crisis continued as in other states. In the meantime, the Congress working committee met at Vellore, where Satyamurthy brought the proposal to accept office, Jeevanandam vehemently opposed it and in consequence the proposal failed to get majority vote. The problem was taken to the Viceroy that the Governor would not interfere much, the Congress accepted office on 14 July, 1937 with Rajagopalachari as the Chief Minister. Now he as the Chief Minister decided to take stern action against the Communists. As a first step, the Government banned the Kothapattam Summer School of Politics, where S.S. Patliwala a prominent Communist of North India imparted classes on Marxian philosophy and Communism. Jeevanandam condemned the ban and toured the district branches of Tamil Nadu Congress Socialist Party in violation of it. Further, at a party meeting in Madras on 4 July 1937, Jeevanandam moved a resolution that the new constitution should be
attacked by means of mass movement conducted on a Socialistic programme.\textsuperscript{139}

In order to settle the conflict between the Congress and the Socialists, Masani, a Congress Socialist toured Tamil Nadu and addressed the Socialist gatherings. He advised the local Socialists to follow the Congress lead, to strengthen labour unions in the city and for starting a Socialist vernacular paper.\textsuperscript{140} Based upon this suggestion, Jeevanandam decided to start a Tamil weekly.\textsuperscript{141} Anticipating Government's objection for permission either in his name or of his associates, he applied under three names- 1. Janasakti printers under the name of Jeevanandam, 2. Socialist Printers under the name of P. Ramamurthi. 3. Jesu printers under some anonymous name.\textsuperscript{142}

As expected the Government, however, granted permission to the last one. The period between 1935 and 1939 was marked by labour uprisings in which Jeevanandam played a significant role. As a labour leader and trade unionist he organised several strikes at Mahalakshmi Mills, Madurai and Lakshmi Mills at Coimbatore.\textsuperscript{143} The Congress Government of the Madras Presidency viewed these strikes as anti-Government activities staged against them.\textsuperscript{144}
Resignation of Jeevanandam

It became a serious issue when Jeevanandam organised strike as a member of the Congress party. In August 1939, the Tamil Nadu Congress working Committee at its meeting at Cuddalore took disciplinary action against Jeevanandam by which they expelled him from assuming any office in the Congress for one year.\footnote{145} Hence, Jeevanandam resigned his membership: from the Tamil Nadu Congress Working Committee. At this time, the Second World War broke out in September 1939.\footnote{146} The all India Congress Socialist Party decided to oppose the war.\footnote{147} Jayaprakasa Narayan the Secretary of the All India Congress Socialist Party visited Madras: and urged the Socialists to deliver anti-war propaganda and he was arrested.\footnote{148} Hence, Jeevanandam arranged extensive tours in Tamil Nadu in "furtherance of anti-war propaganda of the Communist Party of India and made many objectionable speeches.\footnote{149} On 13 October, 1939, the Commissioner of Police, however, warned him against making any more anti-war speeches.\footnote{150} Under section 108 of Criminal Penal Code, the Chief Presidency Magistrate ordered him to execute a bond for Rs. 750/ of good behaviour for a period of one year and furnish two sureties.\footnote{151} Since Jeevanandam failed to furnish sureties, he was arrested and imprisoned. However, his party' men paid the amount at the instance of S.V. Chate and he was released in December 1939.\footnote{152} While Jeevanandam including many other Communist leaders were in prison, the leaders of the All India...
Congress Socialist Party adopted two important decisions. They were
1. All the Socialists to follow Gandhi out and out and indulge in individual
Satyagraha, and 2. The Communists of the Congress Socialist Party to
resign from the party and if proved unsuccessful to be expelled from the
party.\textsuperscript{153}

This decision against the Communists of the Congress Socialist Party
was the result of the long awaited hostility between the Communists and
Socialists of the party.\textsuperscript{154} While all the Communist leaders were behind the
prison gates, the Congress leaders delivered the secret documents of the
Communist Party of India came to light which clearly showed that the
united front was being used only as the platform to 'serve its own ends.\textsuperscript{155}
On this ground in 1940, the Communists were expelled from the Congress
Socialist Party and the united front was dissolved.\textsuperscript{156}

On release in December 1936, Jeevanandam in his capacity as the
secretary of the Tamil Nadu Congress Socialist Party, argued that the
decision to expel the Communists was not proper and democratic on the
grounds that it was neither decided in a party conference nor discussed at
the provincial committees of the party. It was not even decided by the
secretaries of the provincial committees of the party. In spite of his efforts
in 1940 the Communists were expelled from the Congress Socialist party
and the united front was dissolved.\textsuperscript{157}
Jeevanandam remained in the Congress for four years from 1936 to 1940. During this period, the Tamil Nadu Congress Socialist Party was dominated by the Communists. He tried to strengthen the left wing of the party. Suffering from disciplinary action, due to his participation in labour struggles, he severed his recognition with the Congress in 1940. After 1940, the Congress Socialist Party lost to the Communist Party of India, its units in Andhra, Madras and Kerala entrusted to Sundarayya, P. Jeevanandam and E.M.S. Namboodiripad.158 Jeyaprakash Narayan later lamented that the Communists of Tamil Nadu exploited the situation.159 In short, Jeevanandam remained a Communist in Congress. However, the work of Jeevanandam for the multi-dimensional progress of Communism under the mask of the Congress was immense and it is perhaps the main reason why the Communist Party has its firm hold in the labour organisation of various institutions. Moved by the ideals of nationalism and political freedom, Jeevanandam joined the Congress, then moved by rationalism and social freedom, he participated in Self -Respect Movement and, finally, as an advocate of economic freedom and equality, he was a staunch Communist till his last breath.

Anti –War Campaign 1938-1941

The industrial workers participated in the anti-war campaign and the Individual Satyagraha at several places in the Madras Presidency during, 1938-1941. The British administration made persistent attempts to foil the industrial strikes by imprisoning Working Class leaders under oppressive
sections of the defence of India Rules which came into force soon after the Second World War was declared.

The years after 1934 witnessed a phenomenal development in the Working Class consciousness in India. The deteriorating economic conditions, the emergence of Working Class Organisations, the growth of radical literature and the press both in English and regional languages and the establishment of Congress Ministry in Madras Presidency during the period, 1937-1939 substantially contributed to this development. After 1939, this process was further consolidated as a result of the prevailing political uncertainties in India and the prosecution of National Congress and Working Class leaders, both left and moderate, under various sections of Defence of India Rules.

However, the suppressive measures of the British Government did not deter the industrial workers and their leadership from participating in the struggle for freedom of India. The Independence Day was celebrated by the industrial workers on 26 January, 1940 in Madras and Madurai cities. Similarly, when a request for a holiday was refused by the Mill Owners Association, a majority of workers absented from work in some cotton mills in Coimbatore. Picketing was also observed at some of the mills. The rising nationalist consciousness of the industrial workers was demonstrated in the antiwar propaganda in the Madras Presidency. Delivering antiwar speeches, distributing illegal pamphlets, pasting and writing of anti-war
ballads were some of the most important forms of anti-war propaganda in which the industrial workers and their leaders participated.

As the anti-war propaganda was getting vigorous, the British Government gave all the District Magistrates sweeping powers under the Defence of India Rules "to suppress anti-war speeches and propaganda" in the Madras Presidency. There were several instances of the prosecution of industrial workers and their leaders for their participation in the anti-war propaganda. For example, P.A.B.Kunhimon, a Beedi worker from Palaghat was prosecuted for making anti-war speech on 13 July, 1940 under the Defence of India Rules and sentenced on 6 August 1940 to 18 months rigorous imprisonment (R.I) and a fine of Rs.200/- or 6 months rigorous imprisonment. He said:

"We do not want the war. If we help in the war, we will be subjected to great exploitation at the end of it". Similarly, Kandoth Abo, a "cooly" from Kottayam, was sentenced under the Defence of India Rules to 18 months rigorous imprisonment on 17 March, 1941. The offence he committed was that he "went and stood near the gate of the local Mopla School and pasted a paper to the pillar of the Gate."

L. Murugesan, a Beedi worker from Vellore, was arrested and sentenced to 9 months rigorous imprisonment on 30 April, 1942 under the Defence of India Rules. He was accused of promoting "disaffection towards the Government" causing "feeling of enmity and hatred between different classes and even "creating" fear or alarm to the public". And Pilathottathil Velu a "cooly" from Calicut had been sentenced to 12 months rigorous
imprisonment on 8 April, 1942 for contravening an order to notify his movements at prescribed time under the Defence of India Rules.\textsuperscript{168} Previously, he was sentenced to 12 months rigorous imprisonment under the Defence of India Rules on 26 September, 1940 as one of the accused in the Protest Day" incidents that occurred on 15 Septembers, 1940 in Calicut.\textsuperscript{169} S. Radhakrishnan, an apprentice in the Madras Electric Supply Corporation, Madras, was sentenced to 4 months rigorous imprisonment under the Defence of India Rules.\textsuperscript{170}

It is further interesting to note that Kovudian Kunhiramon, a barber from South Kanara and Devasigamani Pillai, a milk seller, from Tirukkoilur, were sentenced to 12 months rigorous imprisonment each under the Defence of India Rules for delivering an anti-war speech on 30 September 1940 and for pasting a wall poster and shouting anti-war slogans on 31 April 1942 respectively.\textsuperscript{171}

Several working leaders belonging to both left and moderate sections carried on a relentless anti-war propaganda in different parts of the Madras Presidency. S.M.Ramayya, from Coimbatore, had been sentenced to 18 months rigorous imprisonment on 2 June, 1941 for possessing prohibited literature. Previously, he was sentenced to 12 months rigorous imprisonment for his antiwar speech in November, 1939.\textsuperscript{172} Kambampati Satyanarayana, Vavilala Gopalakrishnah, N. Narasimha Rao,
Satyanarayana and Mahidara Jegan Mohan Rao, Tentu Appalaswamy, K. Subha Rao, Ex M.L.A., Vizagapatam, V.V. Giri, Ex. Labour Minister, P. Venkateswarlu, Gowthu Latchnna, Atmakuri Govindachary, J. Satyanarayana, N.G. Ramaswamy, Ex.M.L.A, Coimbatore, R. Kisan Singh, U. Muthuramalinga Thevar, E. Dalavai Naicker, K. Damodara Menon were all arrested and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment under the Defence of India Rules for their anti-war activity and propaganda.\textsuperscript{173}

The mounting repression of the British Government had further promoted the simmering discontent of the people. It was a test for the "patience of the people and all those Working Class leaders, particularly those belonging to the left wing, were harassed, arrested and imprisoned all over the country."\textsuperscript{174} The Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee, dominated by left wing leadership, observed Anti Repression Day on 21 July, 1940 and Civil Liberties Day on 18 August 1940, to protest against the arrests of the Socialist leaders and violation of Civil liberties in India.\textsuperscript{175}

The protests continued to be expressed against the relentless repression of Indian people by the British Government. The working committee of the K.P.C.C. called for observing "Protest Day" on 15 September, 1940 "to protest against the repressive policy of the Government all over the country in the name of the Defence of India Rules".\textsuperscript{176} Sensing
the impending disaster, the District Magistrate of Malabar passed an order prohibiting meetings, processions or assemblies on 15 September 1940. However, the prohibitory order was disobeyed in 15 places, mainly at Cannanore town, Tellicherry town, Morazha Taliparumba station limits, Mattanur, Calicut town Kuthuparamba, Badagara with occurrence of more serious and fatal encounters at Tellicherry, Morazha (Pappinesseri) and Mattanur.177

The events which occurred at Tellicherry on 15 September, 1940 bring about the most prominent role played by the industrial workers in a pitched battle between a crowd of 1500 people on one hand and the British police consisting of a Joint Magistrate, one Inspector, one Sub-inspector, sixteen local police and twelve armed reserve personnel. In all seventeen rounds were fired by the police to disperse the crowd. As a result, eight members of the crowd were seriously injured; two of whom died later. A ninth member of the crowd was admitted to hospital with a lathi blow. Of the two deceased persons, one was a school teacher and the other was a beedi worker. Five of the six wounded persons were beedi workers.178 The fury of the workers can be gauged from the fact that eleven constables were hit by stones.

Immediately after the incidents, twenty nine persons were charged by the British Government as accused in the Tellicherry Case. The following
details would attest to the dominant role of the industrial workers in the Tellicherry incidents. Of the twenty nine accused persons, fifteen were beedi workers. Of the remaining, one was a cooly; one a weaver; one a barber; one a goldsmith; two school teachers; and one Nair. Finally, twenty one of the accused persons were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. For instance, N.Kunhappa, a beedi worker, was given twenty one month’s rigorous imprisonment, six were discharged for want of evidence and two were absconding.\(^{179}\)

A more formidable and determined fight, similar in nature to what had taken place at Tellicherry occurred between the British police and the Indian people at Morazha (Pappinesseri) on the same day i.e, 15 September, 1940. The police force consisting of one sub-Magistrate, two sub - Inspectors, one head constable and seven police constables was overwhelmed by a crowd of around 1000 people which also included 60 volunteers clad in green shirts.\(^{180}\) What is particularly more interesting to note is that the green shirts volunteers included the dismissed workers of the Samuel Aaron mills and they were especially arranged for the occasion.

Moreover, the point not to be missed is that the hero of the occasion was one K.P.R. Gopalan Nambiyar, who played a leading role in the strike in the Aaron Mills in April 1940 and who was also a member of the K.P.C.C.\(^{181}\) In a hand to hand fight between the large crowd and the police
party sub-Inspector of Baliapatam was killed and one of the four constables who were seriously injured as a result of heavy stone throwing died the same day. What needs to be significantly mentioned is that the District Magistrate, writing on the incident, referred to the presence of a large number of industrial workers. He wrote thus." There is reason to suppose that many members of the Pappinisseri crowd were concerned with the labour troubles in April last. The attack on him (referring to sub-Inspector, Baliapatam) was savage; he was badly battered about the head, face and neck."

A similar incident also occurred at Mattanur on 15 September 1940, between a crowd of 500 or more persons and a police force, consisting of one Sub-Inspector, one Head Constable and five constables. In the incident, the sub-Inspector was "knocked out" at the very early stage "by a stone in the face". The other members of the police were "substantially injured". One of those injured among the constables died later on 19 September, 1940. The repression by the British Government did not dampen only heightened the nationalist spirit of industrial workers. They continued to evince a great deal of interest in the ongoing political struggle. For instance; twenty seven persons, mostly industrial workers, were arrested and sentenced to two to four months rigorous imprisonment on 21 February, 1941 for their active involvement and participation in a condolence meeting called on 2 January, 1941 in connection with the death of P.J. Narayana Nambiayar who was an accused in the incidents on 15 September, 1940 at Mattanur.
The starting of Individual Satyagraha on 21 October, 1940, generated a great deal of interest among the lower classes as well. In Madras city, a number of people particularly from the “irresponsible and unemployed classes” were appearing forward with a new enthusiasm to offer Satyagraha though without special orders from Mahatma Gandhi or any other leader. The desire of the non-entities to become national heroes or martyrs as the British Government contemptuously referred to the lower classes, particularly the industrial workers, was however, not fulfilled as the British Government mostly ignored them.

Despite of this approach of the British Government, some information is available to reveal the aspect of industrial workers participation in the 'Individual Satyagraha'. For instance, S.M.P. Mariappa, a weaver "earning daily wages" from Salem though "not an authorised Satyagrahi" took part in the Individual Satyagraha movement. Similarly, S.Ganapathi, a carpenter from Caimbatore had been sentenced to 9 months rigorous imprisonment on 21 January, 1941. He was released on 20 September, 1941. Naaraja Asari working under a merchant in Karaikudi, Ramnad, was imprisoned for taking part in the Satyagraha movement. Furthermore, R. Shanmugha Thevar of Ramanathapuram, was a Congress Satyagrahi "with no status in life". He offered Satyagraha with his wife on 3 March 1941. Afterwards, as the Vice-President of the Coimbatore Textile Workers Union, he was active in textile workers strike in July and August 1941.
The British Government viewed the industrial unrest as a hindrance to the successful continuation of its war efforts. It came to a decision that the only way to ensure the unhindered industrial peace to obtain uninterrupted industrial production was through the suppression of the working class movement. It therefore arrested and sentenced several working class leaders to various terms of imprisonment under the much dreaded draconian Defence of India Rules. Thus, a highly inimical approach had systematically been demonstrated and implemented in respect of the industrial strikes during the period, 1939 - 1941. Motor bus workers strike in Madras in June, 1941 was averted under the instructions of the Commissioner of Labour aided perhaps by the arrest under rule 129 of Defence of India Rules of leading agitators. The Chittivalsa Jute Mill workers struck work in November, 1941 over an issue of the dismissal of a woman worker. But what the British Government understood is that it "was only intended as a protest against the detention of their union president K.Subba Rao". Hence, it decided that the only way to end the strike and to reopen the mills was by getting the two union leaders, namely Aleti Appalaswamy, president, and Tedla Appalakonda, secretary, of the Jute Mills Workers Union, "out of the way". Accordingly, the two union leaders were arrested and sentenced to 9 months rigorous imprisonment on 28 November, 1941 on charges of hampering, impeding and delaying the production of jute goods.
The workers of Madras Municipal Corporation were on a strike for more than a six months period in 1941. C.Guruswamy, a press worker and a leader, in his address to the workers criticised the British Government for its callous attitude towards the workers union held in Madras city On 17 June, 1941. Subsequently, he was sentenced to six months rigorous imprisonment on 30 July 1941 under the Defence of India rules for an offensive speech against the British Government.\(^{195}\)

What is still more relevant is that M.Kalyanasundara Mudaliar, from Trichirapalli, was sentenced to 18 months rigorous imprisonment on 9 September, 1940 under the Defence of India Rules. As he was due for release about October, 1941, the British Government grew more apprehensive that after his release, he would carry his activities among the Railway workers and also among the mill workers of the Trichirapalli mills.\(^{196}\) It, therefore, came to a decision that he should be kept out of mischief for the present. Further it felt that it was both necessary and desirable in view of the fact that the Golden Rock Workshops are engaged in work of national importance.\(^{197}\)

The strikes of Textiles workers in Tiruppur and Coimbatore over the grant of dearness allowance in 1941 posed a serious problem to the British Government. The Government strongly believed that the main object of the strike was "to prolong the trouble". Also it was firmly convinced that the workers were more concerned with embarrassing the Government rather than the failure or success of the strike because it was not a "Congress
Proceeding with this analysis and understanding of the strike, the District Magistrate of Coimbatore submitted a proposal on 18 August, 1941 for arrest and externment of the Working Class leaders at Tiruppur and Coimbatore on the charges of impeding or prejudicing war efforts. Meanwhile the strikes at Tiruppur and Coimbatore were called off on 2 August and 23 August, 1941 and the proposal for externment of the leaders was dropped. The unhelpful attitude and the threat of repression of the strike leaders by the British government forced the end of the strike.

Thus, the Industrial Working Class participated actively in the anti-war campaign and the Individual Satyagraha movement launched by the Indian National Congress in the Madras Presidency during period, 1939-1941. By its active participation, it strengthened, in its own way, the struggle for freedom of India from the British rule. As a result, the Working Class movement suffered heavily during this period because of highly inimical policy implemented by the British Government in respect of the industrial strikes.
END NOTES

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3. Mysore Government passed a planter's Bill to that effect in 1903, Nadegannadi, 10 March, 1903, p.10.


7. The Hindu, 15 October 1902, p.4.

8. Ibid., 29 May 1913, p.5.

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48. G.O. No. 297, Development Department, 8 February 1940.

49. G.O No. 904, Public (General) Department, 28 May 1938.

50. G.O. No. 1376, Public Services Department, 9 August. 1938.

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