APPENDIX XV

BHARTIYA KISAN UNION
Basti Abdullapur
Ludhiana-3

PRESS NOTE

Chandigarh, the 23rd December, 1984.

Mr. Balbir Singh Rajewal, Secretary, B.K.U. in a press note issued here today condemned the attitude of the Punjab Govt. for creating panic in rural areas through C.R.P.F., Punjab Police and Army by forcibly disconnecting tubewell connections. Mr. Rajewal said that during last week Police and paramilitary forces manhandled even women folk in several villages which cannot be tolerated in any case. Yesterday when farmers of Payal area in Ludhiana district went to protest against the police highhandedness in Rauni village, to Payal Police Station, Police used tear gas and lathi charge on the peaceful farmers sitting in front of the Payal Police Station. Many women were hurt. About 20 tractor trailers are still staying in the Police Station. All this happened in the presence of S.D.M. Khanna. Mr. Rajewal alleged that all this was a calculated move to humiliate people. While condemning the lathi charge, he said that it is unfortunate that the bureaucracy in Punjab is more interested in creating chaotic conditions than in solving the problems of the people. He said that the Govt. seems to have decided to crush the farmers in Punjab. The farmers in Punjab who
are incidentally Sikhs already feel agitated with the attitude of the Government as well as the incidents happened in the recent past. Therefore, it will not be wise and in the interest of Nation to use repressive measures. The Governor, Punjab should come forward with an invitation to the Union to solve the economic problems of the farmers. He further demanded and independent judicial enquiry into the Payal incident, release of arrested farmers and registration of a case against CRPF and Punjab Police officials who lathi charged, tear gased and manhandled women folk in different villages last week. Otherwise this resentment may prove fatal. Mr. Rajewal said that the right to peaceful mode of agitation wouldn't be allowed to be snatched.

Sd/- Balbir Singh Rajewal
SECRETARY
B.K.U.