ISHMAEL ALWAYS SAGS AND FLOPS

It seems that the only time Mr. Richard Ishmael of the MPCA comes out of his cocoon of complacency is when his members start kicking up their heels, as they have been doing with greater and greater frequency of late. One is by now getting a bit bored with the hopelessly puerile demonstrations, of solidarity with him and his union, by him and his crew.

I can recall the genuinely spontaneous demonstrations of opposition to his poorly bargained Pension Scheme of a few months ago. Mr. Ishmael, who plays the fericous tiger in the newspapers and over the radio, always says and does when the real challenge is put to him.

By Janet Jagan

I put the challenge during our discussions on the Sugar Pension Scheme and dared him to go to the estates and hold public meetings with his members and determine their views on his Scheme. This challenge he scurrilously avoided. I notice now that Ayodhya Singh has also put the same challenge to him, which he is brushing aside with haughty laughter.

CHALLENGE

Of course, one should never have challenged a trade union leader about testing his support with the members of his union, to whom, under room circumstances, he owes his position of authority and responsibility. But one must never forget that the MPCA is unique in its own little way.

To begin with, it has the largest number of members on paper, but it also has the least support from its members.

It is President, Mr. Ishmael lost his deposit when he fought a Legislative seat in a sugar constituency in the 1953 elections. It is President again contested seat in the August 1964 elections again as a sugar constituency, but when he was campaigning on the wall -- a second loss of deposits -- he hastily withdrew.

COMPANY SUPPORT

One also cannot forget that the check-off system, which under normal trade union conditions is a good thing, in the hands of a company union, is a means of company support to build membership and collect dues.

Ask any ten workers on a sugar estate if they agree to being members of the MPCA or if they allow deductions because of fear of victimisation on their by the management. The answer would not be hard to find, and I can safely predict that fear of victimisation is the reason why the MPCA shows such a high membership and collects so much in union dues.

Under normal trade union conditions, a 'rival' union and say that that is wrong. But the simple question is -- can the MPCA leadership be changed democratically? The answer is clearly -- no.

When Ishmael's leadership was challenged in 1953, it was quietly arranged that he be sealed into office for four years, shamelessly violating the constitution which called for annual elections -- which is common practice in the trade union world.

As soon as his four years were up this year, it was again arranged for him to be, in a rigged set-up, cemented into office for a period of three years, again carefully, planning annual elections and normal trade union practice.

TIP-OFF

We can no longer be fooled by such antics of Ishmael as now calling for increased benefits to workers because of the higher price being paid for sugar in the U.S. We know that he knows that the Majority Party was making official inquiries into the increased prices being paid by the U.S. He got the tip-off and immediately, anticipating something militant from those genuinely interested in the sugar workers, started to jump on that hard waggan.

It is in any wonder that the trade union movement in B.G. comes in for scathing criticism, both locally and internationally? It is time that there is a clean-up, and the MPCA properly led and militancy developed.

Mrs. Janet Jagan

MPCA UNDEMOCRATIC

Another vital point to keep in mind is that democracy just does not exist in the MPCA. Some people queried about a new union in the sugar industry, a 'rival' union and say that that is wrong. But the simple question is -- can the MPCA leadership be changed democratically? The answer is clearly -- no.

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