

0105. 5th Progress Report (Aug 1979)

Covers the next 4 months of our work in Bagepalli taluk. We speak of the Tenancy Act (land to the Tenants) and its implementation – how many Coolies take recourse to this social law to reclaim lands unjustly lost to the Landlords.

Resistance to our presence in the taluk has, in the meantime, increased with the Landlords getting united.

This Report cover the period April to July 1979. We have not been able to bring out a Progress Report earlier since we were preoccupied in the villages these past 4 months, preparing for the present crop season. The sowing operations in the taluk have only just been completed due to an inordinate delay in the second rains. The first rains, however, were on time and the preparatory ploughing got over in mid June.

In spite of this “failure” of the rains, a Harijan from Lagumaddepalli village described this crop season as follows:

“Though the rain have failed, and our seeds have yet to germinate, this is still the best crop we will ever raise.”

1. ACT II OF 1979

Early this year the Government of Karnataka enacted a new law stating that all persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes would be entitled to get back the lands they had sold away, provided that these sales were effected within 10-15 years after the grant of land to them by the Government.

In the normal way that such laws are made known to the people, the Village Secretaries informed all the people about Act II of 79 in March 1979. The labourers immediately started inquiring with our Community Workers for further details in the Night Classes. We obtained a copy of the Act, and cyclostyled copies of the prescribed form (Form No: 1) on which to apply to the Assistant Commissioner (AC) for re-grant. In total we have helped more than 200 persons fill up and send form No:1's to the AC.

In most of the villages, the people decided to immediately take possession of these disposed off lands as soon as they filled in and submitted their applications. In practically all the villages where we are working, forcible tilling by the Harijans took place in very spontaneous manners. Some Landlords started retaliating by using muscle power while others complained to the police. In the former cases, such lands lie fallow even today with neither the Harijans nor the Landlords having sown their seeds; but in the latter cases nothing happened. The Harijans courted arrested and received warnings, but did not leave possession of their land.

In order to help the Harijans verify their legal position in advance, we obtained the necessary records from the Taluk office for 30 sample cases from different villages, and verified the dates of original grant of these lands, and the dates when they had been disposed off. Invariably, most of them would not benefit from the Act, quite contrary to the verbal details we had collected. We started enquiring deeper, case by case.

We found that the dates of sale and the dates of registering these sales were hardly ever the same. People told us that they had raised hardly 5 to 6 crops on their lands before selling them for want of implements and capital. “How did you sell them?” we asked. “We gave the Landlord our *Sagubadi Chittis* (Temporary Title Deed given by the government), and he gave us the money.” We then realised the tactics the Landlords had used to circumvent this law, many years before it was enacted.

On every *Sagubadi Chittis*, it is very clearly mentioned that the land cannot be alienated for so many years. Landlords being literate and shrewd, had waited for the expiry of the specified time before taking the Harijans to register the sales at Bagepalli, though the actual transfer had been effected many years prior earlier. In this manner, the records would show everything as being above board. We also realised that this Act No. II of 79, which was publicised as a great redeemer, was in fact only a re-instatement of a very old Land Grant Rule that had till now been overlooked and kept un-enforced.

We started a massive education programme in the villages on these new aspects of Act II of 79. We asked the people to depose before the enquiring officials as to when exactly they had sold their lands (i.e. after sowing how many crops) and that they did not know when the registration of these sales were effected. It was our intention that this Act should be implemented in spirit and not made an eyewash by going according to records, and also that the people must learn whether such a thing was possible at all. Therefore, it had to be made known to the officials that the deals and subsequent registering of them were 2 separate actions, which in most cases did not happen at the same time (most often with an intervening span of 10 to 20 years).

2. FORCIBLE TILLING

In the scores of forcible tilling that have taken place this season, we have observed a similar pattern. It is very easy to forcibly till the first time (for preparatory ploughing) since there is an element of surprise if it is well organized. All the evicted Tenants and other aggrieved persons wishing to take back possession of their unjustly lost lands have to set a common date and all together plough their lands, field after field, drawing strength from their numbers and also from the low morale from the Landlords who know that the action is in accordance with the people's legal rights.

But to keep possession of this land by subsequent sowing of seeds is much more difficult since the element of surprise and shock is lost. Seeds can be sown only just after the second showers, and by this time all the Landlords would have grouped together and planned their counter-strategy. In many cases, the people found the Landlords also sowing the deeds on the same lands, starting from the other end, and the situation become tense as both parties started getting closes and closer to the middle of the fields...

3. LEGAL AID

The way this crop season has began will make quite a few Landlords go to Court to obtain injunctions in their favour after initiating civil and criminal cases. They had predicted that the people would not be able to afford a legal battle, and they could therefore obtain orders in their favour, *ex parte*. This would have a very bad effect on the people's morale. Therefore, we have decided to provide Legal Aid to the struggling labourers and Tenant peasants. A senior lawyer from Bagepalli, who is himself actively on the side of the poor, had agreed to defend the people introduced by us. This has already made the Landlords much more cautious about launching false and frivolous cases against the hitherto defenceless people.

But we have laid down some very strict guidelines with regard to providing Legal Aid, in order that the people must continue to have faith in their own organised unity and struggle. We will discourage them from going to the Courts, except in defence (i.e. when cases are launched against them by the Landlords). Further, no Legal Aid will be provided to individual person seeking redress for domestic and highly personal problems unless the providing of counsel in such cases helps the Coolie Sangha itself in terms of morale, greater confidence, etc.

4. ISSUES AND STRUGGLES

4.1. Landlord-Police Combine in Nagarlu

In Nagarlu village of Pathapalya Cluster, about 25 Tenants filed their tenancy Declarations in June against several Landlords, including a very powerful one living in Pathapalya. This Landlord was very irritated with their approaching the Land Tribunal and asked them to leave his lands with immediate effect. Drawing inspiration from the Pathapalya Harijans, the Nagarlu Tenants refused, and forcibly tilled their tenancy lands after the first showers. There was not tension in the village since the Landlord resided in the next village and was in effect an absentee Landlord. After the second rains in the 3rd week of July, the Tenants all decided to sow their seeds field by field. All 25 went to give moral support to the 6 Tenants who were to sow on the first day. At about 5 p.m. since there was no sign of trouble, they left to attend their own works. At about 6 p.m., when the sowing was almost completed, 4 out of the 6 were summoned to the Pathapalya Police Station by the Sub Inspector.

The Tenants went, and to their surprise they were beaten up in the Police Station. They were asked to sign a statement written by the Sub Inspector in connivance with the Landlord. The Tenants refused to sign this statement and were further beaten up by the Sub Inspector. Finally Khasim Peera phoned us at Bagepalli to seek advice and support. We immediately informed him to tell the Tenants to sign just anything that the Sub Inspector wanted, since such statements would not stand up in any Court of law. We then rushed to Pathapalya.

There, the 4 released Tenants, some more from Nagarlu, and all the Pathapalya Harijans and some Muslims had assembled to discuss the advisability to going back to the Police Station to demand an apology from the Sub Inspector, and also to show the Landlords that they were not scared. But when we explained that this was just what the Landlord-Police combine expected us to do, that their strategy was to divert the struggle from the land issue to a question of law and order, the people were quick to realise the Landlord's game. On their way back however, some Nagarlu Tenants could not resist the temptation to go to the Sub Inspector and inform him that they were going to continue ploughing the remaining lands, and that he was welcome to come and arrest them once again.

The next day, when the 4 Tenant who were beaten up come to Bagepalli to complain to the Tahsildar cum Secretary of the Land Tribunal, the remaining 21 Tenant of Nagarlu continued their sowing of the tenancy lands. No Landlord or Police interfered with them. The next day, this incident was reported in the local press, and official enquiries are presently afoot.

4.2. "Bhoosami Sangha"

About 3 months back, the most powerful Landlord of Pathapalya village convened like-minded Landlords from 15 villages. The Harijan were quick to dub their meeting as "Bhoosami Sangha" (Landlords Association). In this convention they unanimously declared that Khasim Peera was a menace and that the Harijan had to be brought back to their original station in life.

They resolved not to give the Pathapalya Harijan any labour, stop giving them hand loans, and stop selling provisions in the shops. By far, the Harijans reacted to this convention and its resolution with great amusement (an indication that they had understood very well what we had earlier told them about their not being "marginal"). The very next day, the first resolution was broken. Since no binding agreement can be reached when employing labour for an agricultural operation without paying an advance, the second was frustrated when the first was broken. And competition among the petty shop keepers was too great to implement the third.

But the real outcome of the Landlords convention came out very soon. They had decided to launch a series of fabricated Court cases against the Harijans knowing fully well that this would break their morale and ruin them financially. Since the cases would be undefended in most cases, the Landlords intended getting *ex parte* decisions which would give the false impression that the law was on their side. They shrewdly realised that once the seed of doubt that perhaps Khasim Peera's advice was not quite in accordance to the law was properly sown into Harijan minds, that would be the end of their confidence in him. And also in the concept of the Coolies Sangha.

It was for this reason that in an emergency meeting of our Group we decided give Legal Aid to the struggling labourers and Tenants peasants. Since most of the cases were frivolous ones launched with fabricated document the real danger of adverse judgements lay from absentee and *ex parte* decisions.

The Landlords lawyer had boasted to his friends that he had 35 to 40 briefs ready against the Pathapalya Harijans not knowing that we were planning to challenge them by engaging Counsel. But after the outcome of his first case against 2 Harijan widows, there was hasty re-thinking in their camp.

4.3. The Chinna Bidda-Obakka case

2 Harijan widows who had been married to brothers, lost their husbands 10-12 years back. Soon after their husbands' deaths, they were coerced into selling their only plot of land measuring about 3 acres to a Landlord from the next village. Since this Landlord lived a little away, he in turn leased out the same plot to Obakka's brother Yellappa, who is the senior most male member of the joint family. As a result, the land never really left the family's possession.

Yellappa had applied to the Land Tribunal claiming title of this land as a Tenant, on behalf of the widows, and the Landlord had evicted him some months back in retaliation. Since the family was not sure if Yellappa would get the land through the tenancy Act because the Landlord had concocted documents in his favour, the widows decided to apply in from No:1 under Act II of 79 also. And further, they decided not to give up their possession of the land in spite of the verbal eviction orders they had received from the Landlord. The Landlord immediately launched a false case of trespass against the 3 of them and they were dragged to Court at Bagepalli.

Though we defended them, the Landlord managed to get a temporary injunction in his favour from the Munsiff's court. There was rejoicing in the "*Bhoosami Sangha*" and we had to gather in the Harijanawada for many hours that night to boost crushed morale, since all the Harijans knew that Yellappa, Chinna Bidda and Obakka represented all the struggling Harijan verses the "*Bhoosami Sangha*".

We realised that it was imperative that we appeal against the orders of the Bagepalli Court, and in a few days we obtained copies of the Order and appealed to the Civil Court at Chickballapur. There the Judge observed that a clear case of tenancy was involved, and till this was settled by the Land Tribunal, the Courts should not proceed with the suit initiated by the Landlords. The temporary injunction order of the Bagepalli Court was stayed by the Civil Judge.

Now the widows and their brother are once again in possession of the 3 acre plot, and we have managed to overcome a very critical phase of the Pathapalya struggle.

4.4. Pathapalya Muslims and the Coolies Sangha

The 150 Muslims families of Pathapalya have been closely observing the year old struggle of the Harijan Tenants. Some of them finally decided to take a plunge, and 30 of them filed tenancy Declarations against their Landlords in the last week of June. Actually, it is this trend that had prompted the Landlords convention.

The question of Muslim participation in the Coolies Sangha is a very vital one for us as well as for the Landlords. They too fully realise that if the Muslims and Harijans join hands, the future of landlordism would be very bleak.

In spite of this, apart from taking up a couple of minor house site issues and filling in the tenancy Declaration forms for them, we have not given serious thought to the problem, since we are all very close to physical and mental exhaustion. This, we realise is no excuse at all.

4.5. Forcible Tilling in Somnathpura

9 Harijans, after coming to know about Act II of 1979 through the Village Secretary, applied in Form No: 1 to the Assistant Commissioner and decided to take possession of their lands. Along with them another Harijana tenant applied to the Land Tribunal for his leased-in lands also. Though the initial tilling was without any incident, shock followed by tension descended on the village from the very next day. The old landlord refused to intervene even as a mediator, and it was only just before the second rains that the affected landlords managed to enlist his support. He then called for the Village Secretary along with the village records and convened a meetings of the landlords.

Contrary to his expectation, this meeting and new found confidence in the landlord camp only tempered the Harijans' determination not to leave possession of the lands. After the second rains, when they went to sow the seeds, there were sharp verbal exchanges. But both sides resisted any physical clash and the Harijans all sowed their seeds. Once again, the old landlord intervened. For the first time in his 10 month stay, CW Sathyamurthy was visited by the landlord who pleaded that a compromise be reached; the lands under dispute would be shared 50:50 between the purchasers and the Harijans. Sathyamurthy in turn replied that he would first have to consult the Harijans since he did not have any power to commit himself, and called us from Bagepalli to be present at the meeting.

The Harijans thought over the landlords' offer in the meeting and then asked us how long they would have to struggle. "Till you get back your lands", was our reply. Once again, after their relatives were consulted, they unanimously decided to reject the offer.

The next day, the old landlord came once again and without waiting for Sathyamurthy's reply, arrogantly presuming that the compromise offer would be accepted by the Harijans said, "You may have misunderstood what I said yesterday. I did not mean a permanent division. I just meant that till the AC decided on the matter, let us share the crop 50:50." It came as a great shock to him to learn that even his previous more generous offer was rejected wholesale.

This crushed the morale of the landlords and to make matters worse, one among them (against whom the tenancy declaration was filed) lost his cool and begged Sathyamurthy to convince the Harijana tenant to withdraw the application in lieu of some cash settlement. When the Harijans saw this terrible flaw in the landlords' confidence, their morale was boosted up considerably.

Several Harijans from Somnathpura received notices to appear before the Tahsildar at Bagepalli, who was making the preliminary enquiries on behalf of the AC with regard to Form No: 1 applications. One of them was told by the Tahsildar, in front of the landlord's

wife, that he would surely get his land under Act II of 1979. This has further enhanced the optimism of the people.

Some of the Harijans wanted to use Act II of 1979 in order to get a victory over the Nakkalapalli Bovis (see 3rd Progress Report) and Sathyamurthy had a very difficult time in convincing them that this would be a severe blow to the Coolie Sangha and that the unity of the labourers at Nakkalapalli and Somnathpura should not be threatened through such irritants, whatever the provocation. The Harijans have agreed to heed our advice.

4.6. Jelipigaripalli Harijan Compromises

In Jelipigaripalli village of the Somnathpura Cluster, 6 Harijans approached Sathyamurthy to file form No:1's to get back land they had unjustly lost to Landlords from their village, and take possession of these lands. For about a month they stood their ground firmly. Though one of them managed to sow a small portion of the disputed land, the remaining lands were left fallow with neither the Landlords nor the Harijans sowing their seeds. The Harijans were firmly resolved to keep matters pending in this manner till their applications were disposed of by the AC.

In the meanwhile, the "progressive" Landlords was attempting a compromise negotiation between the affected Landlords and the Harijans. We asked the Harijans to decide by themselves whether they would like to accept his mediations. At first they bluntly refused, but then all of a sudden they went to him, and agreed to leave the lands in return for an amount of Rs 600 as compensation. We were very surprised at this unexpected turn of events.

But one Harijan (ironically the oldest and weakest among the 6) refused to go to the "progressive" Landlord's house and this meant that his struggle would continue. He was physically overpowered by the Landlord who sowed his own seeds on the dispute lands. In spite of this, the Harijan refused to go to the "progressive" Landlord. A case was registered in the Bagepalli Court against the Harijan and he was accused of trespass. We are presently defending the case.

These very unexpected and contradictory happenings in Jelipigaripalli has had a very indirect effect on the entire labour and small peasant classes of the village. Though they are afraid of antagonising the "progressive" Landlord, he is still exposed a little bit because of his role in bringing about the compromise and thwarting the struggle. The unexpected decision of a single Harijans to stand alone and continue his struggle has gained tremendous sympathy and respect for him.

In retrospect, we now realise that 5 out of the 6 Harijans who filed their form No. 1's under Act II of 79 came from a single family and therefore could not muster the support of the remaining labour class. It was fear, more than opportunism, that made them compromise with their Landlords. Only continued struggle can eliminate this fear. The continued and spontaneous struggle of the lone Harijan will enhance the chances of involving other labourers and small peasants in the village, and help us shake off our Harijans identity. We have also learnt to be very cautious of "progressive" Landlords.

4.7. Forcible Tilling in Lagumaddepalli

Though 5.4 acres of land was re-granted to the Lagumaddepalli Harijans under the Moratorium on Rural Indebtedness Act, the Landlords refused to give them the lands all this time. The Harijans were much too frightened to forcibly take possession of these lands. They were waiting for "something in writing" but this never came in spite of more than a dozen visits to the Taluk Office. In the meantime we were always telling them that the Taluk Office would

sleep on the matter and that the only way to take possession of their lands was by simply going and raising a crop on it.

It took many months of coaxing and explaining the ongoing struggles at the Pathapalya and Somnathpura Clusters for the people to be convinced. But once convinced the Lagumaddepalli Harijans acted with the thoroughness that they had shown before.

Their first tilling was without incident. When they went to sow seeds after a couple of weeks, however, there was plenty of reaction from the Landlords. A physical exchange ensued but the Harijans outnumbered the others due to their larger turnout at the fields. The Middle Peasants who had earlier cooperated with them in the agricultural wage strike came out openly in their support, and their sowing operations were a success. Now, these re-granted land are firmly in the possession of the Harijans.

4.8. The Kondireddipalli fiasco

Venkatramappa, the Community Worker at Kondireddipalli, was quite awed by the various reports of forcible tilling and allied problems in our Saturday meeting. He decided to shake his people out of their complacency and encourage them to act positively. Some months back a group of Harijans had filed their form No:1 reclaiming $\frac{3}{4}$ acre of very fertile land, under a tank, that they had sold to the Muslim from Bagepalli (Kondireddipalli is hardly 2 kilometres from here). But though they had been to the Taluk office many times in this connection, nothing happened. Inspired by what he heard in our Saturday Meeting Venkatramappa explained to them about the land struggles in Pathapalya and Somnathpura areas, and topped it off by saying, "Even in Lagumaddepalli they are forcibly tilling!" Full of enthusiasm, the Harijans decided that they had enough of waiting and would go and till the small patch they were trying to get back, the next morning. 5 ploughs started the tilling the next morning with the woman and children nervously looking on. Hearing this the Muslims Landlord from Bagepalli collected all the tough looking persons he could gather from the bus stand and engaged a taxi in which they proceeded to Kondireddipalli.

Seeing the approaching car, the Harijans wavered. While one old man from the group decided to disappear, the remaining stayed on. The Landlord entered the field and asked them what the meaning of all this was, and whether they had any records from the Taluk Office to support their claim and action. They confessed that they did not. But then, they would like to get back their land. He said nothing doing and that he would put a case against them. After this the Landlord seemed to lose his courage in spite of the bodyguards he had brought along. He simply returned to Bagepalli as quickly as he could, seeing this, the Harijans also lost their mettle. They too started walking with Venkatramappa to Bagepalli. Very clearly, it was a rehearsed affair for both, Landlord and the people, and both had severe stage sickness.

At Bagepalli both parties went to the same lawyer. He seeing the joke in it, frightened the Landlord further by saying that the law was on the Harijans' side and that his taking bodyguards along would go very much against him if the Harijans chose to lodge a complaint. The Harijans on the other hands were simply relieved when they came to know that the Landlord wouldn't file a case against them.

Subsequently, neither Landlord nor the people could muster enough courage to sow the plot of land. After long deliberation the Harijans decided that it would be too "risky". Privately, Venkatramappa couldn't agree with them more, though he vehemently denies this in our Saturday Meeting.

Quite aside from the lighter vein of this incident of "forcible tilling" we have to sit down and analyse it in greater detail. Though we are in Kondireddipalli for almost 1 year, no major issues have come up. Is it because the people are lumped proletariat? The Kondireddipalli Harijans depend more on road and construction labour for their subsistence, than on agricul-

ture. Groups of labourers have special relations with various contractors from Bagepalli. These relationship patterns do not even vaguely resemble the Harijan-Landlord relationship of more distant villages. Land, we have found, is not the top of their list of priorities and mental preoccupation. Therefore, perhaps the ADATS approach is not one that is ideally suited to be the correct one in such lumpen situations. It is possible that our approach is more adapted to peasant situations and aspirations. Venkatramappa and our Group will have to give more serious thought to some of these reflections.

5. THREATS TO OUR WORKERS

3 months back, Khasim Peera had to leave the room he was living in since its owner (a bonded labourer in a Landlord's house) was being threatened that if he did not evict the Community Worker, it would be reported to the Government that he was renting out his Government constructed Janata house. According to the rules, houses constructed free of cost by the Government, if rented out, would revert back to the Government for re-allocation to someone else. In order to not put this Harijan in an awkward position, Khasim Peera left and obtained a small house adjoining the Harijanawada, belonging to a Muslim linesman in the Electricity department. His wife Suryakumari (our Community Worker at Lagumaddepalli) joined him since she is expecting their second baby very shortly, and finding it difficult to live separately in another village.

Now their present house owner, acting under pressure from the "*Bhoosami Sangha*", is creating irritants every day and demanding that they get out. This being impossible for want of another house, Suryakumari will have to have her baby in the midst of a lot of tension and domestic problems.

To add to their problem, the Landlords have befriended 2 Harijans and another poor man from the main village. They follow Khasim Peera every night hurling drunken abuse and carrying sticks and sickles. Though the other Harijans constantly protect Khasim Peera, this does very little to help Suryakumari get the peace of mind she badly needs just now.

Gadidimappa, our VLW at Pathapalya was the victim of yet another vindictive decision of the "*Bhoosami Sangha*". His parents, who have been following their forefather profession of village sweepers and scavengers, were suddenly retrenched by the Panchayat. Following massive protests from the Harijanawada, and the refusal of any other Harijan to replace them, they were reinstated after a couple of weeks (by which time the main village toilets had begun to clog).

6. NEW TACTICS OF "PROGRESSIVE" LANDLORDS

A very powerful and learned Landlord of the area lives 5-6 kilometres from Somnathpura. He has seen a threat in Sathyamurthy's influence in his domain. Though this Landlord goes under the garb of being a "progressive" Landlord, his misdeeds are well known, and a Community Worker like Sathyamurthy could very easily expose him. Therefore, this Landlord followed a new tactic in disturbing Sathyamurthy's base since he could not afford to retaliate in the traditional feudal style. He began to pose and project inherent contradiction and problems among the people themselves, thus forcing Sathyamurthy to intervene, alienating one side while appeasing another.

In the problem between the Nakkalapalli *Vadde Bovis* and the Somnathpura Harijans, this Landlord saw an excellent weapon.

The Nakkalapalli (a village a couple of kilometres from Somnathpura) *Vadde Bovis* (a stone cutting /well digging labour caste) were tilling about 6 acres of government land for many years. In a political act intended to keep the labourers of his area disunited, and also with an

eye on this plot land, the old Landlord of Somnathpura concocted documents and got the *Sagubadi Chittis* sanctioned in favour of 2 Harijans from Somnathpura. This is an age old problem in the area and the only persons who have benefited from it are the Landlords of both villages.

Sathyamurthy had resolved this problem to the satisfaction of the Nakkalapalli *Vadde Bovis* and with justice, in a Coolies Sangha meeting of the 2 villages where all others (non-labourers) were kept out. The Harijans had agreed to depose before the authorities that they had no claim on the land though the title was in their favour, and they asked the *Vadde Bovis* to go ahead with raising the crop undisturbed.

The “progressive” Landlord went to Nakkalapalli and convinced the *Vadde Bovis* that the Harijans secretly planned to harvest the crop with the help of the authorities after the *Vadde Bovis* had taken pains to raise it. He suggested that they avail the Tenancy Act and file declaration stating that they were the Tenants of Harijan Landlords! In an act of sheer madness and haste, the *Vadde Bovis* did so.

That same night, the *Vadde Bovis* discussed what they had done with our VLW in the Night Class, and all together went to their Community Worker to inform him. Sathyamurthy was, quite naturally, shocked and unable to keep it a secret from the Harijans.

The next day, all the Harijans gathered outside his room declaring that they had been betrayed and insulted, and that they were going that very same morning to destroy the crop that the *Vadde Bovis* had sown on the land. Sathyamurthy begged them to show restraint for a day and sent a messenger to us at Bagepalli.

We rushed to Nakkalapalli, ascertained what had happened, proceeded to Somnathpura to calm the people, and started a shuttle diplomacy that lasted well into the night. As soon as we found the “progressive” Landlords hand in it, we were quick to realise his tactics. We frankly explained our understanding to the *Vadde Bovis* and Harijans. They calmed down after a lot of discussions and reflection, and the Nakkalapalli *Vadde Bovis* (who had benefited cent percent in the earlier Coolies Sangha Meetings) agreed to share the dispute lands equally with the Harijans in lieu of an apology.

This was perhaps the trickiest moment in Sathyamurthy’s 10 month involvement in the Cluster. However, the real outcome of the “progressive” Landlord’s tactics can be exposed only during the Land Tribunal hearing when the Nakkalapalli *Vadde Bovis* and the Somnathpura Harijans get together in front of the officials (declarations once filed cannot be taken back).