



# THE WORKING CLASS

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—B.T. Ranadive

ON Seventh November the CITU and the working class of our country send their warm fraternal greetings to the working class and people of the USSR. Seventh November symbolises the first triumph of the working class against the capitalist order which decrees exploitation for the working class and the toiling people.

On that day in 1917 the working class of Russia under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party headed by Lenin organised a successful revolution and overthrew the regime of the capitalists and landlords. On that day came into existence the first State led by the working class and committed to end all exploitation.

Since then the working class of the world celebrates this day as a day of international solidarity and revolutionary inspiration, calling on all contingents of the international army of the working class to end the capitalist order and establish a socialist society free from class domination.

## Superiority of the Socialist System

The day has also been observed to enumerate the great victories of socialist reconstruction of society in the Soviet Union during the last six decades. They announce the superiority of the socialist system which is free from poverty, economic crisis, exploitation and unemployment in contrast to the world of capitalism and private property.

No wonder within a few decades of the first epoch-making victory, several other victories were secured and the world saw the emerging of the socialist camp embracing one-third of the world.

Today on 7th November 1983 the contrast between the two camps the two social systems is sharper than ever. The capitalist countries are going through the worst economic crisis of the system with 30 million people unemployed, with a growing onslaught on the standard of living of the working class and the common man. In the midst of this situation the rulers of the imperialist countries are spending billions on armaments, preparing for massacre of millions. They starve their own

people, they reduce them to destitutes, they cut all social welfare measures, they impose joblessness on millions to satisfy the demands of war preparations.

In contrast though the Socialist countries are forced to divert part of their resources to defence, they have freed their people from the scourge of unemployment and poverty and continue to ensure them a growingly higher standard of life, from depredation of inflation, rocketing prices and underhand methods to deflate the earnings of the common people.

## U.S. Conspiracies for War

However, this year when we celebrate 7th November and offer our greetings to the working class and the people of Soviet Union our minds are not able to focus attention on the achievements in economic advance secured in recent years. We see war clouds gathering round the Soviet Union, we see the plottings of imperialist powers to unleash war and express our concern and indignation at these conspiracies.

Chagrined by their failure to undermine the Polish Socialist regime, hemmed in from all sides by the deteriorating economic situation and afraid of the growing popularity of socialist ideology in all countries, the U.S. imperialists are hatching their war plot against the Soviet Union.

The provocation let loose by war monger Reagan, the American President, following the shooting down of a South Korean Airlines, on an espionage mission in Soviet air space underlines the gravity of the international situation.

The shooting down of the espionage plane was used not only to slander the USSR, but to disrupt the growing peace movement. The diabolical plot and the propaganda let loose after its success and the provocative steps following it — Resolution of the Security Council, blaming the USSR, banning entry to Gromykov's plane and preventing the Soviet Foreign Minister from participating in the U.N. meeting, reveal the intense war preparations of the USA and the unscrupulous lengths to which it is prepared to go in pursuit of its war designs. This is

**ANTI-CLOSURE, LOCKOUT DAY—DECEMBER 4**

the big danger which our people and our working class must see and combat.

The line of U.S. and imperialist propagandists in connection with the Korean airliner incident must be noted. They conveniently screen the fact that the airliner was deliberately violating Soviet air space for two hours. Ignoring the fact they hypocritically raise the question of safety of civil aviation. Does safety of civil aviation mean that any civil aircraft has the right to violate other nation's air space for hours and refuse to land when ordered? The imperialists in fact are demanding that spy civilian planes sent by them should not be touched, other nations have no right over air space. This is said by the same imperialists who justify in the name of the security of their countries, deployment of their armed forces thousands of miles away from their shores. Will the U.S. tolerate a civilian plane from a small country like Hungary or Bulgaria violate its air space for hours and fly towards strategic installations to collect information? Can India or China for instance tolerate the same?

### For Global Domination

The U.S. imperialists are out for global domination. War is an instrument of achieving this objective. They are wantonly intervening in Central America, in Nicaragua, El-Salvador and attacking the people of these countries fighting for freedom and democracy.

They are intervening in Lebanon and helping Israeli aggression against that country.

They are building a naval base at Diego Garcia which will be a source of danger to India and several other countries. They are furiously arming Pakistan and its military dictator to create tension and war between the two countries.

The provocation was organised when the peoples of the world were agitated over the U.S. plan to deploy in Europe Pershing and Cruise missiles targeted at the USSR. The purpose of stationing these missiles in West Germany and elsewhere is to bring the USSR under a threat of direct attack from these countries. This is Reagan's reply to the USSR's declaration that it would not be the first to use nuclear weapons. This is Reagan's counter strike to Soviet proposals to reduce all nuclear weapons, to freeze them immediately with a view to destroying them.

Reagan and his imperialist allies are keen on deploying these genocidal missiles by December 1st. To counter the opposition of peoples of Europe, of West Germany, France, England, Reagan manipulated the airliner incident.

### Bunkum Theory of two Super Powers

There are enough dupes and fools in India as elsewhere who think that the war is being organised

on both sides; that both sides are to be blamed for piling up of armaments. They, misled by pro-imperialist propagandists and bourgeois opportunists, talk of two super powers. They forget that the two countries — called super powers — the USA and the USSR represent two different social systems. The USA represents the imperialist capitalist system for whom war is necessary to keep itself alive; the USSR represents the socialist system which has no interest in war, and which considers war as a danger to its progress and therefore does its utmost to avoid it. It is forced to spend on defence because it is threatened by imperialist aggression.

### Soviet Decree of peace

The socialist revolution in Russia was won with the slogan: end the war, the cry of peace among nations and peoples. This was during the first world war (imperialist war) when huge armies were confronting each other and the major imperialist countries were busy organising mass carnage.

On the morrow of the revolution, the new working class government published its decree on peace drafted by Lenin. It said, "The Workers and Peasants' Government created by the Revolution of October 24-25 and basing itself on the Soviets of Workers, Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, calls upon all the belligerent peoples and their governments to start immediate negotiations for a just democratic peace.

"By a just or democratic peace, for which the overwhelming majority of the working class and other working people of all the belligerent countries — are craving—, by such a peace the government means an immediate peace without annexations (i.e. peace without the seizure of foreign lands, without the forcible incorporation of foreign nations) and without indemnities".

This was announced when war was still raging against Russia and the imperialists were slaughtering people to secure colonial conquests.

The decree spoke not only against war, but also against the enslavement of colonies by the imperialists. It spoke for the freedom of enslaved people like India. Since then the Socialist State has consistently stood for peace and against wars of aggression, while it supported wars of national liberation.

Knowing that with its emergence the world saw two social systems based on antagonistic principles and realising that this will be used by the imperialists to launch a war to eliminate the new system, the Soviet Union offered peaceful coexistence as the basis of its foreign policy towards the capitalist States. Throughout its existence of more than six decades the Soviet Union firmly adhered to this policy of peaceful coexistence, protection of world peace. There is no parallel in human history of a State so firmly proclaiming and protecting peace among nations. Only a Socialist State led by the working class could do it. Had the ruling classes in

capitalist States listened to the voice of the Soviet Union there would have been no Second World War which caused huge destruction and led to an enormous loss of life, besides imposing untold misery on the common people.

### **War- the Constant Companion of Imperialism**

The rise of fascism in Europe and the over-running of Germany by Hitler clearly pointed to the war danger. The fascists led by Hitler were bent on war at all cost. They could have been checked and frustrated had the other powers like Britain, France, USA combined with the USSR to checkmate them. The USSR therefore called upon these powers to build collective security against fascist aggression. For years it struggled to achieve the objective and called for protecting peace. But the British, French and USA imperialists continued to support Hitler and encouraged his plans of aggression against the USSR. They made the second world war inevitable.

This experience after the rise of the first Socialist State shows that peace is a necessity for socialism and the socialist system which are free from exploitation of man by man; while war is a necessity for and constant companion of imperialism, of the capitalist system based on exploitation of nations and the working class and working people.

Today also the same picture is seen in international affairs. While the Soviet Union and all socialist countries ardently strive for peace, the U.S. aided by its imperialist allies is working for a genocidal war.

Imperialism is a blood thirsty system. It cannot exist without shedding the blood of millions and millions of people. In the first world war they killed lakhs of people. In the second world war many times more were killed. And in the nuclear war they are preparing they intend to kill tens of millions in a few minutes.

Such a blood thirsty system was never in existence before. The only power that can stop the war maniacs from pushing along the war path is the power of the working class and the people. No war can be launched if the organised working class of advanced countries maintains its international solidarity and refuses to be victim of national or bourgeois chauvinism. In war the first casualty is the solidarity and international unity of the working class. That is where the vital role of proletarian internationalism comes in.

### **Struggle for peace**

Today the fight for peace, for avoiding war is being carried on by vast sections of people in Europe, the USA and elsewhere along with the working class. If the working class everywhere including India stands firmly by the banner of proletarian internationalism, of peace, the fight for peace will be invincible.

In Europe the peace forces are getting more determined than ever with prospect of deployment of new missiles by December this year. In England on October 5 the annual conference of the British Labour Party overwhelmingly declared for a unilateral nuclear disarmament. Report appearing in the

*Morning State* (London) says "Unconditional unilateral disarmament was overwhelmingly reaffirmed as Labour Party's policy in a stinging rebuff to the hard right. Delegates stood firm in support of the party's programme for peace, leaving labour committed to scrapping Cruise, Trident and Polaris and closing all nuclear bases when it comes to office. The conference cheered Ren Todd of Transport and General Council Workers' Union when he said it was time Britain stopped being an aircraft carrier for the U.S."

By reaffirming its policy despite the electoral setback it had received the Labour Party Conference has voiced the feelings of the working class and peoples of the world, their urge for peace and nuclear disarmament. But the Governments of the imperialist countries, like the USA, Britain and others represent the interests of the multinationals who dictate economic and foreign policies to them. To bolster their interests in the midst of recession they spend billions of dollars on armaments cutting down social security expenditures and employment opportunities for the workers. Instead of spending these vast sums for bolstering employment, they spend them on acquiring destructive weapons.

### **Profit-the Motive Force of Capitalism**

In the USA the number of unemployed exceeds 10 million. In the advanced capitalist countries put together the number of unemployed exceeds 30 millions. Yet these are the countries whose Governments are preparing for war to sacrifice millions of lives of their honest workers, because war and war production are more profitable to the multinationals than production of jobs and necessities of life. Guns are better than butter and jobs. It is known that for every one person employed in war industry, many more can be employed for the same amount of capital in other industries. But that is not profitable for the big capitalists.

### **U.S. Rejects Soviet Peace Proposals**

That is why the U.S. imperialists are rejecting one peace proposal after another put forward by the USSR and insisting on having nuclear superiority for themselves so that they can start aggression any time they want. They describe this demand for arms superiority as zero option.

The Socialist state proposes peace, is prepared to agree to mutual guarantees for peace, but the imperialist state rejects these offers and does not change its stand on the drive for war.

The USSR has declared that it will not be the first to use a nuclear strike. It has assured the common people of the world that the Socialist State would go to the utmost length to save the world from war. Its declaration is hailed by the peace loving masses all over the world. All that was necessary to save world peace was a similar assurance from the U.S.

But the U.S. President and administration refused to give such an assurance. They belittled the importance of Soviet declaration and refused to respond. They made it clear which side stood for war and exposed the propaganda talk about two super-powers and the hypocrisy or those who blamed both sides.

The USSR not only made the offer in relation to nuclear stike, it also said that it was ready for destruction of all nuclear weapons and for ban on their production. But the U.S. refuse to take notice of this offer and goes on adding to its arsenal such dangerous weapons as Neutron Bombs, Pershing and Cruise missiles.

The USSR also proposed that pending agreement on total destruction of weapons and ban on their test, there should be parity or balance of such weapons between the two camps (Warsaw and NATO) so that neither side lives in fear of the other and peace is maintained. The U.S. imperialist and allies not only did not respond to this offer, they made claims for nuclear superiority for themselves.

Yuri Andropov, General Secretary of the CPSU and the Supreme Soviet have made an appeal to the Parliaments and Legislatures of all countries to support their peace proposals. The appeal says "A durable, dependable and lasting peace is the first and most compelling need of all people, of all nations of all human kind.

"The need for peace is of particular importance when countries have weapons that can destroy human civilisation and all life on our planet and when the threat of war, which was apparently pushed back in the 1970 has again to mount and international tension is mountingly increasing.

"We the authorised representatives of the Soviet people, solidly declare that in keeping with the Leninist policy of peace and international cooperation, the Soviet Union will do all in its power to avert war.

"We reaffirm that in accordance with the commitment it has undertaken the Soviet Union will not be the first to use nuclear weapons and once again call upon other nuclear powers to undertake a similar commitment.

"We declare that the Soviet Union is prepared on a basis of reciprocity with the United States of America, to freeze its nuclear arsenal.

"We call for a quick and fruitful completion of Soviet Union-United States talks on limiting and reducing strategic arms and limiting nuclear armaments in Europe and the earliest conclusion of our agreement on armed forces and arms reduction in Central Europe.

"We propose coming to an agreement without delay on a complete and general nuclear test ban so that no more new kinds and types of nuclear weapons may be developed.

"We call for the prohibition and destruction of Chemical weapons". Thus speaks the voice of socialism, the voice of the international working class.

All those who do not heed this voice, those who talk of two super-powers, equate Warsaw Pact Socialist countries with NATO Alliance, directly or indirectly promote the cause of U.S. imperialism. They abet it to go to war against the USSR and plunge it in a world nuclear disaster.

The Naxalites and their ilk in other countries abet this game of aggression against the USSR.

The fascist hordes of Hitler tried to drown the socialist revolution and its achievements in blood. The Soviet Union defeated the attack but had to pay immense price in blood and materials. Its success, however, changed the balance of forces in the world, sounding the death knell of colonialism. It announced the emergence of the socialist camp.

### Protect the Working Class State — Fight US War Designs

Today again the same challenge is being prepared to destroy achievements of socialism and re-enslave the countries which have achieved freedom from imperialism, to re-enslave the working class which has emancipated itself from the yoke of capitalism. Where do the Indian workers and people stand in this gigantic struggle which will determine the fate of the world and even its existence? What is our cry "Workers of the World Unite" worth if our movement is unable to create a terrific pressure on the imperialists to desist from war against the working class State?

Proletarian internationalism, loyalty to freedom, democracy and socialism demand that India's working class aided by its people should throw its full weight behind the peace forces, against the U.S. designs for war, exposing at each step every provocation of U.S. imperialism and its allies.

Already there are powerful forces in all countries. Workers and other citizens are protesting against war, pressing their governments to join the call for disarmament and abjuration of nuclear weapons. The Governments of imperialist countries are shaking under their pressure. If the voice of India's millions join their voice, if India's working class and people seriously undertake a crusade for peace they will contribute to turning the balance against war mongers. The good work started since September 1st last which led to huge please rallies must be pursued with greater vigour.

On Seventh November all our State Committees and all CITU unions will express solidarity with the USSR, its working class and people in the struggle for peace waged by them. They will support and popularise the peace proposals of the CPSU and Supreme Soviet and express their firm determination to fight for world peace.

Our State Committees and unions will denounce the war designs of the U.S. and its imperialist allies who have now formed war bloc for purposes of aggressions.

On Seventh November our State Committees and unions will recall how the Socialist Soviet Union has stood for peace in its existence of six decades, and how it is doing everything possible to save the peoples of the world from the horrors of a nuclear war.

On Seventh November we join our voice with millions in other countries to protest against war. Together with them we work for the defeat of those who plan to deploy cruise missiles in Europe by December.

# Significance of the Convention

P. Ramamurti

THE Second National Trade Union Convention held on August 21, is, apart from the more than double the representation of the previous Bombay Convention, of far-reaching significance for the trade union movement and the working class.

The main resolution unanimously adopted in the convention notes the further growth of unity and united struggles since the 1st All-India Convention in Bombay two years ago, and their achievements. In the public sector the united struggles of the workers have succeeded in overthrowing the guidelines of the Bureau of Public Sector Enterprises in regard to the limitation of wage increase to ten per cent of total wage packet in Coal, Steel, BHEL, NTPC and several other industries. The new wage agreements had provided an increase of 20 to 23 per cent. Further, the Government had to agree to appoint a Tripartite Committee to revise upwards the dearness allowance formula of Rs. 1.30 per point of rise in the working class cost of living index. These successes would certainly have their impact on the workers and Trade Union movement in other sectors of the economy.

The resolution also noted that lakhs of workers in different states had heroically carried on protracted strike struggles in the face of heavy repression by the Congress Governments, attacks by the goonda gangs specially kept by the employers and physical attacks by the police on not only the striking workers but also on their homes and their families including women and children.

The resolution however, warned the workers against the increasing attacks by the employers on the workers, by resorting to lock-outs, closures, lay-offs, with a view to force them to accept increased work-loads, retrenchment and reduced real wages.

## Building Capitalism — the Basic Cause

The greatest significance of the resolution lies in the fact that it unerringly lays its finger on the basic cause of this terrible offensive — an offensive not only on the working class but on the entire working people, when it declares:

“The crisis of our economy, as a result of the capitalist path of development that our Government is pursuing is being further aggravated by the world-wide capitalist crisis. It has its disastrous effect on our country's economy and the working class”.

All the policies against the working class and the people stem from this attempt to build capitalism in our country since independence. All the tall talk that the Government is wedded to socialism is sheer bunkum.

When the country attained its independence, the Government turned to the very imperialists and the multinational companies for development of our industries in our country. These are the very forces that had been obstructing the development of industries in our country and exploiting our people by the use of their political power for over two hundred years.

Despite the fact that they were forced to part with power by the immense sacrifices of our people in the freedom struggle, this dependence on these exploiting forces enabled to continue their economic exploitation of our country and its resources. Although it is true that by using its political power Government tries to restrict in many ways this exploitation, the imperialists are able to carry on their exploitation though restricted to some extent. Collaboration agreements between these multinational companies and our monopolists were allowed though with some restrictions and some sectors, such as the Pharmaceutical Industry, are completely under the domination of the multinationals.

The foreign collaborator was able to exploit our people by means of higher prices for machinery and spare parts supplied, royalty on sales, and higher charges for transfer of technology.

The International Financial Institutions from which the Government resorts to heavy borrowing take advantage of the situation to keep the foreign monopolists to continue their exploitation of the country. The recent heavy borrowing from the International Monetary Fund has enabled it to put conditionalities which are harmful to our country's interests and hit hard some industries. Further unequal terms of trade have worsened the balance of payments position.

The conflicts and contributions between our capitalists, including the big bourgeoisie are reflected in the strident speeches made by our Prime Minister in international forums in recent months as chairperson of the Non-aligned Movement. They were acclaimed as the voice of the developing nations.

But yet, the International Monetary Fund and the imperialists led by U.S. Imperialists have given only paltry concessions in the face of the united demand of the developing countries for substantial development help.

In the conditions of the world-wide capitalist crisis, the foreign monopolists are naturally attempting to transfer as much of the burden of the crisis to all the Third World developing countries. India is no exception.

## Closures Due to Mismanagement

In his address to the Madras Chamber of Commerce Shri Veerendra Patil, the Union Minister for Labour conceded that 52 percent of the closures of the factories are due to mismanagement (another name for the looting of these factories by the management and diverting them to other pastures where quick and more profits are available). The Reserve Bank, in a recently published study had stated that only two per cent of the closures of factories are due to "labour trouble". This is really due to the efforts by the capitalists to impose onerous terms on the workers and treating them to agree to retrenchment, increased workload and drastic cut in wages. Over two thousand crores of rupees advanced by the nationalised banks have gone down to drain. They have even swallowed with impunity the Provident Fund and ESI Contributions. And the Government takes no action against them.

While the big business houses are being connived at the Government in such huge frauds, industries in the Small-scale Sector are closing down due to want of credit from the Commercial Banks and refusal by Government to supply them raw materials at controlled prices. The case study points out that the other causes of closures are power failure, and insufficient supply of raw materials. This only shows the utter failure of the much tom tomed planning. How can there be planned development when anarchy both in production and distribution is the law of capitalism? The activities of the multi-nationals and their Indian collaborators aggravate the situation. Some factories close down because the bureaucrats concerned with licencing and even ministers allow licenses for the putting up such factories when there is sufficient Indian technical capability and even physical capacity in these fields.

A case to illustrate this is that a foreign company, the Metal Box, was given a licence to put up a factory in Khargpur (West Bengal) for manufacturing a particular type of sophisticated ball-bearings. Already a Tata Company was manufacturing this product. The result was that the Kharagpur factory did not produce the product and the large sum advanced by the nationalised bank went down the drain.

## Demand Nationalisation

The Convention demanded the nationalisation of jute and cotton textile industries, tea and rubber plantations. It also demanded that the Government should not hand over the closed factories taken over by the Government to Private Industrialists after spending crores of rupees in running them for a number of years. This would be placing these workers at the mercy of these capitalists who have ruined the factories, but at the same time blame the workers for no fault of theirs.

The convention's demand for encouraging our scientists, engineers and technologists is in the inter-

rest of the country and developing their capability in all fields and restricting import of technology from foreign sources at heavy cost to the exchequer.

## Working Women

The convention noted the growing atrocities on women, particularly on working women, who apart from being the victims of feudal outlook still prevalent in the society are also being subjected to discriminatory treatment in respect of wages, employment, training, promotion and service protections. The Convention decided to organise a joint convention of working women, who are a part of the working class of the country. This is a timely decision as the women are now coming out in protest against the injustice done to them and may get influenced by the feminists who want to divert their anger against men in general and not against the class oppressors.

## Agricultural Workers

The demand of the convention for radical land reforms and their faithful implementation, for fixing statutory minimum wages for agricultural labourers and contract workers is of great importance. It will not only help those sections of the toiling people, but also drastically counteract rampant corruption.

It is, therefore, the duty of the trade unions to raise these demands, help these workers to organise themselves and extend fraternal support their movements, agitations and struggles. Only thus the trade unions will be able to make them realise that the working class is their reliable friend and ally in the immediate tasks of improving their lot.

## Struggle Against war and for peace

Above all, the convention warned the working class against the hectic preparations for unleashing a nuclear war. It must be made clear to all that all the initiatives taken by the Soviet Union for lessening tension, for stopping the placing of Pershing and other missiles in Western Europe, for an end to the armament race as the beginning of a step by step march to complete and general disarmament have been frustrated by the U.S. Imperialists. Reagan and his imperialist allies are feverishly preparing for a nuclear war. If the Soviet Union's proposals had been accepted, it would have led to lasting and durable peace and also helped in improving the lot of the working people all over the world by diverting the funds used in armaments manufacture to satisfy the necessities of life of the common people and helped them to improve their living conditions. But imperialism is inseparable from war.

Although the resolution talks only in general terms of the need to mobilise the working class against the war mongers, it must be realised that the majority of the workers in our country do not realise the grave danger of a nuclear war. It will not be confined to Europe but our own economy and independence, the jobs of lakhs of workers will be in jeopardy.

Moreover most of the trade unions are not united in the approach to the danger. Many of them equate the Soviet Union with the U.S.A. and talk of the super powers intensifying the war danger.

This will be giving a free passport to the war mongers to go ahead with their war preparations, with all its consequences.

It is the urgent duty of the trade unions to combat this slanderous propaganda and put the real war mongers — the imperialists headed by the U.S. Imperialists into straight jackets. The Indian working class must take its rightful place among the militant fighters for peace and against the war mongers in all the countries. This is one of their international responsibilities, which they can ignore only at their own peril, against the danger to their jobs and against the interests of our country.

### **Immediate Task—Fight Against Closures, Lockouts**

The most important task of the trade unions is to fight against the immediate danger of increasing closures, lock-outs and lay-offs endangering their jobs, real wages and increasing insecurity. The convention rightly placed this as the foremost task before the trade unions. At the same time, it must be fully realised that what the trade unions achieved so far is limited because the partners in the convention have different understanding of the need for mobilisation of the workers and also on the importance of the issues.

Nevertheless the resolution gives sufficient scope to carry forward the unity so far achieved. The issues of closures, retrenchments, increased workloads, erosion of real wages, and growing unemployment and insecurity brook no delay on our part. With the CITU unions taking the initiative in approaching all other unions and federations and holding successful representative conventions and other programmes of agitation and struggles as detailed in the resolution, the trade union unity so far achieved can be consolidated and tremendously advanced. Thereby, in the course of these campaigns, agitations and struggles, the unity of the trade unions mobilised under the banner of the National Campaign Committee can be tremendously carried forward. This will also help in drawing the workers who are still under the influence of those trade union centres who are not in the campaign committee to join in even larger numbers the common struggle. This will be the biggest blow struck against the anti-working class, anti-people and anti-democratic policies of the Government. The Convention rightly highlighted that the working class and its trade union movement must stop the march to authoritarianism and force the Government to halt and reverse its onward march to authorotarianism. No other class has that capacity and organisation.

### **Struggle for New Socio-Economic Order**

The struggle against closures, lock-outs, lay-offs, retrenchment, wagecuts and against the war mongers are inseparable. In every struggle against those calculated attacks, the working class must be made

to realise that it can by its organised might and hurling that entire might, can halt and reverse these dangerous policies.

The delegates to the convention went away with great confidence on what they can achieve. It is the task of the trade unions to educate and inculcate the working class of the grave danger facing them and give them the firm conviction that this danger can be averted and mankind can be saved from a terrible disaster.

The capitalist class has proved beyond a shadow of doubt its incapacity of managing the economy. It is incapable of fully utilising man's creation in all fields — Scientific, Engineering, Technological. Capitalism can only keep its own creation idle.

Therefore, in the grim and sustained struggle against these attacks, the trade unions must bring about heightened consciousness among the working class and show the link between every struggle on day to day demands like that against attempts at imposing heavy work loads, lock-outs, lay-offs and retrenchment with the policies of the Government and raise these struggles against the general policy of developing capitalism in our country when the capitalist system is in the declining phase and is on the way out.

But capitalism will not die of itself. It will be up and inflict immense damage to the workers and the peoples the world over. Let the Trade Unions put their powerful hands to the wheel and give the consciousness and strength to hasten the death of the capitalist system and trail the path of creating a new socio-economic order where every advance would mean stable improvement of the living conditions, more leisure and enjoyment of more leisure and culture and all the good things of life.

**Letter from WFTU, Prague, to CITU,  
dated September 19**

Dear Com. Samar Mukherjee,

Thank you very much for your letter of 31-8-83. The policy of repression followed by the ruling party in Srilanka, as a result of world-wide protest, has been halted to an extent. More arrests have not been made though Com. Panditha is still behind the bars. The President of CFTU has gone back to Srilanka and is functioning. We have received a communication from the CFTU Acting General Secretary thanking WFTU and all trade unions for the protest actions.

I have also seen reports about the observance of 1st September "Day of Peace" in India and the united manner in which it was observed in various parts of the country. It was really a successful observance.

With greetings

Yours fraternally  
K.G. Sriwastava  
Secretary, WFTU

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Queries are welcome from the interested ones.

# Convention on Closures Lockouts on January 22

## Anti-Closure, Lockout Day on December 4

THE National Campaign Committee in its meeting held at New Delhi on October 6 decided to postpone the National Convention on Closures, Lock-outs, Retrenchments, Lay-offs and Denotification from December 4 to January 22 at New Delhi. The postponement was made in pursuance of the request by the AITUC, because of their conference in December.

The N.C.C. decided to observe December 4 as the anti-closure-lock-out-retrenchment-lay-off - denotification day. On December 4, all constituents and unions should hold joint rallies, processions and demonstrations all over the country and in the industrial centres. Resolutions should be adopted in the rallies denouncing such offensives by the managements and demanding nationalisation of the closed units. Copies of the resolutions should be sent to the Prime Minister and Labour Minister.

### A Burning Problem

Earlier on October 4, the burning problem of closures, lock-outs, etc. was discussed in the meeting of N.C.C. with the federations. The leaders of the various federations expressed deep concern over this increasing offensive of the managements which is being resorted to to force the workers to accept increased workloads, retrenchments and reduced wages. All the industrially developed states have been affected by closures and lock-outs, starting from West Bengal at the top, followed by Maharashtra, Gujarat, Tamilnadu, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan etc. Even the Ministries of Labour and Industry have had to admit in their various notes that since January, 1982 to May 1983 more mandays have been lost due to lock-outs than strikes—52 per cent in Kerala to 85 per cent in West Bengal. This problem is coupled with the growing industrial sickness and the move of the Government towards denotifications. 52 per cent of the causes of industrial sickness also, as analysed by the Reserve Bank of India, are due to mismanagement, diversion of funds, management infighting and lack of marketing strategy. The other factors responsible for industrial sickness are faulty initial planning, market recession, power cuts, shortage of raw materials, etc. The Government, which is always quick to blame the workers for the so-called "labour trouble", is rapped by the RBI report itself, which says that only 2 per cent of the industrial sickness are due to "labour trouble". And, this "labour trouble" of course has evidently been caused because of closures, lock-outs and retrenchments.

The Government formed the Industrial Reconstruction Corporation of India (IRCI) to take over the sick units with notification under the Industries (Development and Regulation) Act, 1951, with the ultimate objective of nationalisation. But now it has started denotifying them. So those companies will go into liquidation throwing tens of thousands of workers out of employment. Carter Pooler has

already been denotified. A large number of companies in West Bengal and other states are queuing up for denotifications. Today the Government has started denotifying, tomorrow it will start denationalisation. The meeting deliberated that it was because the Government wanted to strengthen the private sector under pressure from the IMF. The meeting condemned the Government's refusal to nationalise the concerns and a number of speakers opposed its proposal for workers' cooperatives to take over the closed units which was to befool the workers when the Government was not prepared to provide the finance. Besides, the question involved the supply of raw materials, market, etc.

The N.C.C. meeting on October 6 called upon all the constituents to send the following details on closures, lock-outs, etc. so that a comprehensive report can be placed before the convention and a memorandum can be submitted to the Government:

1. Names of affected units with dates and the number of workers affected.
2. Cases of mismanagement causing sickness or closures of the units and steps taken by the Government in the matter; the official and real causes.
3. Struggles of the workers, the financial difficulties and solidarity assistance if any.
4. Examples of the import policy of the Government, diversion of funds and recession leading to sickness, closures.
5. Suggestions for the form of struggle to fight these offensives and any other informations on the subject.

The N.C.C. also decided to hold a meeting of the women's organisations alongwith the federations November 20 at New Delhi to finalise the date and venue of the women's convention. The proposed convention of the unorganised workers will be held after the March to Parliament programme during the Budget Session.

### Causes of Industrial Sickness (Large Industrial Units)

1. Due to mismanagement/management deficiencies including diversion of funds, infighting, lack of marketing strategy.....52%
2. Due to faulty initial planning and other technical drawbacks.....14%
3. Due to market recession.....23%
4. Due to power cuts, shortage of raw materials, etc.....9%
5. Due to labour trouble.....2%

Source: Report of Reserve Bank of India for the quarter ending December, 1979.

# Central Government Eluding its Responsibility

—Nrisingha Chakrabarty

**L**ABOUR Minister's Conference every year is generally a ritual performed without doing the real job. The Conference this year held on September 24, appears to be a departure from the earlier ones. It is a surprise to note that an attempt has been made to discuss and make a general appraisal of "Industrial Relations Situation" in the country. But at the same time it seems from the trend of discussion that an attempt has been made to find a way out for the Union Government to wriggle itself out of its responsibility in respect of the workers of closed and sick industries.

## Growing Incidence of Lock-outs and Closures

The agenda papers circulated in the Conference admitted that "there is however a shift in the pattern in the last two years with lock-out accounting for a higher share of total mandays losses than strike in 1982 and 1983 (January-May) more than 20 per cent of the total mandays losses have been due to lock-outs".

*(Figures have been published in the October Issue)*

It is also noted that closure of establishments due to other than industrial disputes have also been on the increase. The total number of closures due to industrial disputes in 1981 in the country were 311, whereas for other reasons the number was 350. In 1982 these figures were 188 and 442 respectively.

Of course, in the states where the trade union movement is comparably strong and the working class is doggedly resisting the attacks by the owning class, closures on account of industrial disputes are more.

## Avoiding Responsibility

From the Cannanore General Council meeting in September, 1980, the CITU had been warning the working class that with the onset of crisis in the Indian Economy, the capitalist class is utilising lock-out as a weapon to attack them in an attempt to pass on the burdens of crisis on them.

The CITU had been repeatedly demanding that the Government should take effective steps against these closures as these are anti-social acts against the interests of the nation. It is worth while to note that these lockouts and closures had taken place when the government had given a call for observing 1982 as "The year of productivity". Is it also to be noted that after the section 25 (0) of the Industrial Disputes Act had been struck down by the Supreme Court, the Union Government did not take suitable steps to restore this provision. In the agenda papers the government claimed to have restored the provisions of section 25 (0) through the Industrial Disputes (Amendment) Act, 1982 which even after being

passed has not been notified.

The main aim of this amending Act being directed to deprive the workers their fundamental right to strike. This Act was not acceptable to the trade union movement of the country. The Government did not think about special provisions to be made against all closures. It has, on the other hand, tried to forsake its responsibilities by advising the states to make their own laws on the subject, at least that is what the press reported on the morrow of the conference. It is understood that some of the State Governments have questioned this advice because according to them the Union Government should bring in a uniform legislation on the subject keeping in view what was said in the judgement of the Supreme Court.

## Nationalise Jute Industry

Krishna Pada Ghosh, Minister of Labour, West Bengal, in his speech drew specific attention to the industrial relations situation in the Jute Industry in which the managements have refused to honour his award on grade and scale of pay and the award of the then Union Labour Minister on Badli. Referring to the unanimous resolution of the West Bengal legislative assembly demanding nationalisation of the entire Jute Industry, which was presented to the Government of India through an all party delegation on behalf of the Assembly which has met the Union Labour Minister also, he expressed hope that the conference would be able to take a decision on the subject. Curiously in the agenda papers there is no mention of this delegation. It is also not known whether the Conference has taken any decision on the subject.

## Class Bias

Another curious omission was J.K. Synthetics, Kota which accounted for the loss of nearly 1 million mandays in 1983, though it is admitted by the Labour Minister, Rajasthan, that the retrenchment made by the authorities was illegal. Besides, the J.K. Management has flouted an order issued under special provisions and has issued such guidelines to the staff which take away their fundamental right to organise and freedom of speech etc. It is known to all that the Government had helped the Singhanias by ruthlessly suppressing the struggle of the workers against illegal retrenchment.

The class bias of the Government could be seen from the fact that while in the cases of both the jute industry and J.K. Synthetics the managements were clearly in the wrong, the agenda papers do not pin-point the violations of law by the managements and give any guidance to the states as to how to tackle the recalcitrant managements.

## Industrial Sickness

It also comes out in the open while dealing with sick industries.

The Reserve Bank of India had made an investigation into the causes of sickness of large sick units for the quarter ending December 1979. (*The data classified by it has been published on p. 9.*)

Available data reveal that the total number of sick units increased by nearly 27 per cent between December 1979 (22,366) and June 1982 (28,360). Between December 1979 and 1981 while sickness in medium units showed a decline (1013 to 994,) sickness in large units (378 to 422) and small units (20975 to 25, 342) were on the increase. Likewise, the outstanding total Bank advances to the sick units increased by about 25 per cent between December 1979 and December 1981, from Rs. 1623 crores to Rs. 2026 crores.

The position in some of the states is as under:

### No. of Units and Amounts Involved

State	At the end of December 1980		At the end of March 1981	
	No. of Units	Amount involved	No. of Units	Amount involved
1. West Bengal	102	324.24	105	330.92
2. Maharashtra	85	323.25	88	327.32
3. Tamil Nadu	31	170.68	33	165.25
4. Uttar Pradesh	49	93.11	49	143.55
5. Gujarat	39	106.51	38	109.16
6. Karnataka	20	90.30	20	92.28
7. Total	326	1108.09	333	1168.48
Total (including others)	409	1324.47	420	1413.48

The Industry-wise position is as under:

State	Engineering & Electricals	Textile	Jute	Sugar	Others	Total
West Bengal	27	6	34	1	37	105
Maharashtra	25	36	—	2	25	88
Karnataka	8	2	—	3	7	20
Gujarat	5	23	—	—	10	38
Tamilnadu	8	5	—	5	15	33
Andhra Pradesh	3	2	1	1	9	16
Uttar Pradesh	1	6	—	30	12	49
Others	15	13	—	3	40	71
Total	92	93	35	45	155	420

Here also the class bias comes to the fore as the papers do not pinpoint the fact that many of the

large sick units are owned by MRTP houses who have unloaded these units on the Government and diverted funds to newer pastures for quick profits.

### I.L.C. Decision Being Flouted

The papers also do not refer to the agreed conclusions of the 25th Indian Labour Conference which recorded that

“It was generally agreed that.....Legislative provisions and governmental machinery for take over should ensure continuity of employment and production. Consequent upon the take over there should not be any reduction in employment or emoluments nor should there be any adverse effects on service conditions and benefits.”

“The workers asked for an immediate Ordinance.....Units taken over should not be handed back.”

These conclusions have been flouted when the National Textile Corporation had taken over textile mills as relief undertaking reducing both employment as well as emoluments and now the Assam Government has brought forth a similar Relief Undertaking Bill. The CITU had protested against this and there has been no mention to this aspect.

### Mismanagement Continuing After Takeover

The Government of India have left the management of the taken over units with either the old managements or to the Public Financial Institutions and the IRCI who have only compounded the mismanagement.

Krishna Pada Ghosh had referred to this aspect in his speech in the following words:

“The attitude and the policies of the Banking Institutions including the I.R.C.I. in assisting the revival of such units, require a change. If such units are to be revived, bank interest should either be frozen or should be lowered with a view to bringing them back to normal operations”!

This was but a very mild projection befitting a Minister. In fact the entire trade union movement in West Bengal is up in arms against the bureaucratic mismanagement of the I.R.C.I. There is a growing feeling of collusion and corruption for which they have demanded a through probe.

### Changed Policy of Indira Government

The policy of take over which was initiated after the 25th I.L.C. decision, has been quietly reversed by Smt. Indira's Government after 1981, especially after the I.M.F. loan. The Government refused to nationalise the units which have already been taken over even though they had shown signs of becoming viable. Deterioration started in some cases and the Government has come up with de-notification of these units already taken over. Ignoring mas-

sive protest, (even the INTUC also was united with the rest), the Government started denotifying these units, Carter-Pooler being the first to be so denotified. The Labour Minister, West Bengal opposed this in his speech and sought reconsideration.

### Proposal of Cooperatives

The agenda papers suggested a new policy of handing over of the sick units to the workers to be managed through cooperatives. This is an absurd proposition particularly in respect of modern industries which require not only higher degree of skill and expertise but also a fair knowledge of costing, marketing and other gimmicks which are generally the offsprings of the capitalist methods. Labour Co-operatives cannot run an industry which has become sick because of changed pattern of consumption or due to import policy of the Government.

The proposal in reality allows the guilty owners to escape punishment for their malpractices and places the burden on the workmen to subsidise mismanagement of the erstwhile owners and accept their corruption. This is also a very crude attempt on the part of the Government to wriggle out of its responsibility to the society and reveals its class preference once again.

### Role of Public Financial Institutions

To buttress the proposal of co-operatives, the papers assure all help from the banks. This is offered at a stage when it is revealed that the Public Financial Institutions have already acquired more than 25 per cent equity shares in many concerns including the sick units. For example, in National Tannery more than 80 per cent equity shares are held by these institutions. There is no point in denying nationalisation of this unit and offering it to workers for being run on co-operative basis.

The CITU has already drawn the attention of the Government to the fact that the MRTP houses should not be allowed to close down factories like the J.K. Rayon, Kanpur, because these Institutions have either advanced money or have acquired equity shares. It has also demanded that all units in which these institutions have acquired more than 25 per cent equity shares, should be nationalised. Once this is done, the profits of these units can be utilised to rehabilitate the sick industries and ensure jobs to all workmen. Swaraj Paul has levelled a charge that only 11 families with only a paid up capital of about Rs. 150 crores are managing assets worth Rs. 11,000 crores and holding the country's production and well-being of thousands and thousands of workers and their families to ransom. The Labour Minister's Conference did not touch this aspect at all.

### Recognition Secret by Ballot

Krishnapada Ghosh in his speech touched a very vital point about industrial relation. He said, "There is a crying need for identification and recognition of

bargaining agent in industries and industrial units." He informed the conference that the West Bengal Legislative Assembly has very recently passed a bill providing for election and compulsory recognition of bargaining agent through secret ballot. (*Contents of the bill on p. 27*)

### Exercise on Beaten Track

The Conference made another exercise in traversing on beaten track. A plethora of subjects like amendments to several legislations were discussed, some of them featuring in three past conferences or more without any concrete decisions. The urgency needed in respect of ensuring payment of minimum wages in terms of the Supreme Court judgement or legislation for Contract Labour or amendments to Factory Act etc. was completely absent.

### Menace of Unemployment

The growing incidence of lock-outs and closures over and above the swelling of unemployed in the labour market ought to have been a matter of great concern. In fact the ILO had drawn the attention of member states to this aspect more than a year back. Only on the last "Independence Day" broadcast, Indira Gandhi promised employment of atleast one in a family.

But the Conference papers reveal complete non-challance and lack of concern, by the Union Labour Ministry in this respect. Even when Krishna Pada Ghosh, referring to the Scheme of unemployment relief already in existence in West Bengal said "the continuance of Unemployment Assistance is essential and is a social responsibility; we had written to the Government of India for providing assistance to the State Government to meet the requirements of the Unemployment Assistance Scheme", the conference did not respond.

The conference, therefore, turned out to be gathering intended to forsake the social responsibility which devolves on Government of India, and an exercise in refusing to tackle the labour problems seriously.

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# Coal Miners' Strike on November 12

SEVEN lakh coal miners will have to go in for another round of struggle all over the country in view of the refusal of the Government of India to give clearance in toto to the agreement drafted by the management and the trade unions on 5th September 1983. This gross interference by the Government of India was a direct attack at the vitals of the bipartite machinery in public sector undertakings and if allowed to continue it would be a severe blow to collective bargaining in the public sector in India.

In the background of two massive strikes the coal miners expressed their firm determination to defeat the BPE guidelines. The role of coal workers' movement in ultimately forcing the Government of India to retrace from the BPE guidelines and conceding the highest percentage of wage rise in the current phase of negotiations cannot therefore be exaggerated.

## INTUC in Dilemma

A wave of indignation swept all the coal belts in the country when the coal management did not sign the agreement on 20th September when the JBCCI was to meet for the specific purpose. The INTUC which announced that the Government has already given clearance to the agreement had to eat its own words and lent its support to the call for observation of an All India coal miners Protest day on 5th October 1983. For the first time in the present phase of wage negotiation the INTUC unions agreed to join movement along with other central trade unions. It is reported that the Congress(I) leaders snubbed the INTUC leaders for this role and ultimately they backed out from the united struggle being launched in the country. The INTUC leaders openly issued statements asking coal miners not to participate in the All India Protest Day.

The call for the observance of the All India protest Day on 5th October 1983 has a background of series of negotiations among the Central Trade Unions. At first the CITU, HMS and BMS unions alone gave a call on 1st October 1983. When the INTUC and the AITUC leaders subsequently agreed to join the united movement, 5th October was fixed as the common date for the day.

The CIL chairman openly made statement in the press stating the Government had cleared all the NCWA III agreement and 11 October was fixed as the date for concluding the agreement. The INTUC leaders had also issued a statement to the press that the final agreement would be signed and all the arrear payments would be made before the festival.

Earlier the INTUC leaders prevailed upon the Chairman, CIL to announce payment of one month's salary as advance towards final settlement. However this could not lull the militant feelings of the workers and the All India Coal Miners Protest Day was unitedly observed in all the coal belts. Proces-

sions and rallies were held on the day to express resentment at the policy of the Government of India.

The united call of all the Coal Unions had an impact on the Government. A special meeting of the cabinet was called in Delhi to clear the agreement and all but on clause were approved by the Government of India. The understanding relating to the payment of Rs. 12 as across the board payment was however not cleared by the Government.

## Government Hoodwinks

The meeting of the JBCCI on 11th October had a dramatic anti-climax. The management arranged T.V. photographs to give widest publicity to the signing of the agreement. Press correspondents were also invited. A special signing ceremony was arranged. The trade unions were however not informed in the meeting that the agreement was to be signed without the provision of payment of Rs 12. Some of the Trade Union leaders realised after signing that Rs. 12 was not included in the final draft. All the Central Trade Unions therefore decided to withdraw their consent and condemned the role of the Government and the managements.

## Decision for Strike

The Central Trade Unions therefore met separately and decided to record their voice of protest in a joint press statement. They also gave a call for observation of All India strike on 12th November all over the country if the Government of India failed to give clearance to the agreement in toto. They further decided to launch even bigger and longer strike actions if the Government failed to give clearance to the draft agreement without any change.

If the Government of India does not relent then a confrontation in the strategic sector cannot be avoided.

## Warning to Steel and BHEL Workers

Meanwhile it appears that the Government of India has asked the Steel and the BHEL managements to withdraw Rs. 12 paid already to the workers and directed to recover the amount already paid. In such an eventuality the Steel and BHEL workers are likely to join the countrywide struggle to force the Government to withdraw the idiotic directives.

The coal workers in India therefore once again are fighting the front line battle for the public sector workers. The extent of unity of the coal miners will however decide the outcome of their struggle.

The Working Committee meeting of the All India Coal Workers' Federation held in Calcutta on 10th October 1983 decided to prepare for still bigger struggles if the Government continue to persist in its anti-working class wage policies.

## D.A. Committee

### Struggle Inevitable

THE fourth and the penultimate meeting of the Tripartite Committee on D.A. for the public sector employees held at New Delhi on October 6, also ended in a failure to clinch the quantum of upward revision of D.A.

The Director General of BPE gave the final offer of the rate of DA in the three slabs as follows: on basic wage below Rs. 800 — Rs. 1.45; between Rs. 801—Rs. 1250 — Rs. 1.50 and Rs. 1251 and above — Rs. 1.55. When it was pointed out that the basic wages differ from unit to unit, BPE suggested that the difference between Rs. 550 as basic wage and the lower basic wage fixed in any other public sector undertaking can be adjusted while fixing the slab. In the alternative, the Director offered the uniform rate of Rs. 1.50 as the final offer. The Government also made June 1, 1983 as its final offer for effecting the upward revision.

CITU suggested for only one slab of DA payment to all the workers. The entire workers' group, including the INTUC remained firm on Rs. 2 per point of rise in index and on January 1, 1983 as the date of effect. It was also pointed out that the worker's demand would cost only 3 per cent of the cost of wages.

M.K. Pandhe, Secretary, CITU pointed out that the Bangalore based industries comprise a big chunk of public sector workers. The Committee therefore should decide on DA rates payable according to local index also. But the BPE was agreeable for All India Index only.

As the representatives of the Government stated that they had no authority to go beyond their offer, the trade union representatives decided to meet the Finance Minister on November 10 before the final meeting to be held on November 11. Country-wise struggle will have to be

launched by the public sector employees if the Government refuses to accede to the workers' demand. CITU has already issued circular to the State Committees to contact the unions in the public sector undertakings for preparation of the struggles.

### Hunger Strike by Central Government Employees

Central Government employees all over India staged continuous hunger strike from September 30 to October 11. The Programme was organised by the Confederation of Central Government

Employees & Workers demanding (a) Disbursement of bonus for 1982-83 before Puja holidays; (b) Implementation of the Scheme of time-bound promotion; (c) Implementation of Awards of Boards of Arbitration; (d) Interim Relief to Extra-Department employees; (e) Inclusion of ED employees in the Scheme of DA and inclusion of HRA/CCA in wages of casual labourers with 3 and 5 years of service. The programme culminated with a mass fast on October 11. The programmes will be heightened up if the Government fails to accede to the long pending demands. In a statement issued to the press on October 6, the National Campaign Committee extended full support to the struggle.

## Consumer Price Index Numbers

Base 1960

State/Centre	June 1983	July 1983	Aug. 1983	State Centre	June 1983	July 1983	Aug. 1983
Andhra Pradesh				Orissa			
Gudur	451	454	467	Barbil	540	542	551
Guntur	551	566	566	Sambalpur	602	623	634
Hyderabad	539	544	545	Punjab			
Assam				Amritsar	511	536	541
Digboi	503	521	521	Rajasthan			
Doom Dooma	439	442	460	Ajmer	528	534	537
Labac	459	443	437	Jaipur	546	553	565
Mariani	440	454	456	Tamil Nadu			
Rangapara	440	448	454	Madras	550	561	562
Bihar				Coimbatore	571	576	586
Jamshedpur	506	513	519	Coonoor	564	573	584
Jharia	505	517	538	Madurai	578	586	600
Kodarma	588	595	614	U.P.			
Monghyr	556	575	592	Kanpur	517	522	527
Noamundi	546	539	549	Saharanpur	536	536	534
Gujarat				Varanasi	577	609	639
Ahmedabad	535	541	546	West Bengal			
Bhavanagar	538	552	569	Asansol	513	518	530
Haryana				Calcutta	489	501	513
Yamunanagar	535	543	557	Darjeeling	438	449	456
J. & K.				Howrah	472	483	494
Srinagar	558	563	568	Jalpaiguri	431	428	433
Karnataka				Raniganj	501	509	528
Ammathi	559	568	570	Delhi Territory	536	543	549
Bangalore	591	589	598	Other Centres			
Chikamagalur	532	549	571	Berhampur ('49)	770	793	803
Kolar G.F.	514	512	521	Cuttack ('49)	696	705	694
Kerala				Jabalpur ('49)	697	714	715
Alleppey	599	596	600	Beawar ('51-52)	609	619	630
Alwaye	575	581	587	Tripura ('61)	468	462	463
Mundakayam	546	542	551	Goa ('66)	376	386	385
Madhya Pradesh				H.P. ('65)	383	386	390
Balaghat	544	563	571	Bhilai ('66)	356	362	367
Bhopal	562	578	584	Bhilwara ('66)	334	342	347
Gwalior	530	537	548	Chhindawara ('66)	280	284	290
Indore	567	566	566	Kothagudem ('66)	338	346	347
Maharashtra				Rourkela ('66)	371	376	378
Bombay	559	566	564	All India ('49)	648	658	667
Nagpur	548	550	559	All India ('60)	533	541	549
Sholapur	554	565	584				

(Figures in bracket indicate base year)

## Glorious Bengal Bundh

**D**ESPITE organised opposition and gangster attacks by the Congress (I) hoodlums killing one CPI(M) cadre and despire their bomb throwing on a bundh procession inviting police firing which killed one person, the bundh on September 28 was glorious and total in the entire state. The working class of West Bengal, the peasantry and the agricultural labourers, the students and teachers, the youth and women and all sections of the working and toiling people gave an exemplary demonstration of their determination to carry forward the struggle and clinch the issues of the demands from the Centre — more powers to the states, repeal of all anti-democratic and anti-trade union legislations, stop the move for denotification, nationalise the closed factories, remunerative price to the peasants' produce and minimum wage to the agricultural workers.

All the industrial centres in the state, big or small, including the port and dock, stopped the 'sound of production' as there was no worker inside. The workers came out on the streets, in huge processions, reddened with flags and banners, denouncing the anti-people and anti-labour and pro-monopolist and pro-feudal policies of the Government of India throwing tens of thousands of the workers out of employment, pauperising the people and trying to enslave the states by acquiring all the powers in an authoritarian manner. The always-busy, crowded and congested places like the Howrah and Sealdah stations, the Howrah Bridge, Burrabazar, Chowranghee, Dalhousie Square, etc. wore a vacant look, ridiculing the Congress (I) satellites of Indira Gandhi for failing to see the writings on the wall.

The success of the bundh, significant as it was from the nature of demands raised, is bound to create a big impact on the entire working class of the country, on the toiling people and people from all aspects of life. It pointed out that closures, lockouts and retrenchments by the monopolists are anti-social acts as the measures throw thousands of workers out of employment putting the burdens on each family. And, to move for denotification and refusal to nationalise the concerns, and rather to give a free hand to the multi-nationals to exploit the people, is an anti-national and anti-people act by the Government of India. Similarly, the refusal to give more powers to the states to enable them to programme their plans of development is to turn them into 'Bonded States' under the Centre and incite the divisive and separatist forces to cause rampage on the unity and integrity of the country. No wonder that the demand has been echoed from a number of states and has been rightly reflected in the Srinagar conference.

Such determined united struggle has to be carried forward in all other parts of the country, and the working class has to stand as the guarantee to lead it. The CITU unions have to work wholeheartedly and lend their full strength for the struggle.

## AITUC Betrays BEL Workers

**A**S a result of the betrayal of the interests of the Bharat Electronics Workers by the AITUC leadership the management of BEL could impose an unfavourable agreement on the 20,000 employees working in Bangalore, Ghaziabad and Pune. Despite opposition of CITU, BMS and independent unions, the AITUC leadership went ahead with signing of the agreement on 16 October 1983.

Though the agreement provided parity with BHEL at the minimum wage level the skilled and highly skilled workers were kept much below the BHEL level. The new fitment formula was disadvantageous to the workers. Several other concessions available to BHEL workers were denied to the workers of BEL as a result of this agreement. What is surprising that the managements' proposals which were rejected by the AITUC alongwith other central trade unions during wage negotiations, were accepted by the AITUC in a secret deal with the management.

While the talks in Joint Negotiating Committee were in progress, the AITUC leadership was involved in separate discussions with the management and an understanding was evolved behind the back of other constituents of the JNC.

As a result of the understanding the management resorted to convening meeting without prior consultations with other constituents. For instance, when a meeting was fixed on 5 October, Ghaziabad union was given only 24 hours notice. M.K. Pandhe who was representing Ghaziabad unit could not attend the meeting due to the short notice. The meeting of 14 October was also fixed in an arbitrary manner and the intimation was given to members on 13 October. These tactics were adopted purposefully to make it impossible for the CITU representative to participate in the meeting. The unfair dealings of the management would not have succeeded without the connivance of the AITUC leadership.

M.S. Krishnan the AITUC representative who tried to explain the agreement to the Ghaziabad workers was hooted down by the entire workers at the gate meeting and had to leave the place without making a speech. According to reports, strong resentment prevailed among the BEL workers at Bangalore itself as a result of which the management shifted the venue of the meeting from Bangalore to Delhi.

The Ghaziabad and Pune unions did not sign the agreement which became an agreement with the Bangalore based unions only. Yet the management unilaterally decided to dissolve the Joint Negotiating Committee.

In a general body meeting of the Bharat Electronics Employees Union (CITU), Ghaziabad held on 23rd October, the workers strongly protested against the shady deal and authorised the union leadership to sign the agreement under protest. An identical stand was taken by BMS union in Ghaziabad. In Pune also the union had condemned the underhand dealings between the BEL management and the AITUC union.

# AROUND THE STATES

## ORISSA

### R.S.S. Mafias Murder CITU Leader's Son

The Rourkela Steel Plant (SAIL) management-Contractors-R.S.S. Mafia combine demonstrated its vengeance against the growing influence of CITU in a most barbarous manner when it murdered the six year old son, Sanjay Rout of Ananta Rout, the State Committee member of Orissa State CITU and District Committee member of CPI(M) on September 24.

These RSS mafias were being actively organised by the contractors in connivance with the management of RSP since 1977 to contain the development of CITU in the mining belt. They fired their first salvo against CITU in 1977 itself when CITU opposed the retrenchment of 700 Gorakhpuri and 1500 tribal labourers in the Kalta Iron Mines. Since then 11 attempts were made on the life of the CITU leaders, particularly on Ananta Rout, Amiya Das and Rabi Nayak. Despite these attacks the strength of CITU went on increasing and thousands of mine workers joined the newly formed Bonai Khadan Mazdoor Union (CITU). This dastardly murder was committed after the CITU organised a successful month long strike by 600 workers in the Patmunda Manganese Mines, owned by one Satish Agarwal, having links with the R.S.S. elements. Narahari Ray, an R.S.S. and BMS leader alongwith 10-12 other saffron coloured gangsters entered the house of Ananta Rout in his absence at 8 PM on that night from a forest track behind and hacked the child to death with Bhujali and also severely injured Ananta Rout's wife and sister-in-law who are now in the Intensive Care Unit of the Ispat General Hospital, struggling with life and death.

The entire mining area starting from Barsua Vally to Koira, Tensa, Kalta and Roxy was surcharged with anger and thousands of workers, women, peasants and democratic people came out on the following morning to hold processions and meetings to condemn the dastardly murder. There was total stoppage of work on 26th and thousands of workers alongwith 40 to 50 truck loads of women, peasants and contractor workers started the huge funeral procession with the banner of United Mines Mazdoor Union (CITU) denouncing the RSS-management barbarism. Addressing the masses in the public meeting held at Tensa, Ananta Rout said, "the dastardly murder of my son cannot stop my trade union activities under CITU to organise the working class against repression and exploitation". He took the vow to further dedicate for the working class movement till the rest of his life. Another procession

of two thousand contract workers was taken out by the Steel Employees' Union (CITU) of RSP and submitted a memorandum to the Collector, Sundergarh demanding immediate arrest of the criminals and compensation to the family. Organised by the CITU State Committee massive marches and meetings continued till October 2 and Protest Day was observed throughout the State on October 7. Ajeya Rout, the State General Secretary, Laxmidhar Biswal, the Vice-President and Lambodar Naik, the Secretary visited the place and condemned the murder in a statement. After continuous mass pressure, the authorities arrested only seven of the fourteen persons named. B.T. Ranadive, President, CITU condemned the murder in a statement on October 1 and directed all the State Committees and affiliated unions to send telegrams to the Orissa Chief Minister demanding arrest of all the criminals.

### Transport Workers Form Federation

A State Level Federation of Transport Workers was formed in a convention of private transport workers of the State held at Cuttack on October 10. The federation was named as All Orissa Transport Workers' Federation. The convention was inaugurated by M.A. Sayeed. Delegates from the transport unions attended from Rourkela, Baripada, Keonjhar, Sambalpur, Balasore, Bhadrak, Bhubaneswar, Berhampur, Cuttack Badambari and Cuttack OMP Square. The convention adopted resolutions on security of service and life, repression on workers by the employers and the State Government, on united struggle of the workers etc. A public meeting was held after the convention which was addressed among others by M.A. Sayeed, J. Pati, Harihar Dash, Santosh Mahapatra, Radharaman Sarangi, etc. Nirankar Jena and Janardan Pati were respectively elected as President and General Secretary of the Federation.

### Relay Fast By Guards

At the call of the All India Guards' Council, the Guards' Council of Khurda Road observed hunger strike on twelve hour basis in batches from October 3 to 6 before the office of the Divisional Railway Manager. Large number of other sections of the railway workers demonstrated at the site in support of the hunger strikers.

## BIHAR

### Massive Kisan Rally

Thirtyfive thousand peasants and agricultural workers with a large number of women joined the massive rally at Patna on September 23 jointly organised by the State Kisan Sabha, the Agricultural Labourers' Union and the Cane Growers' Association in pursuance of their 18-point demands. The huge march to the Chief Minister was led by E.M.S. Namboodiripad, General Secretary, CPI(M) alongwith

Santimoy Ghosh, General Secretary of All India Kisan Sabha, Krishnakant Singh, President and Subodh Ray, General Secretary of Bihar State Kisan Sabha, Sarangdhar Paswan, Secretary, Bihar State Agricultural Labourers' Union, Ramashray Singh and Yogendra Narain Singh, President and Secretary of the Cane Growers' Association. The militant demonstrators demanded relief to the flood and drought affected people, condemning the increasing police atrocities on various sections of the toiling people.

A seven-member delegation led by Santimoy Ghosh met the Chief Minister and demanded to declare the entire state as famine affected due to the floods and drought. He also narrated concrete instances of police atrocities on the women and other weaker sections of the society with the collusion of landlords and regarding the eviction of the share croppers.

Addressing the huge rally at Gandhi Maidan E.M.S. made a scathing criticism of the Bihar Government for its criminal apathy towards the famine stricken people of the State. He said, it was because of the mass agitations, the Congress(I) was forced to replace the corrupt Chief Minister, Jagannath Mishra. But under the short tenure of the present Chief Minister, there has been already eight police firings killing peasants, workers and students. He urged for the need to wage mass struggles to reverse the anti-people economic policies of the Government. He appealed for waging struggle for peace against the war mongering policy of the US imperialists and emphasised that the struggle for peace is inextricably linked with the struggle for social emancipation.

Santimoy Ghosh criticised the Government for denying the remunerative prices to the peasants, but giving subsidies to the monopoly houses. He called upon the masses to rise up in action against the Government's policy to make the peasants victims of the capitalist market mechanism both in buying their requirements and selling their produce.

The 18-point demands included nationalisation of wholesale trade of foodgrains, implementation of land reforms, payment of dues to the cane growers, etc.

The State CITU and the Coordination Committee of Unions and Association distributed four thousand food packets to the demonstrators.

## **RAJASTHAN**

### **Ajmer District Convention of Unions**

The first District Convention of trade unions under the banner of the State Campaign Committee was held at Ajmer on October 2. About one thousand delegates of the CITU, AITUC, HMS and BMS unions and other trade unions from the various

industrial spots of the district participated in the convention. The convention was attended by a sizeable section of women workers also. Marching from the railway station with flags and banners the workers joined the convention held at the Divisional Railway Recreation Hall.

A presidium consisting of one representative of the Central Trade Unions conducted the proceedings of the convention. Addressing the convention, P.K. Ganguly, Secretary-CITU elaborated the resolution of the Second National Convention of August 21 and focussed at the growing incidence of the closures, lockouts and retrenchments. He urged upon the workers to wage united struggles and evolve new forms of struggle to fight this new offensive of the employers. From the State CITU, Prem Krishan Sharma, the General Secretary addressed the convention. The resolution calling upon the workers to wage united struggles against the anti-labour and economic policies of the Government was unanimously adopted.

### **Strike Against Lockouts Retrenchments**

Organised by the State CITU, the workers of the Jaipur industrial units, comprising of big and small factories went on one day's complete strike on October 11, protesting against the arbitrary lockouts and retrenchments resorted to by the employers.

Collusion of the Rajasthan Government with the employers has provided them the golden opportunity to subject the working class to repression and retrenchments to boost up their profits. Even the courts have joined this repressive machinery against the workers and asking them to furnish bails of Rs. 10,000 each for the cooked up cases. Encouraged by this policy, more than two-thirds of the workforce of R.T.S. factory have been retrenched. Even the Government undertaking, the Jaipur Metals have retrenched over 400 workers. The Jaipur Spinning has locked out the unit since the last 20 months, affecting 2600 workers.

Having struck work, thousands of workers joined the march of the unemployed workers to the Chief Minister covering a distance of about 15 km. and submitted a memorandum to him.

*Mass Rally:* To carry forward the struggle along with the demands of the peasants and agricultural workers, the State Committees of CPI(M) and CITU have decided to hold a mass central rally at Jaipur and demonstration before the Secretariat on November 14. The rally will be joined by all sections of the workers, peasants, agricultural workers, women, students and youth and other mass organisations from all parts of the State.

## **MADHYA PRADESH**

### **Struggle by HSCL Workers**

The HSCL workers working under the contractor, Mahendra Singh fought for wage rise under the

leadership of CITU and ultimately compelled the contractor to accede to the demands. The struggle was successful despite, the disruptive activities by one S.S. Bhattacharjee who was expelled by the CITU General Council. Similar successful struggles have been waged by the workers against other contractors also.

At the call of the Steel Workers' Federation of India, the Hindustan Steel Employees' Union organised a 12 hour dharna on September 20 at Equipment Chowk in Bhilai demanding annual bonus, promotion facilities and against price rise and unemployment. In the evening a mass meeting was held which was addressed among others by R.S. Thakur, Vakil Bharti, Gajendra Jha and K.P. Panikkar.

### **Karl Marx Death Centenary**

The Bengal Immunity Workers' Union, Jabalpur Unit held a Convention observing the Karl Marx Death Centenary at Jabalpur on October 8 and 9. The convention was inaugurated by P.K. Ray, the CITU leader who explained the teachings of Karl Marx and urged upon the workers to assimilate the teachings and implement the same appropriately in their day to day struggle with the objective of changing the social system. The convention was attended by a large number of workers from various other trade unions.

Earlier, the union held its Annual Conference also which elected P.R. De and R.C. Maurya as the President and General Secretary respectively.

## **UTTAR PRADESH**

### **State Convention on October 30**

The State Campaign Committee in its meeting held at Lucknow on September 27 alongwith different mass organisations decided to hold the State Convention at Lucknow on October 30. It was estimated that about 3000 delegates from the various trade unions of workers and employees would attend the convention. The meeting was attended among others by the representatives of CITU, AITUC, BMS, UTUC, HMS, Bank Workers' Federation, NFPTI, U.P.M.S.R.A., Railway Employees' Confederation, Roadway Workers Joint Council, AIDIF, etc. The meeting discussed each aspect of the resolution of the Second National Convention of August 21 and decided to mobilise the workers for implementation of the decisions. Particular stress was given on the growing closures, lock-outs and retrenchments by which the State was particularly affected and decided to launch united movements to meet the offensives. The meeting also demanded take over of the J.K. Rayon, Kanpur by the Government.

### **Workers Compel Lifting of Lockout**

Organised under CITU, the workers of Raman Silk Industry, Shivpurwa went on an indefinite dharna within the premises of the factory, which the management had suddenly locked out on Sep-

tember 13. Compelled by the pressure of agitation the Labour Department was compelled to call a tripartite meeting and the lockout had to be lifted from September 24.

## **HARYANA**

### **Mass Rally Against Retrenchments**

A mass rally of thousands of workers was held on October 2 at Hissar against the retrenchments resorted to by the management of Hissar Textile Mills. Addressing the rally, E. Balanandan, M.P., Treasurer of CITU denounced the State Government for colluding with the management and called upon the workers to intensify their united struggles and force the Government to nationalise the factory. The District CITU later submitted a memorandum to the Labour Minister demanding prosecution of the management for violating the earlier settlements and demanding nationalisation of the mill.

In continuation of the struggle workers from Gopichand Textile Mills, Sirsa, Hissar Textile Mills, Haryana Concast and Hansi Spinning Mills launched a dharna before the Deputy Commissioner's Office at Hissar from October 11. The Hissar Textile Mills management have been pursuing a policy of continuous repression on the workers and have already retrenched about 2000 workers. The functions of the mill have dwindled to only 40 per cent production of the installed capacity. The State Government of Rajasthan is openly siding with the management.

### **Hunger Strike by Sweepers**

The Sweepers of the Haryana Agricultural University have launched a continuous hunger strike at the campus of the university demanding reinstatement of five victimised employees and settlement of other long pending demands. The Hissar District Committee of CITU in a statement on September 29, has demanded immediate reinstatement of the employees and settlement of the other demands raised by the Sweepers' Association. It urged upon the Labour Department to intervene in the dispute for settlement and appealed to all unions to extend their full support to the sweepers' struggle.

## **ASSAM**

### **The Anti-Labour Bill**

In the name of ensuring employment, reopening of closed units and running the sick units, the Industry Minister of Assam has introduced a bill in the Assembly, named, The Assam Industrial Relief Undertaking (Special Provisions) Bill, 1983, which seeks to suspend all labour welfare laws, Standing Order Act, Industrial Disputes Act, Payment of Wages Act, Minimum Wages Act, Bonus and Gratuity Acts, Shops and Establishment Act, alongwith all agreements and awards of courts and tribunals for a period of five years. The Assam State Committee of CITU is mobilising the unions for a militant struggle against the measure.

# TAMILNADU

## Struggle of Electricity Workers

Industrial relations in the Tamilnadu Electricity Board have been deteriorating due to the unilateral decisions of the management by malafide transfers, victimisations and attack on trade union rights. A Co-ordination Committee of eight trade unions has been formed to conduct united struggles. The demands of the Committee include withdrawal of the arbitrary orders of malafide transfers and victimisations, 16.66 per cent bonus to all employees without ceiling and filling up the 25,000 vacancies. The Committee has decided to launch a joint programme of rallies, demonstrations and meetings in more than one hundred centres from October 12, which will be addressed by the leaders of the various unions.

In the meanwhile, led by CITU, the central organisation of Tamilnadu Electricity Workers has already started action programmes all over the State. Groups of activists on cycles are going around in the villages also to mobilise the electricity workers as well as the consumers on the common issues affecting them, including price-rise, unemployment, atrocities on women, etc.

## Transport Workers' Strike

The unions led by CITU, LPF(DMK) and AITUC served strike notice to all state owned transport corporations against the attempts of the managements to thrust the unjustified agreement arrived at with the ruling party's union on all workers and observed the strike on September 30. On October 1 they held massive joint demonstrations in all the depots in the state wearing black badges. At Madras, a joint rally marched to the Chief Minister and demanded his intervention in settling the dispute. Various other trade unions joined the rally demonstrating their solidarity with the transport workers.

## Handloom Workers' Strike

More than 13,000 workers of the handloom industry in and around Madras went on one day's strike on September 21, demanding implementation of minimum wages as declared by the State Government. Prior to the strike, hunger strikes were staged from September 19. Unions belonging to CITU, AITUC, INTUC and also AIDMK joined the strike. Later, thousands of workers, including hundreds of women marched to the Deputy Labour Commissioner's Office and submitted a memorandum.

In the powerloom factories in and around Erode, several thousand workers have been rendered jobless as owners declared lockout from September 10, refusing to implement the minimum wage. Led by CITU, demonstrations and mass rallies have been launched.

## Beedi Workers' Conference

The 4th Conference of the Tamilnadu Beedi Workers' Federation held at Vellore on September 24 and 25 has given a call to observe November 7 as the Demands Day in pursuance of their charter of

demands. The conference was inaugurated by V.P. Chintan of CITU. Representatives of transport, electricity, P&T unions and Kisan Sabha greeted the conference. 81 delegates representing 15 unions in the state attended the conference. In his General Secretary's report, V. Kannan detailed the strike struggles launched by the Beedi workers since the last conference in 1975 and the benefits achieved therefrom. He called upon for further carrying forward the struggles for the settlement of their other demands. The conference elected K. Vaithianathan and V. Kannan as the President and General Secretary respectively. After the conference a big procession was taken out which culminated in a public meeting.

## G.I.C. Federal Body

A federal body, viz General Insurance Employees' Association, South Zone was formed by the G.I.C. Association of Tamilnadu, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Karnataka in a convention held at Madras on October 7 and 8. It was decided to affiliate the organisation with AIIEA. The convention which was attended by 150 delegates was inaugurated N.M. Sundaram, Joint Secretary, AIIEA. The convention adopted resolutions demanding settlement of the charter of demands and restoration of collective bargaining rights. The conference was greeted by Roop Chand Pal, M.P., CPI(M). R. Santhanam and J. Gurumurthy were elected President and General Secretary respectively.

## State CITU Conference

In the background of the above struggles, the state CITU has decided to hold its fourth conference at Coimbatore from December 28 to 31. A Reception Committee has been formed with M. Nanjappan as President and U.K. Vellingiri as the Secretary and 48 other members. It was decided to raise a fund of Rs. 1 lakhs through donations. A massive procession and public meeting will be held on the last day.

## JAMMU & KASHMIR

### Karl Marx Death Centenary

The Centre of Social Studies organised the Karl Marx Death Centenary at Srinagar on October 8. The meeting was addressed by Jyoti Basu, Chief Minister of West Bengal and Vice-President of CITU. Among others who addressed, were Mohd Yousuf Taregami, Secretary, J & K State CPI(M), Abdul Kabir Wani, member, State CPI(M), Mir Qasim, etc. The speakers emphasised on the revolutionary teachings of Karl Marx for the emancipation of the working class.

### Agricultural University Employees' Struggle

Organised by the Agricultural University Employees' Co-ordination Committee, hundreds of employees from all over the valley rallied before the Vice-Chancellor's office at Srinagar on September 29 against the newly framed service rules prepared by

(Contd. on page 20)

## Government Eludes Ratification

THE trade union representatives strongly criticised the dilatory tactics adopted by the Government of India for not implementing the decisions taken by the Committee on Conventions, in its twentieth session held at New Delhi on 24 October 1983.

M.K. Pandhe, Secretary-CITU who attended the meeting on behalf of the CITU attacked the Government for not taking steps to implement the decision to reduce the maximum limit of weight to be carried physically from 100 kg to 50 kg as per ILO Convention No. 127. This issue is being discussed in the Committee since 1976 and every time the Department of Food is raising frivolous arguments to delay implementation of the decision. The Chairman, A.G. Deshmukh, Secretary, Labour Ministry, in the end said that the 50 kg gunny bags should be introduced from the kharif session of 1984 in a phased manner.

The Committee appointed a tripartite sub-committee of 2 representatives from each side to select Conventions not ratified by India for consideration of the Committee and to suggest the Conventions for review by the committee. From the workers' side M.K. Pandhe (CITU) and P.S. Khera of INTUC were included on the committee.

Regarding the question of protection of workers' representatives from victimisation, arising out of review of Convention No. 135 concerning workers' representatives in the undertakings the T.U. representatives pointed out that the present legal framework is heavily loaded against the workers. They also opposed the recommendation of Sanat Mehta Committee and demanded that the question should be considered at length. The representatives of the INTUC and the management, however, supported these recommendations.

On the question of review of Convention No. 129 concerning Labour Inspection the T.U. representatives criticised the inadequate machinery of the Union Labour Ministry to supervise the implementation of labour laws in the country. M.K. Pandhe pointed out that the employers non-chalantly violate all the laws due to the lack of proper inspection and penal action.

Regarding the conditions of Child Labour the Government of India had not implemented the resolution it had moved in the ILO conference in 1980 and the T.U. representatives criticised the role of Government of India in the matter. Therefore immediately attention has to be paid to improve the conditions of child labour and the Government has not taken any tangible step in this regard.

There was some discussion on the ILO Convention on Migrant Labour. About 7 lakh Indian workers are working abroad who require protection from Government of India. The Ministry observed that "if the Government takes step in the matter, the competitiveness of Indian labour would go down and other countries would not employ the Indian labour." The T.U.s. however demanded that the agreement signed with the individual employees

must be honoured by the managements abroad.

The Convention regarding protection to workers from wrong termination was also discussed at length. The T.U. demanded that this question should be further considered since present legal framework is totally inadequate to protect the workers from vindictive action by the management. The Chief Labour Commissioner tried to point out that there was already safeguard against wrongful termination, but the trade union representatives rejected the contention.

The Maternity Protection Convention was revised by the ILO in 1952 but the Government has not yet implemented it. The T.U. representatives demanded that the maternity benefits should be improved and more and more women workers should be covered under the scheme. They asked for increased leave facilities and additional medical benefits.

The next meeting of the Committee on Conventions will be held in the month of March next year. Before the meeting the sub-committee would meet and consider some of the Conventions for consideration. It was agreed that a copy of the complaint sent to the ILO by TUs should be circulated to the members of the Committee so that questions may be discussed in the committee if agreed to by all.

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the university, which go against the safeguard of the employees. After the rally a memorandum was submitted to the Vice-Chancellor. The rally was addressed among others by G.M. Dulloo, President and B.L. Mahaldar, the General Secretary of the Coordination Committee.

## KARNATAKA

### Demands Day by Plantation Workers

The Plantation Workers observed October 5 as the Demands Day in the State at the call of the All India Plantation Workers' Federation. A huge procession was taken out from the office of the Karnataka Provincial Plantation Workers' Union at Chikmagalur to the Deputy Commissioner. The demonstrators carried CITU flags and placards containing their demands. The demands raised included Rs. 500 as minimum wage, take over and nationalisation of the closed and big plantations, implementation of the welfare provisions of the Plantation Act relating to housing, water supply, medical facilities etc. The workers also condemned the anti-labour policies of the Government and raised demands against price rise, unemployment, etc. A deputation led by C. Nanjundappa, General Secretary of the State CITU met the Deputy Commissioner and submitted memoranda addressed to the Union Labour Minister and the State Labour Minister. The procession then returned to the union office where a public meeting was held.

# A TRADITION WOVEN IN GOLD

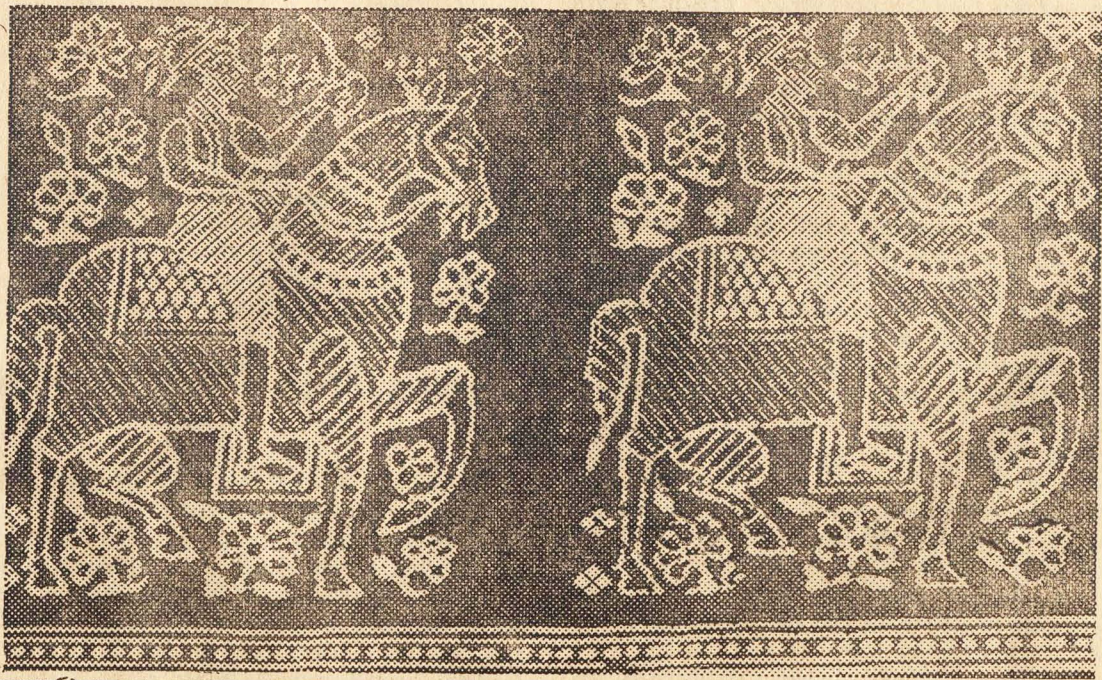


Time was when even an Egyptian pharaoh or a Roman empress would beam with special pride over the muslin piece in the royal wardrobe. The handloom saris of Bengal were out on world conquest even in that hoary past. Today their very names spell class. The world over, as always.

Not only saris, in their endless varieties in silk and cotton, the magic touch of our master craftsmen is unmistakable in the rich treasure of our handicrafts too. Be it a decorative or a utility piece, a quaint doll or an exotic floor mattress, each is an admirable work of art, through which speaks a golden tradition. Let them beautify your homes and also be a mute testimony to your refined taste.

For these dreams in fabric and artefacts, come sharp, come today to TANTUJA or TANTUSHRI MANJUSHA and GRAMIN Shilpa B ipanis—

GOVT OF WEST BENGAL



## Meeting of SWFI

A meeting of the Working Committee of the Steel Workers' Federation of India held October 9 at Calcutta strongly condemned the gruesome murder of the 6 year old son of Ananta Rout, member of the Orissa State Committee of CITU and the dastardly attack on his wife and sister-in-law at Kalta mine by the RSS gangsters on September 27 last. The gangsters wanted to kill Ananta Rout but finding him not in the house they killed his son and attacked the women in the residence. The meeting demanded strong action against the culprits and adequate protection to T.U. leaders and their family members.

The meeting welcomed the delegation of the Federation just returned from China. Dilip Muzumdar reported on the impressions of the visit and K.K. Tripathi and P.K. Mukherjee supplemented the report. The members of the delegation stated how remarkable advance had been made in China in socialist reconstruction despite setbacks during the period of cultural revolution. They narrated how they were warmly received everywhere. The Working Committee thanked the All China Federation of Trade Unions for the warm hospitality shown to the delegation.

Jibon Roy submitted a report on the activities of the Federation since the last meeting of the Working Committee. During this period, Steel Contractor Workers' struggles including strike actions were developed and in Durgapur and Burnpur for the first time the DA of contract workers was linked to price index. In Rourkela and Bhilai the State Governments resorted to repressive measures to crush the workers' struggles. In Rourkela the CITU activists had to face gangster attacks.

The Working Committee also noted the non-implementation of some of the clauses of the national agreements signed recently at the bipartite level. The managements have also unilaterally interpreted some of the clauses of the agreement to the detriment of the steel workers. The meeting decided to launch a campaign all over India against the non-implementation of the agreement by the managements in steel industry.

The Working Committee decided to collect details of the prevalent crisis in the steel industry and prepare a memorandum to be submitted to the Steel Minister. The meeting decided to campaign among the steel workers on the basis of the memorandum.

The Working Committee called upon all the unions to campaign on the question of retrenchment, closures, lock-out, lay-off and denotification and popularise among the steel workers the All India Convention being organised by the National Cam-

paign Committee on these issues on January 22, 1984.

M.K. Pandhe while speaking in the meeting explained the nature of the crisis developing in steel industry in major capitalist countries and how the Indian Steel industry is being affected by the crisis. He pointed out the health hazards faced by the steel workers and emphasised the need for collecting details on the question so that in the next bipartite meeting specially being convened to discuss this issue the grievances of the workers could be effectively put across and concrete measures demanded to protect the health of the workers.

On behalf of the SWFI it was decided to send a deputation led by Dilip Muzumdar to visit Kalta mine and meet the family members of Ananta Rout and Kalta workers. The delegation will also meet the Chief Minister of Orissa to demand an end to such gangster attacks on the CITU activists.

## CITU Demands Nationalisation of Bombay Textile Mills

B.T. Ranadive, President, and Samar Mukherjee, M.P., General Secretary of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions, have issued the following Statement on October 20:

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions, welcomes the take over of 13 textile-mills of Bombay pending nationalisation by the Govt. of India as this would help in reinstatement of about 36000 workers who were out of employment due to stubborn refusal of the mill owners to open the same.

The CITU demands that all the sixty Textile Mills of Bombay should be nationalised in public interest as the Bombay Textile tycoons have proved to be thoroughly anti-social in their outlook and inefficient in managing these mills. It also demands early settlement of the genuine demands of the Textile workers, the badli workers in particular.

## Bombay BHEL Workers' Donation to CITU

The workers employed in Motor Repair Shop at Andheri, Bombay collected Rs. 2500 for CITU fighting fund. All the workers working in the plant contributed to the fund. At a meeting held inside the workshop, the draft of the amount was handed over to M.K. Pandhe, Secretary-CITU. In the meeting the workers appreciated the role played by the CITU during recent bipartite wage negotiations in BHEL. M.K. Pandhe while thanking the workers for the contribution appealed to them to strengthen the organisation so that the struggles for the pending demands can be carried forward successfully.

## News from China

### Workers' Democratic Rights Guaranteed

Workers' Congresses have been established in about 2,00,000 enterprises and institutions to guarantee democratic rights to the workers, according to the statistics provided by the All China Federation of Trade Unions. Factory Directors and Managers have been democratically elected in over 15,000 enterprises, Workshop Directors elected in 23,000 units and group and section leaders in more than 52,000 units. These Congresses have exercised their rights on behalf of the workers to manage enterprises, to take part in decision making and distribution of houses and bonus to supervise the leadership.

### Trade Union Organisations

Trade Union organisations have been set up in the industrial establishments in all provinces, cities and counties in China in the past five years since the Ninth National Trade Union Congress in 1978. There are 433,000 trade union organisations at the grass root level now, 32 per cent more than in 1979. They have a membership of 73.3 millions in 5,479,000 groups, 256,000 cadres and 9.3 million activists. In addition to the cadre school of All China Federation of Trade Unions, there are 26 trade union cadre schools at the provincial level and 23 at the city level. Short term training classes have been run by more than 40,000 trade union organisations. From 1979 to 1982, the cadre schools have trained 76,900 cadres, raising their theoretical, managerial and professional standards.

### Tenth Trade Union Congress

The 10th National Trade Union Congress of China, opened in Beijing on October 10, was attended by 1,999 delegates, according to ACFTU. The delegates comprised of trade union workers, advanced workers, those working in science, technology, culture, education, public health, sports, from minority nationalities, of Taiwan origin, from Hong-kong and Macao and of returned overseas Chinese. Women accounted for 29.4 per cent of the delegates. The average age of the delegates was 41.1. Apart from this, 328 specially invited delegates attended the Congress, which included veteran trade union workers, retired workers, self-employed workers and workers' family members.

### Employment Rises

Xinhua reports that from 1977 to June, this year, 46.5 million urban people have got jobs in China. An average of 5.3 million people were given jobs in 1977 and 1978 each year. From 1979, this, average went up to 8.3 millions each year. China has a vast population—rich in labour resources. The development of the diverse economic forms with socialist public money as the leading sector solved the problem of unemployment under the guidance of overall state planning, assigning jobs to the jobless by the

labour departments. The Labour Service Companies, over 17,000 in number in various provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities, have played the major role in solving the unemployment problem. The unemployment rate has fallen from 5.5 percent to 2.6 per cent.

### Washington Rally for Jobs, Peace, Freedom

Over 2,50,000 people participated in the "1983 March to Washington" on August 27 to mark the 20th anniversary of the historic civil rights march led by the late Martin Luther King. With "jobs, peace and freedom" as the main slogans, the demonstration, the largest since the anti-Vietnam war rally ten years ago and the first march in 1963, drew all sections of the people — black and white, men and women, old and young. The demonstrators came from more than 300 cities across the country, by "freedom trains", chartered planes, bus, cars, vans, bicycles and on foot. The march started from the Constitution Avenue and culminated at the Lincoln Memorial. The demonstrators carried the portrait of Martin Luther King and thousands of placards reading, "jobs, peace and freedom", "money for jobs-not for war", "no U.S. war in Central America", "peace in Middle East" and "Freeze arms race". They shouted anti-racial discrimination slogans and sang civil rights songs like "We shall overcome". Leaders of civil rights and labour representatives spoke of the great significance of Martin Luther's speech expressed twenty years ago: "I have a dream which required an end to the national policies that have kept the United States a dual society — separate and unequal". They condemned the slow pace at which the blacks were winning public office and exhorted them to take part more vigorously in political struggle along the line chartered by Martin Luther King and march from "slavery to championship". Speaking at the rally, Coretta Scott King, Martin Luther's widow, reaffirmed the people's commitment to peace, justice, brotherhood and equality. She criticised the administration for being "out of touch with all but an elite group of Americans" and for "sowing the seeds for the rich to get richer by making the poor poorer". The speakers urged upon all to meet the situation with determination, since the "problem of unemployment had gripped all the Americans — black and white, across the land from the Atlantic to the Pacific". They also urged for nuclear weapons freeze and reversal of U.S. policies in Central America.

The march was organised by over 700 organisations from civil rights, labour unions, women's groups, peace movement, students and others.

(News from Xinhua, Washington).

# I.L.O. Metal Trades Committee

**T**HE 11th Session of the I.L.O. Metal Trades Committee was held at Geneva from September 20 to 29. 235 delegates and 29 observers attended the session, including 37 member states and several inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations. Chittabrata Majumdar represented CITU along with an INTUC delegate as the workers' group from India.

There were two technical agenda before the Committee: Collective Bargaining as a means of improving the working and living conditions of workers in the metal trades; and, training & re-training of men and women workers with special reference to technological changes. Two tripartite sub-committees consisting of the workers, employers and government representatives were formed to prepare the reports, conclusions and the resolutions for the plenary session of the committee. The main stress in the conclusion on collective bargaining was to ensure and protect this right for the workers in metal trades in keeping with the provisions of ILO conventions and Recommendations on Freedom of Association and Trade Union Rights. The parties to collective bargaining should be free to determine the content of their agreements and the working and living conditions. The law should provide minimum social guarantees to every worker irrespective of the enterprise, industry or branch of activity in which he is employed and in particular, should protect all those workers not covered by collective agreements. The Governments should not interfere in the process of collective bargaining and their role should be to provide minimum conditions of work and appropriate framework so that collective bargaining between the two sides may proceed without difficulties.

The conclusion on training and retraining stressed on the need of initial and further training of workers, women and the technical staff in employment and

## Samar Mukherjee to Sofia

At the invitation of Comrade Peter Dyulgerov, Chairman of the Central Committee of Bulgarian Trade Unions, Com. Samar Mukherjee, M.P. General Secretary-CITU has left New Delhi on October 22, to attend an international meeting — "Dialogue on Peace and Trade Unions" to be held in Sofia from October 25 to 27, 1983. The main aim of the meeting is to work for safeguarding and consolidating peace in the world, against arms race, imperialism and neo-colonialism.

the modifications required in the system. It was categorically stated that the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes of vocational guidance and training should be done in co-operation with the workers' organisations. Several resolutions from the workers' group were also adopted, viz; concerning freedom of association and tripartite consultation, on employment and social policies; on occupational safety and health; on multinational enterprises etc. All the reports, conclusions and resolutions were adopted unanimously in the plenary session.

## International Symposium on Environment and Industrial Safety

**T**HE National Safety Council has decided to sponsor the International Symposium on Environment and Industrial Safety in New Delhi on 13-15 November, 1984. Over 300 delegates including 50 from abroad are likely to participate in the Symposium. Fifteen experts from different countries including those from the WFTU and ICFTU will submit papers on various aspects of safety in the symposium.

The objective of the Symposium as finalised by the Governing Body of the National Safety Council are as follows:

(a) to create awareness about the hazards of environmental pollution and accidents among the industries, authorities concerned and the public at large;

(b) to discuss and exchange ideas, experiences, information and research findings regarding the control measures for common types of industrial pollutants and modern techniques and practices of accident prevention;

(c) to gain from the experiences of industrially advanced and also some developing countries regarding the control measures and to formulate measures suitable for application under local conditions.

The National Safety Council has decided to invite representatives from USSR, China, Czechoslovakia, GDR and other Socialist Countries.

The Council has formed an Organising Committee to make preparation for the Symposium. M.K. Pandhe, Secretary, CITU has been included as a member of the Committee,

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## Conference of Bihar State Gramsevika Sangh

**T**HE Third Conference of Bihar State Gramsevika Sangh was held at Patna on September 26 under the chairmanship of Savita Varma. More than 100 gramsevika delegates from 18 districts of Bihar attended. Vimal Ranadive, Secretary, AICCWW inaugurated the conference. Yogeshwar Gope, the Chairman of the Bihar State Non-Gazetted Employees' Federation was the Chief Guest.

The Central and State Governments of Congress (I) had created the posts of "Gramsevikas" with the intension of raising the cultural level of the women of villages. But it was too obvious that neither they could raise the educational and cultural level of the women, nor the Gramsevikas got any promotion, grades, scales, pension, etc even after serving the Government for more than 20-25 years.

The General Secretary, Rampukari Devi explained while submitting her report "We gramsevikas are supposed to raise the educational and cultural level of women. But while trying to brighten their future without any means in our hands, our own future becomes dark. We have no promotion, no scales, no confirmation of services even after working for 20-25 years! The third pay commission decreased our salaries, and the fourth one did nothing to improve our life! We are now where we were at the time of our appointment".

The Gramsevikas were given the jobs as maid-servants under the Health Department which was resented by all and they launched struggles which ultimately won their demands and they were put back in the field. Another joint action was launched in 1977—a Satyagraha for 52 days in front of the Assembly and they got their demand for 2 permanent posts of women in one unit. Other demands were still to be fulfilled. There are about 200 vacancies to be filled up.

Yogeshwar Gope, President of the Association spoke in detail about the problems of Gramsevikas, their struggles; the organisation and the future steps to be taken for their demands. He said the whole Federation as such has to fight for these demands.

The resolution on the demands and action was passed unanimously. Main demands mentioned were: Abolition of discrimination in wages; 20 per cent promotion to higher grades—junior scales, and 10 per cent to higher grades—senior scales; confirmation of services as per rules; insurance; pension; diploma course in training; appointment of 2 gramsevikas in one unit and cent per cent of the post of women supervisors to be filled up by promotion.

The new committee was elected with the follow-

ing members Savitri Varma-Honorary President, Girija Sinha-President, Rampukari Devi-General Secretary, Sunnitra Devi-Treasurer.

Vimala Ranadive in her concluding speech gave a number of examples of working women launching struggles for their demands all over the country under the flag of CITU and on their own. She appealed to unify their forces to fight against the authoritarian rule of the Congress (I).

### Ad Hoc Committee of Working Women

A convention of working women in Bihar was held on September 27 at Patna. About 150 women attended. Aparna Bhattacharya presided over the convention. The highlights of the convention was the large participation of the women workers from the Municipal Corporation who were on strike since August 18. Chandi Prasad, General Secretary of CITU, Bihar State, while addressing the women, explained the purpose of holding the present convention of working women. Women have been entrenched from Jute and Textiles, Mines and Tobacco industries. They are denied the jobs. Minati Poddar, a teacher in a Patna school spoke on the working conditions of the teachers. Jayashri Devi from Khagaria told how the unequal wage in beedi still continues despite the Equal Remuneration Act. Shivani Choudhari of the Telephone Exchange narrated the difficulties in her profession. Sagarika explained the position of a woman in the present feudal society and appealed for a common fight to change it. Kumud Bakshi a student (SFI) and Sangita Suman spoke mainly on the dowry system which is ruining the families. Tatari Devi who was on strike in Corporation said that the strike was going on for 1½ months. People were suffering. But still the authorities refused to accept their demands. She said that the Chief Minister, newly appointed by the Prime Minister had told them that there was no money to give minimum wage. Keka Pal (LIC) said that there was no provision of crèche in LIC, unequal treatment to women continues in the offices. Sudha Bindu (Janawadi Mahila Samiti), Krishnakant (Kisan Srbha), Jogendra Prasad (Distt. Coord. Committee) Sudhir Prasad (SFI) and Yogeshwar Gope, President of the State CITU greeted the convention. A resolution in support of the Corporation Workers' strike was passed.

An Ad-hoc committee of working women, with Minati Poddar as Convenor, was formed, Vimal Ranadive, Secretary, AICCWW guided and summed up the deliberations. She urged upon the working women to unite and fight the policies of the ruling Congress led by Indira Gandhi.

# The Trade Unions (West Bengal Amendment) Bill 1983

*It is now known to all that an amendment Bill passed by the West Bengal Legislative Assembly in 1969 during United Front regime providing Secret Ballot for recognition of Collective Bargaining Agent was refused Presidential Assent for past 13 years and returned in 1982. The Left-front Government in West Bengal has once again brought an amending Bill which has since been passed in September 1983 and sent to the President for his assent. We publish below certain excerpts from this Bill for information of all concerned.*

Krishna Pada Ghosh, Minister of Labour Government of West Bengal (Member CITU Working Committee) introducing the Bill on September 6, said in the statement of objects and Reasons the following:

*The Trade Unions Act, 1926 provides for registration of Trade Unions and in certain respects defines the law relating to such registered Trade Unions. The Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 provides for representation of workmen generally by a member of the executive or other office bearers of a registered Trade Union. For the purpose of collective bargaining, such registered Trade Unions actually represent the workmen.*

*There is no law, applicable to this State, through which employers may recognise specified Trade Unions to the exclusion of others for the purpose of settlement of industrial disputes. In that context, the need to have a legislation providing for the manner in which bargaining agents may be selected and also indicating their rights, has for long been felt and the present Bill has been drafted keeping in view this need.*

In particular, the Bill provides for: (a) mode of determination of bargaining agents both for individual units and for any class of industry in a local area, through secret ballot to be conducted by the Registrar of Trade Unions, (b) conditions for recognition of Trade Unions and rights to be enjoyed by such Trade Unions, (c) classification of bargaining agents as sole bargaining agent, principal bargaining agent and as constituents of the joint bargaining council, (d) expanding scope of appeal against decisions of the Registrar to include cases concerning determination of bargaining agents, (e) specifying penalty to be inflicted on employers for failure or refusal to grant recognition, and (f) protection to lawful trade union activity of recognised Trade Unions.

Recognition of Trade Unions as bargaining agents:  
\*28A. (1) Subject to the provisions of sub-section (2), any registered Trade Union may apply to the Registrar for recognition as a recognised Trade Union for an industrial establishment or a class of industry in a local area: Provided that no such application shall be entertained in respect of an industrial establishment or a class of industry in a local area, if there is already a Trade Union recognised under this Act in respect of such industrial establishment or class of industry, during the period of two years immediately following the date of

recognition of that Trade Union by the employer concerned: Provided further that such application may be filed with the Registrar within the period of two years referred to in the first proviso if the recognition of the Trade Union concerned is cancelled under this Act during that period: Provided also that in a case where recognition has been granted under the provisions of sub-section (3) of section 28B, subsequent application by any other union may be entertained by the Registrar or the expiry of a period of six months immediately following the date of recognition of a Trade Union by the employer concerned, subject to the condition that the Registrar shall not entertain any such application unless accompanied by a document containing the signatures of such minimum number of eligible workmen as is necessary for support for recognition as constituent of the joint bargaining council: provided also that the existence of a recognised Trade Union in respect of a class of industry in a local area shall not be a bar in submitting an application for recognition in a single industrial establishment belonging to that class of industry in a local area.

\* (3) If there is only one applicant Trade Union in respect of an industrial establishment or a class of industry in a local area, the Registrar shall enter the name of that Trade Union in the prescribed register to be maintained by him for this purpose and grant a certificate to the applicant Trade Union directing recognition of that Trade Union by the employer concerned and upon such recognition, the Trade Union shall be the sole bargaining agent in respect of the industrial establishment or the class of industry in the local area.

(4) If there are more than one applicant Trade Unions in respect of an industrial establishment or a class of industry in a local area, the Registrar shall arrange to hold an election by secret ballot in order to ascertain which of the applicant Trade Unions secures the largest number of votes, being more than fifty per cent of the votes of the workmen employed in the industrial establishment or the class of industry in the local area, and after recording the name of the Trade Union securing the largest number of votes as aforesaid in the prescribed register to be maintained by him for the purpose, grant a certificate to that Trade Union directing recognition of that Trade Union by the employer concerned and upon such recognition, the Trade Union shall be the sole bargaining agent in respect of the industrial establishment or the class of industry in the local area.

(5) If none of the applicant Trade Unions participating in the election as aforesaid secures more than fifty per cent of the votes of the workmen, the Registrar shall record the names of such Trade Unions as have secured not less than ten per cent of votes of the workmen employed in any class of industry in the local area or not less than fifteen per cent of votes of the workmen employed in the con-

cerned industrial establishment, in the prescribed register to be maintained by him for the purpose and grant certificates to such Trade Unions directing the employer concerned to recognise such Trade Unions as constituents of the joint bargaining council in respect of the industrial establishment or the class of industry in the local area. And, from amongst such unions, the Trade Union securing the largest number of votes shall be given a certificate directing the employer concerned to recognise the same as the principal bargaining agent in the joint bargaining council in respect of the industrial establishment or the class of industry in the local area, provided the said union has secured more than forty per cent of the votes of the eligible workmen.

(6) The constituents of the joint bargaining council shall have the right to participate in any negotiation, discussion or settlement concerning the workmen employed in the industrial establishment or the class of industry in the local area. Two or more Trade Unions recognised as constituents of the joint bargaining council together having more than fifty per cent of the votes in such election shall be entitled to sign any settlement in a case where there is no principal bargaining agent.

(7) Where there is a principal bargaining agent in a joint bargaining council, no settlement shall be entered into in the concerned industrial establishment or the class of industry in the local area, without the principal bargaining agent as a party.

\* 28D. (1) On receipt of the Registrar's certificate directing recognition of Trade Unions under section 28B, the employer or employers, as the case may be, shall grant recognition to the Trade Unions as the sole bargaining agent or principal bargaining agent or constituent of the joint bargaining council, as the case may be, in relation to the industrial establishment or class of industry in a local area, to which the certificate relates.

(2) A Trade Union recognised under sub-section (1) shall also be recognised as the sole bargaining agent or principal bargaining agent or as a constituent of the joint bargaining council, by every federation, association or organisation of employers pertaining to the same industrial establishment or class of industry in the local area.

\* 28E. (1) A Trade Union being the sole bargaining agent or recognised as a principal bargaining agent or as a constituent of the joint bargaining council shall, in such manner and subject to such conditions as may be prescribed, have the right:

(a) to raise issue and enter into collective agreement with the employer or employers on general questions concerning employment or non-employment or terms of employment and conditions of labour of any workman in respect of the industrial establishment or class of industry in a local area, for which it is recognised: Provided that where, in any local area, in addition to Trade Unions recognised for a class of industry, there are also recognised Trade Unions in individual industrial establishments belonging to that class of industry, the Trade Unions

recognised for a class of industry shall have the right to raise only such issues which concern that class of industry as a whole; (b) to collect membership fees, subscriptions or any other dues payable by members of the Trade Union within the premises of the industrial establishment; (c) to put or to cause to be put up a notice board on the premises of the industrial establishment in respect of which it is recognised and affix or cause to be affixed thereon notices relating to meetings, statements of accounts of its income and expenditure; (d) for the purpose of prevention or settlement of any dispute regarding issues specified in clause (a):— (i) to hold discussions with the workmen who are members of the Trade Union at a suitable place or places within the premises of the industrial establishment with the consent of the employer; and (ii) to meet and discuss with the employer or any person appointed by him for the purpose; and (e) to nominate its representatives on non-statutory bipartite committees like Production Committee, Welfare Committee, House Allotment Committee, that might be set up by any employer in an industrial establishment.

(2) The rights of a Trade Union referred to in sub-section (1) shall be without prejudice to the rights that any unrecognised Trade Union enjoys under the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947.

\* The recognised union should get certain statutory facilities which the Bill provides in following terms:

“Every employer shall give to a member of the executive or other office bearer of a Trade Union recognised as sole bargaining agent or principal bargaining agent or constituent of a joint bargaining council for lawful trade union activities including leave for attending conciliation proceedings”.

\* The Bill also provides for penalty as follows for such employers who refuse to grant recognition:

32A. If any employer fails or refuses to grant recognition to a Trade Union as required under section 28D, he shall be punishable with fine which may extend to one thousand rupees or with imprisonment which may extend to six months or with both.

\* The right of trade unions to secure registration and recognition is further strengthened as the Bill provides for a right of appeal through a new insertion as follows:

(3) For the purpose of an appeal under sub-section (1) an appellate Court shall, so far as may be, follow the same procedure and have the same powers as it follows and has when trying a suit under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, and may direct by whom the whole or any part of the costs of the appeal shall be paid, and such costs shall be recovered as if they had been awarded in a suit under the said Code.

There are other provisions in the chapter dealing with definition so that the present loopholes are done away with. Thus the two approaches — one by the Government of India which tends to take away the right to organise and another by the Left Front Government which widens the trade union right of the workers, are now clearly seen.

## Conference of N.R.M.U. Central Railway

**T**HE Conference of National Railway Mazdoor Union, Central Railway was held at Nasik Road on October 5-8 1983. This is perhaps the strongest Union among those affiliated to AIRF having a membership of over one lakh thirteen thousands. The General Secretary's Report presented at the Conference shows that a part from participating in all the programmes given by AIRF, this Union has conducted long drawn agitations and campaign in support of the 21 point charter of demands and local issues of this railway.

Closely following the last annual Conference held in August, 1982, they held programmes of Dharna before the Divisional Railway Managers at Nagpur, Bombay, Bhopal, Jabalpur, Sholapur, Jhansi, and various depots and sheds. Some of these took the shape of week-long agitations and dharna. Casual labourers were mobilised against retrenchment and for their other demands. The Report states "But for the struggles and various agitations launched by the Union, several urgent problems and serious demands would still have remained unresolved.....the branches can be proud of their activities".

B.T. Ranadive, President, CITU addressed the delegates and workers rally on October 8. He was accorded a rousing welcome by the CITU activists here, who participated in the rally along with the railway men. Explaining the present national and international situation to the workers, he pointed out that the railwaymen could not secure their just demands, because they have not been able to forge unity among themselves. He also pointed out that certain decisions of the leadership of the AIRF have led the railwaymen away from the mainstream of the working class movement of the country which should be remedied. The Conference re-elected S.L. Sethi and P.R. Menon as President and General Secretary of the Union respectively.

### Conference of Engineering Staff Action Committee

The Conference of Engineering Staff Action Committee of Sealdah Division was held in the Naihati Municipal Hall on October 6. Over 300 Engineering staff of the division attended the Conference. Nrisingha Chakrabarty, Secretary, CITU inaugurated the Conference. Jagu Patro presented the report of the activities of the committee for the past two years and also the reasons for which the Conference could not be held earlier.

13 delegates took part in the deliberations on the report. They severely criticised the administration for the repression on the gangmen and other railwaymen. The Conference decided to change the name of the committee as Railway Engineering Staff Association. Jagu Patro was re-elected as General Secretary. Samar Mukherjee, General

Secretary, CITU, addressed the Conference explaining the present national and international situation and urging upon them to work for united struggle of railwaymen.

### Joint Convention of Eastern and South-Eastern Railway NCCR

A Joint Convention of railwaymen was held at Baker Hall, Calcutta on October 23 by all the constituents of National Campaign Committee of Railwaymen, which was addressed by S.K. Dhar, N.S. Bhango and Shri Krishna, Joint Conveners, who explained to the railwaymen the surrender of the basic demands by the recognised federations of the railway workers.

**Samar Mukherjee, M.P., General Secretary, CITU has sent the following Message to the General Secretary, Vietnam Federation of Trade Unions on October 18.**

Dear Comrade,

Thanking you for extending invitation to our organisation for sending a one man delegation to your Fifth National Conference which is going to be held in Hanoi on 16th — 17th November 1983. I regret to inform you our inability to participate in the Conference.

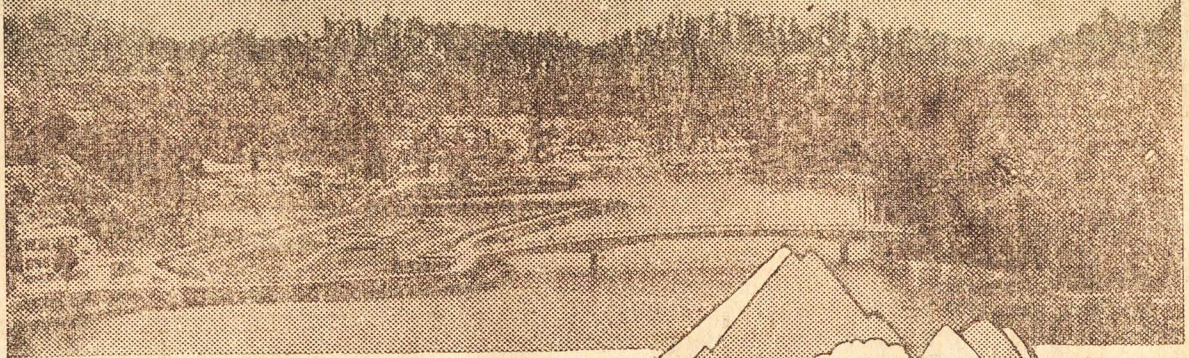
Working class of Vietnam under your leadership has earned appreciation of all democratic people in India for the measures taken to not only strengthen socialist construction in Vietnam but also for rendering help to the people of Kampuchea against the attempt of enslavement by the Pol Pot regime. The success it scored are praiseworthy especially because it has to devote in re-building Vietnam from the ravages of the barbaric war unleashed by the U.S. imperialists in the past.

Today the U.S. imperialists are furiously arming themselves to unleash another war which is likely to threaten humanity with extinction while USSR and Socialism is their target of attack. The working class of India are fighting against this war danger and in this common struggle for peace we are with you as a part of our international duty.

We greet you on this occasion and wish you success.

With warm greetings.

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For further information, please contact:

**TOURIST BUREAU** Nehru Road, Darjeeling; Hill Cart Road, Siliguri; 3/2, Benoy-Badal-Dinesh Bagh (East), Calcutta-700001; West Bengal Information Bureau, A/2, State Emporia, Baba Kharak Singh Marg, New Delhi-110 001; Karim Mansion, 797, Anna Salai, Madras-600 002.

Government of West Bengal

# September 1 Observed Abroad

*(This is the second part on the subject giving reports of the observance abroad.)*

## West Germany

In a most spectacular action, the workers joined by a large number of people from diverse activities including those from church, started a blockade of the US base at Multlangen at 5.45 AM on September 1. 5.45 AM symbolises the time when the first shots of Hitlerian aggression was fired against Poland fortyfour years ago on September 1, 1939, making the beginning of the Second World War. The USA has planned to station the new Pershing II at Mutlangen. The Pershing I has already been stationed there. Every two hours the workers were replaced by another group and the blockade continued for day and night till September 3. Apart from this blockade, 224 rallies and meetings were held in the various towns of FRG.

## Japan

Rallies and meetings were held at various places of the country adopting resolutions demanding an end to the Japanese-American security treaty and respect of the Japanese Constitution restricting military expenditure and armed forces. Resolutions also demanded banning of US nuclear ships on Japanese ports. SOHYO started preparations for a "Month of Struggle Against Nuclear Threat" on September 1.

## Great Britain

Peace rallies were held by the industrial workers at Liverpool and other places. Mass rallies were also held in several towns in Scotland which adopted anti-war resolutions. Members of British T.U.C. General Council and a group of Left trade unions issued a statement appealing to all British trade unions to observe the day.

## USA

A large contingent of women took part in a massive demonstration at Seneca Falls demanding an end to the production of new missiles and renounced the idea of nuclear first strike.

## Italy

Defying fierce police repression against peace movement, protest demonstrations were held in different towns. A huge demonstration was staged at Comiso, Sicily: against the expansion of a military base to house 112 American Cruise missiles. A large number of trade unions, irrespective of their affiliations, took part in the demonstration.

## Austria

The "Trade Unionists for Peace" Movement was set up in Austria to organise People's Action against the arms race and the NATO plans to deploy new

US nuclear missiles in Western Europe. The Movement started preparations for the great peace march to be held at Vienna on October 22.

## Greece

A mass rally of about 15,000 workers and the people was staged at Piraeus. Other rallies were also held at Athens, Salonica and other places. The General Confederation of Labour (CGT) of Greece issued a statement in support of the peace rallies.

## Portugal

Responding to the call of CGTP-IN, trade unions held innumerable rallies and meetings at Lisbon and at various factories demanding cancellation of the US plans to deploy new nuclear missiles on the European soil. Special posters were printed to mark the Trade Union Day of Action for Peace.

## Philippines

A fifteen thousand strong peace rally was held at the export-manufacture zone near Manila. Another mass rally of about 10,000 workers was held at the Marcos Stadium in Manila, organised by the trade union centre, TUPAS. Rallies and meetings were also held in other parts of the country.

## Nicaragua

Rallies, meetings and conferences were organised throughout the country. The Nicaraguan trade union centre specially brought out a brochure on the occasion, entitled, "September 1, International Day of Peace and Struggle for World Peace Movement against the Imperialist Threat of a Nuclear War".

## New Zealand

The US nuclear cruiser, "Taxas", which drew massive protest actions at Brisbane, Australia, met with even stronger opposition when it reached New Zealand on an official visit. On its arrival at Auckland, the ship was greeted by thirty thousand protesters and a "peace flotilla" of 250 small boats. At Wellington, 15,000 demonstrators and 100 small craft met the ship. The New Zealand seamen's union and other maritime unions brought all port activities to a halt. The cruiser which required repairing works, was not attended to by the maritime workers both at Australia and New Zealand. This was a demonstration of the growing workers' concern about their countries' "defence involvement" with the United States.

## In the Socialist Countries

Huge peace rallies, marches and demonstrations were organised by the trade unions in the Socialist countries like, USSR, Czechoslovakia, GDR, Bulgaria, Poland, Hungary etc, demonstrating their determination to carry forward the struggle for peace as a priority task. They denounced the US led imperialist war designs and cried the common slogan—"Jobs and not Bombs".

## International Struggles

### Uruguay

At the call of the Inter-Trade Union Assembly, (PIT), five lakh workers defied the anti-strike laws and took part in a strike on September 16 at Uruguay. The workers demanded "freedom, jobs, wage rise and amnesty". Ten years of fascist dictatorship has brought down the workers' purchasing powers by 50 per cent with unemployment running at 15 per cent. In confrontation with the Police, a large number of leaders and activists were arrested. A national protest day was observed subsequently on September 25.

### Bolivia

Organised by the Bolivian Workers' Centre (COB), thousands of workers participated in a protest demonstration at La Paz in September against U.S. intervention in Central America. The demonstrators raised the slogans: "Peace On our Earth", "Yankees out of Central America", "Strengthen Solidarity with Cuba and Nicaragua". The trade unions denounced the Washington policy designed to whip up the arms race and demanded disarmament.

### Chile

Pinochet celebrated the tenth anniversary of his fascist regime on September 11 with blood shed. A number of patriots were murdered and children and women were burnt alive by his henchmen. The savage repression could not however stop the massive protests. A huge number of demonstrators marched through the streets of Santiago crying, "Pinochet is a murderer".

### South Africa

Over two thousand African students of Fort Hare University boycotted classes and participated in a rally against discrimination in the South African education system and the decision of the racist authorities to increase the fees of the black students. The demonstration was staged in Bantustan of Ciskei, a state specially created by the racists for the black population. Despite savage repression, the Africans joined the demonstration to denounce the racist policy to ban the Africans from further education.

### Steel Crisis: Capitalist Countries

The union of Belgium Steel companies reports that steel production in the country fell by 34 per cent during the past twelve months — a twenty year low. Jobs in the steel industry fell by 5.5 per cent. In West Germany, the production fell to 36 million tons in 1982 from 53 million tons in 1974. 50 per cent of the steel workforce were on a reduced working week by January, 1983, apart from ten thousand steel workers having been laid off. Over 3,000 steel workers were laid off in Japan by the end of May. In Great Britain and Luxemburg, employment in the industry fell by 15.4 per cent and 7.5 per cent

respectively. Semiliar crisis has gripped the US Steel industry also. Protracted struggles have been waged by the workers in all these countries.

### Japan

SOHYO and other trade unions have set up a national council to wage protracted struggle against Nakasone Government's administrative reforms to "overcome the serious financial crisis". The steps include reduction and winding up several social welfare programmes, raise railway fares and close down some railway routes, raise medical fees and introduce higher taxes.

### F.R.G.

Following the decision of the "Deutsche Howaldtswerken" shipyard management to sack over half of the total workforce, a large number of wives of the workers has started hunger strike in Humburg recently. They are campaigning in a van in the port of Humburg to mobilise public opinion against the managements' move.

### Brazil

The workers of "Volkswagen" and "Mannesman", the trans-nationals, have started mass agitation against the decision of the management to reduce the work force to increase their profits. Volkswagen have already laid off about 2,000 workers from their Sao Paulo factory. Mannesman have similarly sacked over one thousand workers from their factories in Brazil.

### Peru

Teachers and the students in the universities of Peru have launched a massive hunger strike in protest against the Government's refusal to raise the education budget. This was the culmination of a series of protest actions including stoppage of work for the last two months.

### Com. Ashoklata Jain

With deep grief CITU mourns the sudden demise of Com. Ashoklata Jain, member of the Delhi State Committee of CPI(M) and President of the Delhi State Committee of Janawadi Mahila Samity, on October 3 at the age of 31 only. During her student life in Jawaharlal Nehru University she was a prominent leader of SFI. She was rusticated for protesting against the suppression of the JNU Students' Union during the Emergency. She was taken back by the University only after the Emergency was lifted. She served as the President of the Delhi State SFI in 1979-80. She worked with dedication to develop the women's movement as well as the Party and the CITU in the West Delhi Unit.

CITU dips the red banner in homage to Com. Ashoklata and extends heartfelt condolences to the breaved family.