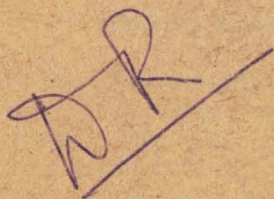


**CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE
UNIONS**

Fifth Conference

GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

P. RAMAMURTI, M.P

A handwritten signature in purple ink, consisting of stylized initials 'PR' with a horizontal line underneath, slanted upwards to the right.

KANPUR

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Comrade President, Fraternal Delegate Comrades & Comrade Delegates,

Full four years have passed since our last Conference was held at Madras. The intervening period has been marked with several twists and turns in the situation, both national and international. This period has been full of important developments including a general election, a mini-general election and elections in several states inside our country, deepening economic crisis in all the Capitalist countries, growing dangers of war, mounting attacks on the working people particularly the working class and the saga of dogged resistance to these attacks and in defence of peace, of living standards and trade union and democratic rights—these are different facets of the common struggle of the toiling people throughout the world in the present national and international situation. It would be my endeavour to draw your pointed attention to these developments, how the CITU had reacted to these developments and conducted our activities and struggle in the given situation. This is necessary in order to emerge from this Conference more unitedly and with a clear perspective of the tasks that are ahead of us and arm ourselves with the necessary understanding to carry forward our struggle.

Growing Dangers of War

At the time of our last conference in April 1979, the danger of war, though looming large had not assumed the menacing proportions that it has today. By the time, the General Council met at Cannanore in September 1980, the danger of another nuclear world war had grown. Consequently, the General Council adopted a resolution denouncing the U.S. imperialists for bringing the world to the brink of a nuclear holocaust. With the elections for the U.S. presidency being round the corner both the contenders unleashed a propaganda of war hysteria. Detente, which had been imposed on the U.S. and other Imperialists by force of Public opinion had virtually vanished with the election of Reagan. The U.S. has intensified its policy of nuclear weapons of mass destruction, forging newer and more deadly weapons, and building bases throughout the world in order to destroy the Socialist System and to dominate the whole globe. All the efforts of the USSR to reverse the process have been frustrated. As a result the arms

race has intensified. In these circumstances, the General Council decided to run a campaign in order to bring home the magnitude of the war danger and develop a movement for peace, so that our workers and people take their place in the world-wide movement against War and for Peace.

The General Council meeting held at Hind Motors in January 1983 last reviewed the steps taken so far including the observance of the "Peace and Solidarity Day" on September 1, 1982 in response to the call given by the 10th World Congress of Trade Unions held at Havana in February 1982 under the auspices of the World Federation of Trade Unions. It came to the conclusion that these activities had resulted in just the first stirrings among the people on the vital issue of peace. The General Council called for intensification of the campaign with redoubled efforts. I would request the delegates to discuss the steps taken in this regard during discussion on the report so that the experience of a union or the State Committee becomes the common property of the CITU ranks. This would enable us to rectify the deficiencies and carry on the movement more effectively.

Neo-Colonialist Loot

The CITU General Council meeting held in August, 1981 had pointed out that the economic crisis in the capitalist world was deepening more and more with every passing day. Even bourgeois economists admit that the crisis has reached a stage reminiscent of the Great Depression of the 1930s. The ruling classes in the advanced capitalist countries, had always tried to transfer the burdens on the developing countries and their own workers. Protectionist policies and imposing unequal trades on the developing countries have been important weapons in their armoury. They have sharpened these weapons and imposed harsher terms. Even the ruling classes in the developing countries are now forced to protest against these more stridently and unitedly voice demands for a reversal of these policies of the Imperialists.

It may be remembered that we had exposed the Government of India's slogan of "export or perish" as a slogan to placate the imperialists. This only served to blind our people to the neo-colonialist loot of the country. We had warned that such a policy in many cases with concessions and subsidies, would lead to further deepening of the crisis in our country.

Our warning has been proved true. The sixth plan document now accepts that in the five years of the Fifth Plan India has lost Rs. 5000 Crores as a result of this unequal trade.

I.M.F. Loan

Despite the warning and exposure of the humiliating conditionalities demanded by the I.M.F., the Government went in for a loan for 500 Billion U.S. Dollars (Equivalent the amount of Rs. 5000 Crores) from the International Monetary Fund accepting all its conditionalities. These conditionalities have forced our Government to liberalise our imports, give more concessions to multinationals and Indian monopolists and impose more burdens on the common people. The crisis of our economy has deepened.

Disastrous Effect on our Economy

The effect of thus putting our head in the hangman's noose is now admitted even by some top industrialists and by some ministers. In the recent 7th conference of the non-aligned movement, strident voices were raised against these conditionalities. Addressing the Madras Chamber of Commerce in Madras, the Finance Minister, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee had stated that last year we imported Rs. 2000 crores worth of unwanted things, unnecessary things. Instead of banning these imports and thereby reducing our trade deficit, the Government goes on with its propaganda that the workers should produce more to enable the country to increase exports and reduce the foreign exchange gap. Because of the Government's commitment to liberalise imports, many factories in this country have cut down production and resorted to under utilisation of capacities. There is dumping of soda ash at cheaper prices in this country and as a result, many soda ash factories have today cut down production by more than 50 per cent, leading to loss of employment for hundreds of thousands of people. Take another example, the import of man-made fibre. Dumping at cheaper prices of man-made fibre in this country by foreign country from foreign countries has been going on, since the IMF loan with the result that the viscose factory in Mettuppalayam in Coimbatore district of Tamil Nadu was been closed down for some time and later working much below capacity. In Mavoor in Kerala, the factory belonging to Birlas which is making pulp for manufacturing man-made fibre has been closed down because it is not needed. I can point out to many other factories in this country which have closed down because of the import of man made fibre which is cheaper. It is dumped in this country. Our polyester fibre, and filament yarn producing factories are closed down or are working partially. The other day, J.K. Synthetics in Kota retrenched 2,400 workers under the plea that imported yarn is cheaper.

The economic situation in our country is plagued with other features. Then there is power shortage in State after State. In Tamil Nadu there is hundred per cent cut for the High Tension Power users with the result that nearly a million workers are out of employment in the factories; they have been laid off. Similarly, in Karnataka there has been power shortage. In Gujarat there has been power shortage, hundred per cent out for some time. In Rajasthan there has been power shortage. In Bihar there has been power shortage. State after State is facing power shortage with the result factories are not utilising their capacity; they are closing down their shifts and lakhs of people are today thrown out of employment. This is the bizarre picture, a direct result of bad planning, and complete neglect of maintenance of Power Plants.

No branch of our economy can escape the effects of this crisis. Our traditional industries in Kerala, Handlooms, cashew, coir all are in doldrums. Prices of cotton and all other commercial crops have tumbled leading to impoverisation of the peasants producing them. The price of cotton came down by one-third and yet yarn prices have shot up by nearly 50 per cent. Handloom weavers throughout the country today have deserted employment. In Tamilnadu in city after city where handlooms are concentrated, they are carrying on a struggle and when they ask for reduction of prices of yarn, they get bullets and lathi-charges. Hundreds of other factories are closing down. In Madras, for example, today the truck factory, Ashoka Leyland, has closed down one of its shifts; thousands of workers are thrown out of employment. The ancillary industries catering to the Ashok Leyland, and to the automobile industry throughout the country are in doldrums; they are closing down their shifts, throwing out of employment thousands of workers.

Let us take the position of steel. Steel production has increased, but yet we are importing steel. Our stockyards have been stacked with unsold steel. There is a glut of steel produced in this country. And yet because of the pressure of, because of the commitment that the Government has given to the International Monetary Fund when we went in for that IMF loan, we have liberalised our imports to such an extent that despite a huge increase in the production and the big stocks of steel that are lying unsold in our stock-yards, we have been importing steel.

Dumping of outmoded Technology

There is dumping not only of goods but also of obsolete technology unwanted in advanced countries. And certain

selfish capitalists are importing this technology accepting humiliating terms of collaboration. The Times of India in a recent issue noted this and wrote:

“The New policy has rightly stressed the need to import technology on a selective basis. As things are, it is being literally bought by Private and Public Sector companies *en-masse*. On an average 400 to 500 Agreements are signed by them with each other. Far too many of them fetch the country outmoded technology which the exporters discarded long ago. Indian companies that adopt them are not particular in the least because in the sellers’ market they operate, they are sure of making a kill with whatever they produce. As depressing as the humiliating conditions that the exporting companies impose on the Indian Companies by which they make sure that the latter continue to depend upon them. They would not be able to get away with them, were the Indian Companies were in a position to develop the technology they import..... *The tragedy is that the Government seems to be conspiring to maintain the existing state of affairs.*”

(Emphasis Added)

The most blatant example of this is the licence issued in 1981 to the Bombay Dyeing and Weaving Co. Ltd. to import a DMT Plant. Not only has the DMT, technology been discarded and replaced by a new technology called PTA, the plant licenced by the Government to be imported by the Bombay Dyeing and Weaving Co. Ltd, is a second hand plant, which had been worked for 27 years and discarded by its owners — Hercofina & Co. of USA — as early as 1977. I had objected to its import and furnished unimpeachable proof of all the facts. And yet, after eighteen months, the Govt. made up its mind to give the licence.

This state of affairs continues, despite all talk of Selective Import of Technology, because there is plenty of slush money in every one of these imports liberally distributed among the right quarters, for the right men.

People denuded of their purchasing power

The bankrupt policies of capitalist path of development persued since our independence, have fattened the monopolists and big business houses while it has pushed more and more people below the poverty line. Despite the fact that statistics are doctored and manipulated from time to time, the Sixth Plan document admits that 48 per cent of our people live below the poverty line. The criteria of poverty have been fixed

arbitrarily. I would only cite one example to bring home the truth of increasing poverty.

We all know that two and half lakh of Bombay Textile Workers are on strike from 18th January 1982. Bombay Cotton textile mills produce one-third of the total cotton cloth production in this country. And yet in the bazar, in the shops there is no dearth of cotton cloth. What does it indicate? It indicates the dire poverty of the people and the tremendous loss of purchasing power of the people, that despite the loss of one-third of the total cloth production there is a glut of cloth in the country.

Failure of Land Reforms

Apart from the pro-monopoly, pro-multinational policies which have resulted in the impoverishment of the working people, the other direct cause for this sad state of affairs is the pro-landlord policies pursued by the Government of India and its failure to carry out land reforms. What has happened to the land reform and the land laws in this country? They have become landless laws. This will be clear from the report of a team of experts led by Ladjinsky from foreign countries which came and investigated the ways in which land legislation in this country had been implemented. It specifically stated that since Independence the number of peasants who have been evicted from their land is much more than the number of peasants that had been evicted during last one and half centuries before independence. Under some pretext or other poor peasants are evicted. The Planning Commission's task force itself has stated that the land laws that have been enacted for the benefit of agricultural labourers and the poorer sections have not been implemented because of lack of political will. I am emphasizing the words "lack of political will". The task force further stated that the landlords have hundreds of links with the local administration, the local police and the revenue administration. Because of this and lack of political will on the part of the party in power the land laws such as ceiling law, etc. are not implemented and remain just paper laws.

How can those Governments who represent the interests of the bourgeoisie and the landlords get the political will to implement land legislation? A majority of the Ministers in the States and the legislators in the Congress(I) ruled States are themselves landlords. Will they ever be interested in giving up their own land?

So we find that our brethren in the country side are the worst victims of this policy. There struggle for land, for

minimum wages are ruthlessly suppressed and blatantly false stories of extremism or caste riots are put forward.

Collapse of all Labour Legislations

In the General Council meeting held at Belur-Howrah in August, 1981, the collapse of all labour legislations was noted. In the Working Committee meeting held at Bangalore in July 1982, the question of closure and lockouts was discussed and it was felt that the owning class is utilising the weapons of closures and lockouts as a weapon to tire out the workers through prolonged closures and lockouts and force on them increased workload, retrenchments etc. and thus lower labour costs.

Let us take the example of the struggle of Rampur. The management of Raza Textiles refused to implement the Order of the U.P. Government on wages of textile workers. The workers were paid Rs. 100/- per mensem less than in other mills in the state. The Government did nothing. But in the face of the determined struggle lasting for over six months, the Government floated a rival union, immediately registered and recognised it as the representative union and got an agreement signed by it for an increase of Rs. 40/- per month only.

The Supreme Court judgement delivered on 18.9.1982 in the case known as "Asiad Case" sharply brings into focus as to how the managements and even the Government are making a mockery of the provisions of Minimum Wages Act and other labour legislation, which confer some benefits on the workers.

The closures and lockouts in the Jute Industry in West Bengal, Birla's rayon factories at Mavoor (Kerala) and Kirlosker's Engineering Factory in Harihar (Karnataka), J.K. Rayon (Kanpur) have already been reported in the past. Other instances are the Jharsuguda Cotton Textile Mills (Orissa) J.K. Synthetics (Kota-Rajasthan), Simco Meters in Tiruchirappalli (Tamilnadu).

In the Jharsuguda Cotton Textile Mills, the management tried to increase workload and take away some of the benefits which the workers had secured through determined struggles braving the attacks by the management's goonda hirelings in collusion with the rival unions. Our Comrade Ajeya Rout escaped death narrowly though he was severely injured. When the union contested the legality of the lockout, the Labour Department of Government of Orissa declared the lockout as illegal, but did not lift its little finger to force the management to open the mill. Nor did it prosecute the management under Section 29 of the I.D. Act. On the other hand the owners

imposed a closure in the mill while the Government both at the Centre and State remained a silent spectator, despite repeated representations to them and violation of section 23(N) of the Industrial Disputes Act.

Take J.K. Synthetics in Kota. J.K. Synthetics is retrenching 2400 people without getting permission of the State Government although Section 25(N) of the I.D. Act specifically says that no employer shall close down a factory or retrench the workers without getting the specific permission of the State Government. And the State Government is expected to take action in the case of violation of the law, including sending the management to jail under section 29 of the Industrial Disputes Act. Has the Rajasthan Government taken any action against JK Synthetics when they retrenched 2400 workers illegally without getting the permission of the State Government? No action is taken against those people because they are very powerful people. What is the use of the Government shedding crocodile tears about the plight of workers? The employers care two hoots for the so-called beneficial legislation, for they know that they can get round the ministers and the administration.

Mechanisation and Automation

Mechanisation, modernisation and automation are integral parts of the device to save labour time and labour costs. We all know that in socialist system where right to work is a fundamental right, guaranteed by the constitution this process benefits the workers by lightening their physical labour and increasing their time for leisure, recreation and cultural activities, but in capitalist system it is just the reverse. It brings in super profits for the employers and woes to the working class. The contentions of employers that computerisation does not affect employment potential of the middle class employees has been proved to be untenable. The on-line digital computers installed in Metal box and several other industries, the 3rd/4th Generation Computers in the steel industry and installation of the same in Total Operation Pattern System in Railways etc. are going to be giant job killers, of both middle class employees and workers.

The question of modernisation i.e. introduction of automatic looms in jute and textile industry has already become a cause of grave concern for the workmen in these industries. What is at stake is the job of tens of thousands of workers.

One green leaf tobacco threshing plant established by the ILTD Division of India Tobacco Company at Anaparti, has

resulted in closing down of the Chirala factory and the Parchur depot of Andhra Pradesh, throwing 6000 workers (75% of them being women) mostly coming from the Scheduled Castes and Tribes on the streets. Deputations were led by the All India Coordination Committee of Working Women to the Prime Minister, apart from other steps by the CITU Centre, but of no avail!

The Government has also granted a letter of intent to Messrs Phillips & Co. which has now been registered as Pilico Electricals for manufacture of Micro Processors despite the opposition of three public sector units viz. ECIL, Keltron and Instrumentations of India Ltd. They have pointed out that they and a Private Sector Unit NELCO have already developed these Systems Engineering and supplied them to many industries while Phillips are yet to start research on it.

When the job security of the existing workmen is thus threatened, one can understand what explosive situation is prevailing among 20 million of registered unemployed most of whom are youth.

Growing industrial sickness

There is a growing trend in the sickness of industries. An indepth study conducted by Reserve Bank of India for the period ended December 1979 about industrial sickness of 389 large units revealed that in the majority of such units sickness was the result of management deficiencies, diversion of funds, lack of clear marketing strategy and infighting among different interests for seizing control of the company. The number of sick medium and small scale units by the end of June 1980 was 1026 and 22325 respectively. The latter went up sharply to 23225 at the end of December 1980. (Economic Survey 1981-82 Page 21). The report bemoaned that despite measures undertaken by Government the incidence of sickness in industry is growing.

The Government of India appointed a Committee headed by Shri T. Tiwari to find out measures to solve the problem. One of the terms of reference was consult the organised labour with a view to eliciting their opinion about acceptance of automation, retrenchment, suspension of statutory provision of Bonus Act, Wage Awards etc. The CITU submitted a memorandum challenging the entire process of consultation with organised labour without having even a single member from the worker in the committee. It appeared as if the banking industry was trying to solve its problem at the cost of labour. Banks have advanced crores of rupees to these sick units. The

suggestion itself was tantamount to asking the workers to willingly accept sufferings for the mismanagement and corruption of the owning class often connived at by the Bankers. The memorandum pointed out that by not insisting upon the monopoly houses who owned 59 large sick units to take appropriate measures to nurse the industries back to health, the Government has laid bare its pro-monopoly bias in its fiscal policies. Com. Nrisingha Chakrabarty appeared before the Committee and explained the view point of CITU and demanded that if the Government is serious about the issue they should open a dialogue with the organised labour on industrial relations policy as a whole. It is not known whether the Committee has submitted any report, what are its recommendations and what steps the Government has taken in the matter.

In the Economic Survey for 1982-83 the Government admitted that the number of large sick units has gone upto 420 by the end of March 1981 of which 329 are viable. The position in respect of 42 units was being determined. The Government have shied away from giving the figures as to how many of them belong to the monopoly houses. Similarly they have not given the number of medium and small scale sick units. They have also not said how many of them have been closed down, the number of workers affected and the steps taken by the Government to help and rehabilitate the affected workers.

The plight of the workers can be understood if one goes through the 29th Annual Report (1981-82) of the Central Provident Fund Commissioner. Out of about Rs. 50 Crores which the employers have not deposited, Rs. 17.65 Crores relates to units which are under closure or liquidation.

New Tactics to be evolved

The situation, Comrades, demands that the delegates relate their experience of struggles against the different manifestations of the present crisis, so that it becomes the common property of the organisation. The rich experience gathered through innumerable struggles, duly analysed, helps us to study the trend of developments and take specific steps to meet concrete situations.

Let us take one concrete example. In Delhi area during some strikes, the management recruits people from Palwal, a nearby village in Haryana and brings them to the factory with the help of the police. Thus with the help of the supervisory cadre and small section of skilled workers, they started pro-

duction, though not to the full capacity. They continued to work under police protection for a month. This demoralised the striking workers and an agreement much below what could have been secured had to be made to save the situation.

There are examples when the factories of a monopoly house is closed in one State but the production of the same is doubled or trebled in factories situated in other states by payment of overtime or with the help of contract labour in order to force the workers in the closed factory to accept the employers' terms.

While united struggle of the working class with the help of other sections of the toiling masses happens to be the basic strategy for the working class movement, we have also to discuss and evolve new tactics to meet the changed and diverse types of offensive of the ruling class in this period in its effort to pass on the entire burden of the crisis on the shoulders of the working class and toiling people.

Growth of United Resistance

Comrades, from the Foundation Conference of the CITU when it inscribed on its banner the slogan of "Forward to United Struggle", we had made it clear that we unite not just for the sake of unity but to pursue a line of struggle and resistance to defend the workers interests; that in the name of unity we do not compromise with collaborators. We further stated that the joint actions of the working class and the struggle for the trade union unity has profound meaning extending beyond the trade unions. The trade union movement of workers and employees is the most well organised force fighting against the burdens of the economic crisis imposed by the bourgeois-landlord rule. Its resistance rouses other sections in defence of their interests. In the present situation when the economic discontent flowing from the policies of the ruling classes is likely to be exploited by the ruling class and its political agents in diversionary channels, the united resistance by the organised workers can become the basis for an independent rallying point for all left and democratic forces ranged against the ruling class and the return of authoritarian dictatorship.

It was in this background that a ringing call for formation of a Confederation of Trade Unions and Federations was given from the platform of the 4th Conference of CITU.

The Conference discussed the struggle of Public Sector Employees in 1978 and decided that as the Government had failed to open a dialogue for finalisation of the wages and

income policy and the BPE's intervention in wage negotiations continued unabated, efforts for united struggle of public sector employees should be made. A very well represented convention was held at Bangalore on July 21-22, 1979 and a call for one day token strike on September 14, 1979 was given. The INTUC which did not participate in this convention, was however forced to give a separate call for token strike without fixing any date. As a result many INTUC unions participated in the strike on September 14 in which about 1.5 million workers participated. But the action Committee formed by the Convention could not carry forward the struggle any further.

Swift political events however overtook us and had its impact on the functioning of the National Campaign Committee. For sometime attitudes of the constituents towards each other had undergone a change. The very correct step by some of the constituents to defend the interests of the working class irrespective of political consideration, suffered a set back. The changes in political situation arising out of differences within the Ruling Janata Party which led to its split and fall from power had influenced some of the constituents.

However, the thread of unity could be taken up anew in the light of the experience of the struggles of the Insurance employees, the Bangalore-based public sector employees and the loco running staff, the running thread in all the three struggles being the defence against the Government's going back on its earlier commitments/agreements. Further, the Government also had attacked the right to collective bargaining by unilaterally scrapping of the earlier agreement with the LIC employees and changing the service conditions by arbitrarily promulgating executive orders. The callous unconcern with which they treated the struggle of the Bangalore-based public sector employees and the ruthless repression of the loco running staff, which everyone condemned despite their reservations about one or the other aspects of these struggles made it possible for the CITU, AITUC, HMS and BMS to come together and organise a Convention on 22nd February 1981 which was attended by 105 representatives. Programmes of solidarity action like Dharna before the Prime Minister's House on February 27, joint rallies and badge wearing on March 3 and one day all India strike of public sector employees on March 11, 1981 were adopted. The programmes were by and large successful.

It has to be noted that while these programmes were announced and being executed, the Government started hectic negotiations with the Joint Action Front (which did not include the CITU and BMS). The reports about these which appeared

in the press created some confusion, which affected the March 11th strike to some extent. Nevertheless the strike on March 11, was a good exhibition of unity and solidarity.

Struggle of The Peasantry

These activities of the workers and the policies of the Government had their impact on the peasantry and agricultural workers. They started moving enmass to secure remunerative price for their products and increased wages to the agricultural labour. Acceptance of this latter demand by the peasants imparted greater momentum to the movement. The united rally of the peasantry and agricultural workers on March 26, 1981 at Boat Club, New Delhi by various Kisan & Agricultural Workers' Organisations was unique in many respects.

It is a welcome feature that quite a large number of workers in and around Delhi had struck work and joined the rally. This was a practical demonstration of one united action of the toiling masses, the beginning of the realisation about the commonness of the struggle of the toiling masses. The huge Kisan rally had its impact on the success of the Bombay Convention.

The Bombay Convention

The Convention held at Bombay on June 4, 1981 in which about 3000 delegates from 8 Central Trade Unions and 40 national federations participated, was a significant development. For the first time the working class through this convention championed the cause of the peasantry and agricultural workers and of the entire people. It advocated the demand for curbing price-rise and making available the daily necessities through a public distribution system under the supervision of peoples' committees and thus championed the cause of the people at large. Calling for a reversal in the policies of the Government, the convention provided a rallying point for advocating alternative policies for the development of the country. It called upon the Government to start immediate dialogue on the demands raised in the Convention.

The programmes adopted in the convention was responded to enthusiastically by all sections of workers through out the country. The attendance in State Conventions at many places went beyond the expectation of the organisers. Similarly the "Workers March to Parliament" on November 23, 1981 was described as the biggest ever rally held in the capital by the newspapers. The huge rally served notice on the Government that the Working Class will register its protest by one day

country-wide industrial general strike on January 19, 1982 as Government had failed to give any meaningful response to the demands of the Bombay Convention of June 4, 1981.

Strike on January 19

January 19, 1982 will go down in the annals of trade union movement in our country as a "Red Letter Day". For the first time, the working class of the country registered a "Protest Strike" on basic issues which went beyond the general trade union issues. As a result it inspired other sections of the people also to join the same. A "Bundh" was declared on that day in West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura. Bundh was observed in Bihar also. But at many States, in Industrial Centres, cities and towns, the industrial strike took the character of a bundh. The Banks and the LIC offices throughout the country remained closed. Quite a large chunk of State Government employees, about 8 lakhs in all, participated in the strike as a measure of solidarity. Participation of agricultural workers, some of whom laid down their lives in UP, MP and Tamilnadu, was another unique feature of the strike action. It was a mightily demonstration of the unity of the working class which in the course of the struggle, drew in other sections of the toiling people.

A Review

It has, however, to be noted that the workers in the industrial undertakings like railways, P&T etc. which are run departmentally did not join the strike. The leaders in the railway movement had expressed earlier their hesitation and diffidence, inspite of their support to the call. The National Campaign Committee expected that with the gathering of momentum of united struggles, this hesitation would disappear. It took special steps to meet with the leaders. But efforts to bring them in the mainstream of the movement did not succeed. The refusal of the leadership of such a big chunk of industrial workers to join the mainstream of the trade union movement, their breaking away from the principled stand like "Bonus for all as Deferred Wage" and signing the agreement on "Productivity linked bonus" and accepting "deferred payment" of arrear dues only for the sake of some paltry immediate gains have not only let down the trade union movement of the country in general but also has done great harm to these workers themselves. Experience is sure to bring this home to these workers.

I am sure that experience and the impact of the united struggles will make them aware of the need to go with the mainstream of the struggles. We ardently appeal to the mass

of the Central Government, State Governments, Railway and Defence employees to fight the authorities shoulder to shoulder with the rest of the working class, to fight unitedly for the common demands of the workers and the people.

Comrades, we are aware, and experience confirm that the existence of several trade union organisations and their differences reflect the inner struggle in the trade union movement for a line based on class struggle, a militant line of trade union unity, a line of alliance with other democratic forces to fight the bourgeois-landlord class rule. In fact the formation of the CITU reflected this struggle.

In this struggle two contradictory currents have been influencing the trade union movement. The separatist current, isolationist current, officially patronised and sustained by illusions spread by reformist leaders on the one hand and the current of growing unity arising from the experience of the working class and maturity of the trade union movement on the other.

The growing strength of the latter has led to a great degree of cooperation between several central organisations. On some occasions even the INTUC and/or its unions had joined in negotiations or protests. In the three days' strike of coal miners throughout the country a large chunk of workers following the INTUC participated defying the direction of their leaders. This change has been taking place in the last two years.

What do these indicate?

The urge for the trade union unity and the united struggle is shaking today reformist strongholds. Everything is not well with the INTUC, a section had split away from the parent organisation disapproving its policies and joining hands with CITU and other members of the National Campaign Committee. Though the existing top leadership of the INTUC is committed to loyally supporting the official policy, still there cannot be any unanimity because at the base, there is lot of discontent and disillusionment with the official policy.

Considering the need for greater unity in the existing situation our CITU must again reiterate its call for a Confederation of Central Trade Union Organisations and Federations. It is a call for a Confederation where the policy decisions will be taken unanimously and which will function as a forum of continuous discussion of problems facing the trade union movement. It is only through constant discussion and mass action that the desired unity can be achieved.

I am glad to report that comrades have taken steps to rectify the deficiencies noted earlier in the meetings of the Working Committee and National Council. But nevertheless it requires eternal vigilance to ensure that correct steps for united front activities are taken at all levels. Above all, the understanding about the immense importance of our line of united struggle must percolate to our ranks. I would urge upon the delegates to discuss the question thoroughly. While commenting on this report they should relate their experience and the problems faced by their unions or the industry so that concrete steps could be evolved from this Conference.

Government Attacks T.U. Rights

The Government enacted the National Security Act with the solemn assurance that it would not be utilised against the democratic and trade union movement. As usual this assurance was broken. The Act was applied against reputed trade union leaders, particularly during the struggle of public sector employees and the loco running staff. Closely following the Bombay Convention, the Government promulgated the Essential Services Maintenance Ordinance, a monstrous piece of legislation, arming itself with powers to prohibit strike in every field of economic activity. This was an unadulterated attack against the working class alone. The fig-leaf of a Supra-class State Standing above classes and meting out even handed justice was exposed. The real face of the class rule, the interests it seeks to protect, the repressive machinery it strengthens against the working class were all exposed. There was not a single word against the employers, against lockouts and closures in the essential services in the Ordinance. It was indefensible even by the leaders of the INTUC who, it is well known, have been the servitors of the ruling class and preaching class collaboration. The ordinance was seen as a propitiatory measures to facilitate the negotiation of I.M.F. loan. This lapse was however removed when the ordinance was replaced by an Act of Parliament. Needless to say that these provisions against lock-outs and closures will never be implemented, as in the past. Enactment of this monstrous piece of legislation was an around attack on the basic trade union rights of the working class.

Mounting Protest

The National Campaign Committee gave a call for observing August 17, 1981 as "Protest Day" all over the country. Virtually millions came on the streets voicing protest. Even small towns resounded with the slogans of condemnation of the

Government's action. In tune with the rising wave of protests, the M.Ps from the opposition parties built up a wall of resistance inside the Parliament and a stiff opposition to every section of the Bill was put up before the Bill could be passed into an act.

This, no doubt, had its impact on the working class and contributed to the success of the next phase of the movement.

Repression on the Workers

The Government as usual took recourse to repressive measures on the eve of the 19th January 1982 Protest Strike. Circulars were issued by various management threatening wage cut and other punishments. In pursuance of that circular over 50000 were put behind the bars as a preventive measure to defeat the strike move. The Coal India management and the State Government of Haryana and to some extent Tamilnadu Pondicherry and Rajasthan moved with vengeance. The former and the Government of Tamilnadu passed orders for deducting 8 days wages for participating in the strike. In Haryana, all the 2000 workers in the Hansi Spinning Mills and Haryana concast were thrown out of employment. In Pondicherry and Rajasthan several State Government employees and Road Transport Workers were victimised. The National Campaign Committee, noting the trend of growing repression and attacks on trade union rights had decided to lodge a complaint with the ILO on violation of the Rights to Organise, Freedom of Association and Right to Collective Bargaining. On December 14, 1981, the complaint was lodged giving details of the attacks made by the Government.

The Government also had taken the step to counter the effect of these complaints and invited the Director General of I.L.O. Mr. Francis Blanchard to visit India during the Republic Day Celebrations.

The Workers of Central Coal Fields served a notice of strike demanding cancellation of the wage cut and forced the management to withdraw the orders. The National Campaign Committee moved the Government. The statewide movement and the determined struggle of the workers forced the management to take back the workers of Hansi Spinning Mill and Haryana concast and cancel the wage cut. But the victimisation in Pondicherry and Rajasthan still continues.

The National Campaign Committee also met the Director General of I.L.O. and posted him with the developments. The Report of the Committee on Freedom of Association of the

ILO has condemned the Government stand. Arrangement for publicity of the same was made by the CITU Centre. The report was widely published in the National Press.

Broadside Against T.U. Rights

The Government piloted 14 anti-Working Class Bills in March/April 1982 which not only took away the coverage of Industrial Disputes Act over millions of workers, but also imposed severe restrictions on the functioning of trade unions. It must be noted that this Act nullified an earlier judgement of the Supreme Court.

The nature of the curtailment proposed in these new Acts and Bills, which are proposed to be amended further on the basis of the Sanat Mehta Committee Report must be understood. In future no trade union can function on its own. Powers are being given or proposed to be given to the Registrar of Trade Unions to interfere in the internal affairs of the unions. Any member, be it at his own instance or at the bidding of the employer, can raise a dispute about the election in the union and the Registrar is empowered to give an Award which prevents the workers from electing their own leadership because any person adjudged guilty of unfair labour practice is debarred from holding office in any registered union. The Registrar's decision cannot be challenged in any court of law. No union can call for a strike without raising first an industrial dispute and going through the process of conciliation, arbitration and adjudication. There would be rules for recognition of majority unions determined on the basis of verification or now proposed check off system. Once this process is over it cannot be challenged for 3 years and no unrecognised union can give a call for strike. Even after all these processes are gone through and a strike is called, then the Government has the power to declare it illegal under the ESMA. Would anything like collective bargaining remain anywhere in the country once the employer knows that no strike can take place under these circumstances.

The National Campaign Committee observed a protest day against this. But the united struggle had to be carried on in a different context. Before coming to the same, I would like to draw your attention to the strike of the Bombay Textile Workers. It is the most protracted and determined struggle of the workers in our country's annals. It raised not only the immediate economic demands of the workers but also demanded repeal of the Bombay Industrial Relations Act and recognition by secret ballot.

Attack Against Freedom of Expression

During this period, attempt was made to stifle the voice of the press which had been exposing brutal killings and repression by the police, corruption in high office and their links with anti-social elements, mafia gangs. These reports were cautious because of the existing laws. But even the very few reports, which exposed only the tip of the iceberg, were sought to be suppressed.

The Bihar Government which was daily being rocked by such reports brought certain amendments to the existing laws which was intended to terrorise the journalists and scuttle the press. The journalists themselves came out in protest and their movement spread through the length and breadth in the country unifying all sections of journalists.

The CITU lent full support to this struggle. Our Bihar State Committee, in close cooperation with other forces, gave calls for strikes and bundhs repeatedly. We must however admit that we had not been able to do as much as was necessary because two similar bills are already in the Statute Book in Orissa and Tamilnadu. This was another manifestation of authoritarian attack.

United Struggle in changed context

The CITU continued the united struggle in a changed context. The wage agreements in most of the public sector undertakings would expire by December 1982. The Bureau of Public Enterprises had given new guidelines which was a virtual lathicharge on the earning of the workers. It was an offensive of wage freeze. The National Campaign Committee in these circumstances was moved for organising the public sector employees struggle, with special emphasis on Coal, Steel and BHEL. The CITU proposed that the organisations in these undertakings should be helped to come together for a joint struggle against this offensive which was accepted by the National Campaign Committee.

Conventions were held at Bhopal on June 21-22 for BHEL, at Bokaro on July 17-18 for Steel and at Dhanbad on August 21-22 for Coal Workers. All these conventions generated a mass enthusiasm and common understanding for a struggle. The situation in Coal Industry in which the Government had arbitrarily reconstituted the negotiating committee at the instance of INTUC needed immediate attention. The convention formed an action committee and decided to go in for a struggle. September 11 was observed as an All India Coal

Miners Protest Day and on November 8, there was one day's protest strike. The anger of the workers against the Government was such that the INTUC leaders were unable to prevent large section of their members from joining the strike. As a result over 75% of the coal miners came into the joint struggle despite severe repression at several centres.

The success of these conventions once again unified the National Campaign Committee and the meetings called by the Government to consider the question of productivity twice—once in June and again in December—were boycotted by N.C.C. Similarly the National Tripartite Conference called on September 17-18, was also boycotted. Some of the constituents had shown vacillations during this process, but ultimately unity prevailed and the resistance could be carried on unitedly on all these occasions.

In the meanwhile a Convention of all employees in the Public Sector was called on October 12-13, at Hyderabad in which delegates from 300 unions in this sector attended. This Convention decided to give a call for one day token strike in December 1982 and authorised the N.C.C. to fix up the date. In consultation with the representatives of the National Federation, 28th January 1983 was fixed for the strike.

The Coal Workers had in the meanwhile become restive because the Government had not changed the negotiating committee in the coal industry and a call for 3 days strike in January (17-19) was given.

Elections in Tripura, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka

This united resistance had its repercussion in the elections to the State Assemblies of Tripura, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. In Tripura, because of the policies pursued by the Left-Front Government, its return to power was more or less certain.

But the Congress(I), which had held on to the reigns in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka all through these years of political upheavals was completely routed in this elections. This had some effect on the Government too.

Government Retraces its Steps

The Government retraced its steps. It first reconstituted the negotiating committee in Coal industry once again. It had to take the representative from BMS in the Committee. Although the reconstitution was not to the full satisfaction of the CITU,

nevertheless it joined the negotiating committee in deference to the wishes of some of the constituents.

— The Union Finance Minister opened a dialogue on the strike in the Public Sector Undertakings and the Government recognised the need for the upward revision of the present D.A. formula of Rs. 1.30 per point and agreed to set up a committee to decide the quantum. It was also decided that the Committee should give its findings within 3 months. The Finance Minister also agreed to have a dialogue on the BPE guidelines and it is expected that the subject would be taken up very shortly. On his assurance the protest strike was postponed.

The General Council discussed the question in the meeting held at Hind Motors on January 21-23, 1983 and called upon all our unions to continue the campaign and remain vigilant. It is necessary to do so because the Government as in the past, may go back on any assurance or agreement. More than two months have passed but the Committee has not been formed yet. As a result though an accord has been reached in wage negotiations in the Steel industry, agreement could not be signed yet.

Move for Verification

In the name of consulting the organised labour on the recommendations of Sanat Mehta Committee for further amendment to the Industrial Disputes Act, the Government called the leaders of the National Campaign Committee except Shri Dara for a meeting. It sought the opinion from all organisation. The N.C.C maintained a united stand on all questions including verification with provisions of secret ballot in cases of disputes.

But shortly thereafter, the Government has started the second lap of verification procedure i.e. calling upon the unions to submit their membership registers and other documents. The National Campaign Committee is currently discussing the development.

Independent Activity

Comrades, the CITU had always emphasised that success of our united front activities would largely depend upon our independent initiative and activity, our own strength and flexible approach.

It is unfortunate that despite repeated attempts, we have not been able to impress upon the State Committees to review the United Struggles and draw lessons from our experience. It

is no doubt true that during the Working Committee meeting held at Bangalore in July 1982 and the General Council meeting held at Hind Motors in January 1983, several reports had been placed by the State Committees and Federations. But those are not reviews of the struggles. There is need for such reviews being made with due preparations. I would call upon the delegates to understand that without conducting reviews of our independent and united front activities, we would not be able to give necessary philip to our organisation and for expansion of the trade union movement. Big possibilities for all these have opened up.

During the intervening period between our last conference and this one, there has been some important developments in regard to organising our independent activities.

Recapitulation of all independent activities during this period would only be a repetition of what has already been published in our journals. Industrywise reports also were placed and discussed in the General Council, Working Committee and Secretariat meetings. I would, therefore, relate only some important aspects which must be recalled to the memory of all of us so that we could draw proper lessons.

At the time of our last conference the coal miners were organising for a continued strike in which all forces including the INTUC was participating. Such action had become necessary because of the rigid stance of BPE to limit the wage rise, despite an assurance by the Government earlier that they would discuss with the Central T.U. leaders the guidelines on wage norms. The INTUC was playing a dubious role as it agreed for indefinite strike in coal industry having participated in day's token strike in February 1979, whereas in the steel industry it refused to join with us even for one days token strike. We had, therefore, to concentrate in the wage negotiations in coal and just on the eve of the date fixed for strike a settlement could be arrived at after hard bargaining. A wage rise of 17% was secured while the BPE guideline tried to limit the same to 10% only. This settlement, helped settlement of wage negotiations in steel and BHEL. It was decided to give a call for special collection of struggle fund and the response was as follows:

Unions under Steel Authorities of India Ltd.	Rs. 1,78,200.00
Unions under Coal Industry.	22,751.00
	<hr/>
	Rs. 2,00,951.00
	<hr/>

It may be remembered that because this amount of struggle fund was raised, it was possible for the CITU to make arrangements for the historic rally of the workers on November 23, 1981. Though there were some contributions, the centre had to spend a lot of money to make the stay of the workers at Delhi at least tolerable even when winter had set in.

The second most important part of our activity relates to the struggle on Bonus in Assam Tea Estates. The dedication and heroism with which the workers came and joined the struggle is noteworthy. We have already related the saga of this struggle in our General Council meeting held at Belur. This struggle not only had drawn a large chunk workers away from the INTUC fold, but also helped us to sustain the democratic movement against the chauvinist and secessionist movement launched by the reactionary forces for the past 3 years.

During this period an attempt has been made to organise the Construction Workers & Engineering Workers. In both these sectors, our comrades in West Bengal took the lead. A Regional Committee has been formed in the Construction industry in the Eastern Region which has taken steps to organise the Construction Workers all over the country. Similarly in the Engineering industry a meeting of representatives from all over the country was held at Howrah and a committee has been formed to collect data from all states. Further steps would have to be taken to advance the movement.

Efforts have also been made to organise our Unions in Cement industry when the issues were referred to arbitration at the instance of INTUC. Several meetings have also been held. But our influence being limited, we have not been able to make much headway.

On the question of minimum wages in scheduled industries, there is an anarchy at present with very low rates of pay. First a Convention of 4 States was held in South and then a similar convention with 6 States in and around Delhi was held. A programme of mass signature, demonstration etc. has been launched. This had good impact on the entire area.

The CITU had also lodged complaints with I.L.O. Committee on "Freedom of Association about violation of basic trade union rights in "Assam Tea Estates," "Loco Running Staff Struggle", Assam Cooperative Jute Mills and "DVC Shramik Union" in order to expose the wanton attack by the Government of India, the management and its hirelings". Arrangements for due publicity of the comments of "Committee on Freedom of Association" were also made so that

attention of all concerned is drawn to the difficulties the CITU is facing in conducting its activities.

To consolidate our strength, three Federations have been formed in the jute, coal and steel industries. The All India Coal Workers Federation has become an important weapon to champion the cause of the coal miners. Similarly the formation of Steel Workers Federation of India has a salutary effect. Steel and Coal workers occupy important positions in modern industry. The emergence of these two Federations has contributed immensely to the advancement of the movement. I have already related the struggles of the coal miners. In the steel industry the Federation has been able to take up the issues of the most down trodden section of the workers in the industry—the Contract Labourers. A strike in Durgapur and Burnpur could secure some relief for the contract labour, a part of whom have since been absorbed in the steel plants as regular workers. A struggle is going on in Bhilai Steel Plant and at the call of the Steel Workers Federation of India, one day solidarity strike took place by the Contract Labourers on December 29, 1982, in all the Steel Plants.

Formation of a Federation in Jute industry is also a significant development. Apart from taking the problems of the jute workers, the Federation has also championed the demands of the jute growers and exposed the untrammelled loot by the jute barons.

Another instance of our independent activity is that an attempt has been made in this period to bring the Seamen & Port & Dock Workers into a common movement. The condition of the seamen required urgent attention. A token strike on August 5, was conducted. As the Government has not done anything about their demands a 3 day token strike was conducted on November 25-27, 1982. The Government appears to be unmoved and is intent on carrying on as before. Hence the Seamen with their family members held a "Dharna" before the Prime Minister's residence on March 30, 1983.

An attempt was made to organise the workers in all the factories run by the monopoly house of the J.K. Group in support of the struggle of the workers of J.K. Rayon, Kanpur. But it did not gather sufficient momentum. Once again this task has been taken up with the retrenchment of 2400 workers in J.K. Synthetics at Kota. This has to be pursued vigorously.

Apart from the above, our forces working in the plantations have been reorganised by holding the conference of All India Plantation Workers Federation at Siliguri on September 16-18, 1982.

Pay Attention to the Working Women

Our activities among the working women following the All India Convention held at Madras just before our last conference have resulted in generation of an awareness among the working women themselves.

Though we have repeatedly elaborated the point on earlier occasions, I feel that the question must be taken up more seriously. A short report on the activities of the All India Coordination Committee set up in the convention at Madras is enclosed as Annexure-I. This would show what tremendous prospects for the advancement of the movement there are. But the growth has not been as warranted by the possibilities due to apathy by the State Committees. Our women workers justifiably complain of non-cooperation. I suggest that sometime of our conference be devoted to discuss the problem.

Repression

During the past 4 years, the CITU activists throughout the country had to advance through tremendous repressions. We have lost many a comrades in these struggles. Our women activists and workers were criminally assaulted at Hansi (Haryana) and at Krishnakali Tea Estate in Assam. We are proud of our comrades who have held high the banner of CITU despite such repression. The saga of these struggles, conducted on a principled basis with indomitable courage have been highlighted in our meetings and our journals. I need not elaborate them any further.

I would only like to add that history has placed the responsibility of leading our people for social transformation in our country on the shoulders of the working class. In that process we will be called upon to make more sacrifices. Let us take now to go ahead so that the cause for which our heroic martyrs have laid down their lives is fulfilled. That would be the fitting homage to the memory of these brave workers.

CITU's Role In Tripartite and Governmental Committees

The CITU has been following a policy of nominating representatives to Tripartite or Governmental Committee so that the views of CITU can be properly placed. As the decisions taken in these committees are regularly being reported and publicised, I am not going into details of their functioning.

It has, however, been our experience that these committees function perfunctorily without any seriousness. The presence of our nominees and their principled stand had often resulted in some good decisions.

The Secretariat, however, decided not to nominate any one in the National Shram Vir Awards Committee as it was felt that no useful purpose can be served by nominating our representative to it.

The CITU has also not accepted one seat in the Governing Body of Central Board of Workers Education.

We have also refused to send any nomination in the Industrial Committee on Plantation because our original allotment of 3 seats was arbitrarily revised and reduced to one. The Secretariat had noted that the CITU's nomination in various bodies is being reduced. We had one seat in the General Council of National Labour Institute. But this time there has been no offer to us. Similarly one seat in the National Council for Vocational Training which was held by us was withdrawn.

It has also been noted that of late only INTUC is being patronised in the Committees. The employees Provident Fund Review Committee and E.S.I. Review Committee are headed by Ramanujam and HO Shing, two representatives of INTUC.

Organisation

The old leadership under the influence of Mohan Punamia in Rajasthan went astray and we had to take a decision to reorganise the state Committee and expel some of the erstwhile leaders who dabbled in industrial shares and resorted to individual terrorism to keep the unions with them. Thanks to the loyalty of the mass of rank and file of the CITU, the reorganised State Committee of CITU could overcome these defects, regroup its forces and fight these disruptive forces. I am happy to announce that the influence of CITU is now spreading to newer areas in Rajasthan and the workers are joining CITU braving the attacks of the management-police combine and defeating the disruptive tactics adopted by the group led by Mohan Punamia.

The position of membership of CITU is given in Annexure II to this report. The Credential Committee in the Foundation Conference of CITU reported that 1759 unions with 8,04,637 members joined CITU. The position of membership in December, 1972 was 9,12,328 (2031 unions). The Second Conference was held when semifascist terror prevailed in West

Bengal and the third Conference was held just before emergency when the semi-fascist terror continued. Hence the figures of these two conferences are ignored. At the 4th Conference 3861 delegates representing 11,48,966 members from 1473 unions had participated. This growth had forced us to revise our constitution and limit the number of delegates. In this conference 2500 delegates representing 15 lakhs members are participating.

But there are many things to be said about the state of our organisation. In the General Council meeting held at Belur in August 1981, I had stressed on the day to day functioning of the unions. The annexure will reveal that the records of the Registrar of Trade Unions as on 31.12.1978 showed that only 1930 unions claiming a membership of 9,17,633 had submitted their returns while in the conference in April 1979, 1479 unions with a membership of 11,48,966 members participated. This shows that many unions either do not submit their annual returns or do not indicate in their returns that their union is affiliated to CITU. Perhaps their failure to pay affiliation fee to CITU every year in time, is responsible for this. The State Committees also do not exercise sufficient vigilance and check over this lapse.

Before this Conference, it was seen that some unions have cleared their dues right from 1976 onwards. This is a happy feature. This shows that if sufficient attention is paid by the State Committees, this defect can be overcome.

Relations With Fraternal Organisations Abroad

It gives me immense pleasure to announce from the platform of this Conference that our principled struggle, increase in our strength against all attacks by the ruling class and its Government and our functioning with devotion to the principles of Proletarian Internationalism have earned for us fraternal relations from many organisations from abroad.

I do not propose to give a long list of the representatives of CITU who visited other countries or those who have visited our office or our conference. The presence at this conference of fraternal delegates from various organisations particularly from the socialist countries and the WFTU, is a recognition of this fact. On your behalf and on behalf of the entire membership of our organisation I warmly welcome them and give them our fraternal greetings.

I would, however fail in my duty if I do not point out some important developments in the course of relations with fraternal

organisations particularly those in the socialist countries and our participation in international forums.

In 1981, a goodwill delegation from CITU led by Com. K. Ramani, Vice President and Com. M.K. Pandhe, Secretary CITU visited USSR at the invitation of AUCCTU and had free and frank exchange of views. In the same year another good will delegation from CITU led by Com. C. Kannan Vice President, Com. R. Umanath and Com. Lakshmi Sen visited Peoples Republic of China at the invitation of All China Federation of Trade Unions. Both the delegations presented their reports in the General Council meeting held at Belur Howrah in August 1981 which adopted resolutions thanking the All Union Central Council of Trade Unions, USSR and All China Federation of Trade Unions. On behalf of you all, I once again express our sincere appreciation for the warm hospitality which was extended to the members of the delegations.

The increasing participation by CITU in international forums and its contribution to the world movement of the working class could be noted from the following:

*Just after our 4th Conference at Madras. Com. M.K. Pandhe attended the International Labour Conference as an Adviser in the Indian Delegation.

Com. Nrisingha Chakrabarty, Secretary-CITU participated in a Conference on New International Economic Order held in Belgrade, Yugoslavia in April 1980.

Comrade Samar Mukherjee, Treasurer-CITU, participated in the Tenth World Congress of Trade Unions at the invitation of World Federation in February 1982 at Havana (Cuba). He also participated in a conference on I.L.O. Conventions on Basic Trade Union Rights held in Tokyo at the instance of SOHYO and Japan I.L.O. Association in November 1982.

Com. Jagjit Singh Lyallpuri, participated in a Conference on Peace and effects of Disarmament held in Paris (France) in November 1981,

Com. Sunil Basu Roy, participated in a Seminar "On Environment" held at Baku at the instance of I.L.O in cooperation with AUCCTU.

Com Sudhin Kumar, Vice-President CITU participated in a Seminar held at Prague on October 9-11, 1979 organised by Czechoslovakia Federation of Trade Unions in Commerce in cooperation with I.L.O.

Com. Vimala Ranadive attended the 4th World Trade Union Conference on Problems of Working Women held at Nicosia (Cyprus) by WFTU on October 15-19, 1979.

Ideological Campaign

We from the very beginning realised the necessity of conducting an ideological struggle among the workers. A list of pamphlets published between the 4th & 5th Conference is placed at Annexure-III.

We have tried to improve the quality of our journals, "The Working Class", "CITU Mazdoor" and "Voice of Working Woman" so that they may serve as important weapons for conducting the ideological struggle. An analysis of the report is enclosed as Annexure IV. It may be seen that while sale of CITU Mazdoor has picked up, the picture about the other journals is not a very happy one. I am sure that after our discussion in the last General Council meeting at Hind Motors, our State Committees would pay attention to this aspect.

Trade Union Education

As a large number of new activists were coming to CITU, there had been repeated demands for trade union education. During this period some attention could be given towards imparting trade union education to the activists of CITU.

Ten trade union classes of 5 days duration were held under the grant-in-aid scheme of the Central Board of Workers Education (CBWE) the state-wise division being as follows:

Delhi Region-2, Haryana-1, Madhya Pradesh-1, Bihar-1, Orissa-1, Gujarat-1 and Tamilnadu-3.

The most difficult part was arranging teachers from the Centre at times when it is convenient for the State Committees to hold classes. Only Tamilnadu State Committees conducted the first class to build up a batch of cadres who could conduct the classes on their own.

In view of the fact that the sanction from CBWE is subjected to a lot of red tape and even now the due amount for 3 classes are still due, the secretariat decided not to continue such classes any further. It was also decided that the CITU should hold classes on its own and accordingly classes have been held in Punjab, Assam and Jammu & Kashmir.

The CITU would have to continue such education in future.

Collective & Democratic Functioning

During this period we have held five Working Committee meetings and three General Council meetings on the following dates.

Working Committee Meetings

New Delhi—March 21-23, 1980.

Cannanore-September, 11, 1980

Belur-August 21, 1981.

Bangalore-July 23-25, 1982.

Hind Motors—January 21, 1983.

General Council Meetings

Cannanore-Sept. 11-14,
1980.

Belur — August 21-24,
1981.

Hind Motors January
21-23, 1983.

This cannot be called a satisfactory functioning. But the compulsions of the political situation like elections in January 1980, May and December 1982 etc. sometimes have forced the delayed meetings on us.

Similarly in respect of Secretariat meetings also though some improvement has been registered, still it is not satisfactory.

But regular consultations on issues and problems are carried on without fail and we should try to have regular meetings of the Secretariat in future.

Strengthen The Centre

Apart from the day today activities in connection with the work of various industries, the CITU Centre had to render help to various friendly trade union organisations. Steps were also taken to seek the help of Members of Parliament to strengthen the work of CITU at the base. Their participation in these activities is being felt now at the lower level. The CITU office also helped the Parliamentary Office in regard to Bills to help in advancing the cause of the workers. Com. Samar Mukherjee M.P. has moved the Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) amendment Bill, Com. Sukomal Sen, M.P. has moved the Payment of Gratuity (Amendment) Bill and Com. Sudhir Giri M.P. has moved the Factory Act (Amendment) Bill during this period.

There has been an increase in the work of the Central Office. Some improvement has also been registered. But many more things still remain to be done. The Centre requires

to be strengthened, particularly with comrades who could be assigned the work of some industries, which we have not been able to attend so far. The complement of staff in the office also would have to be increased, with such persons who have some aptitude towards office work.

Conclusion

Comrades, this report has already become a long one. It was almost inevitable because we are passing through a period of crises in all spheres. I wish that a lively discussion takes place on the points mentioned in the report.

But before concluding I would like to draw your pointed attention to the serious questions of drought that is prevailing in West Bengal, Tamilnadu and other parts of the country. In the Bangalore Working Committee and Hind Motors General Council meetings your attention was drawn to this. Our brethren in the rural sectors are face to face with near famine conditions. The situation in Tamilnadu is compounded by lack of even drinking water. Though the only means to tackle the situations rests with the Government of India, our comrades in the Left Front Government of West Bengal and the Working Class in West Bengal have risen to the occasion. The working class throughout the country must come to the help of the suffering peasantry. This is one of the very urgent tasks before us.

Comrades,

The great achievements of the Socialist Countries in all fields within a short span of time, the fact while the capitalist world is passing through one of the worst periods of the crisis arising out of the inherent contradictions of the system where tens of millions are unemployed and prices are soaring, while all these scourges are absent in the socialist countries, bears testimony to the superiority of the socialist system. Mankind is inevitably moving towards that goal, despite the tremendous obstacles sought to be put in its onwards march by the imperialists, including their feverish preparations for unleashing a nuclear war for destroying the socialist system. But imperialism will not automatically die. The working class, leading the mass of toilers has to deal the death blows on this rotten and stinking system.

Let us draw inspiration from these heroic struggles and carry on our struggle in our country so that the working class is able to lead our entire people in the victorious march to a new social order where exploitation of man by man will be a thing of the past.

REPORT OF THE WORK DURING LAST 2½ YEARS
ALL INDIA COORDINATION COMMITTEE OF
WORKING WOMEN

5th Conference of CITU Kanpur 13th to 17th April, 1983

—Vimala Ranadive

The All India Coordination Committee was formed in 1979 at Madras Convention with definite aims and objects, namely to organise working women under the influence of CITU on their specific problems which have been neglected so far by the trade unions including CITU. There were conferences in Kerala, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and some other places, attended by women from different industries and also by middle class employees like teachers nurses, office employees. The attendance was quite good in almost all the conferences.

During the last 2 years, the All India as well as the State Coordination Committees made some headway in a few states in respect of achieving some specific demands of working women for creches, transport, short working hours and accommodation for nurses etc. besides highlighting their problems. The acute unemployment of women due to introduction of machinery, suppression of trade union rights and attack on women trade unionist were some of the problems taken up at the centre with united efforts of various trade unions and women's organisations. These issues got good publicity in the press. A number of deputation, Dharnas, protest meetings by working women on these questions have taken place especially in Kerala, Tamilnadu and also in Delhi and Kanpur.

The Conferences of state and Central Government women employees were held in Kerala and West Bengal attended by a good number of women and men under the auspices of their own unions, of which a note is to be taken of. The conferences were addressed by Coms. Susheela Gopalan, Ahilya Rangnekar, Kanak Mukherjee and myself. The enthusiasm and initiative shown by the women employees in these conferences in advancing their problems on the platform with the criticism of their leadership too, though very mildly, for neglecting their cause was to be noted. The journal "Voice of the Working Woman" is highly appreciated as mouthing their own cause.

Another feature to be noted was, the movement of working women was taken up jointly, by the co-ordination committees

in the states and also by our women's organisations which strengthened the cause of working women. The problems of working women and the resolutions concerning them were taken up on the platform of women's organisations making it a common cause for both the sections. In the conferences at Udaipur in Rajasthan, Gwalior and Morena in Madhya Pradesh held recently, a good number of women came from agricultural, contract, garment, Beedi construction etc. along with a few from teachers and office employees. The West Bengal branch of AIDWA brought out a huge procession of working women on 'Employment Day' on August 18th 1982.

At many places, working women in different offices, not directly connected with CITU are taking up their problems with the guidance of their unions or separately by the Co-ordination Committees. The Government and non-government agencies, Research Centres, working women's study groups and centres in India and outside, write to us or meet us requesting for information on the problems of working women. They also send us good materials which we utilise for the journal. The important point to be noted here is a number of these so-called research centres are directly or indirectly connected with foreign countries and with Christian missioneries.

The women's wings of International Trade Unions like WFTU, TUI, in different industries are in contact with us and are requesting us to send material on working women while providing material about their problems. The main concern of their seems to be the participation of working women in the trade unions, and their promotions on the higher bodies. It is known that women's wings of the trade unions exist in most of the trade unions there, and they function under the guidance of the respective trade unions.

All these confirm the correct steps the CITU has taken with regard to the problems of working women and their promotion in the trade union bodies which resulted its recognition by various sources, official and non-official.

But, the important point as to the organisation of women in industries under our influence remains still to be done, the task neglected by our unions so far. There are thousands of women in coir, cashew, plantation, beedi, garment construction, fisheries and in the unorganised industries, a majority of them perhaps, are under CITU, who have played a major role in many struggles. If we take into consideration as to how far we have succeeded in organising these sections, we have to say, we have done not much. Special efforts to bring them to our unions were not made, inspite of the directions given in the

conferences and elsewhere. Women comrades working in the state Coordination Committees have brought this to the notice of the State CITU at many places and some efforts have been made by the leadership in states too. But essentially the problem still remains to be attended to properly and much is required to be done in this respect.

The unions, being dominated by male comrades, during discussions between women comrades and CITU leadership, a number of times the question of non-cooperation to women comrades by the leaders, is raised. Therefore, it is a great necessity to educate and convince the union leadership about the correctness of the policies of CITU on the question of working women and the task.

Voice of the Working Woman

The journal "Voice of the Working Woman" is a media to coordinate the activities of working women, by giving the reports of struggles, and their organisation reports on Industries, working women in International field and their struggles and so on. The journal also covers, the news about the activities of AIDWA. It is run and guided by CITU and financially subsidized by it. The sale of the journal is 1600-1700 and priced at Rs. 0.50 per copy till now. The journal is mainly sold in Kerala, Tamilnadu, Andhra Pradesh and in Delhi. There is a constant demand for the journal from various sources, in India and also outside. It goes to all International Trade Unions like WFTU, TUI and also to socialist countries and ANC. The response is also quite good.

It is true, the journal should voice the demands, struggles, problems etc. of the working women. But in practice, very few women comrades from the states write on these, despite the fact that a number of struggles of women of different sections are often launched. If this weakness is removed the journal can be improved much.

The price of the journal has to be increased from Rs. 0.50 to Re. 1.00 due to unavoidable reasons. It is financially supported by CITU, and unless there is an increase in the sale, availability of regular advertisement etc. to continue at such low price becomes difficult. Special efforts are to be made by our committees to subscribe more members as the comrades from Vishakhapatnam have done. Kerala comrades are selling 500 copies which is creditable.

This question should be taken up seriously by CITU and our coordination committees in states.

Karnataka	48	27,978	47	34,483	94	34,000
Kerala	127	123,240	164	106,244	656	300,000
Madhya Pradesh	15	19,964	29	15,685	80	18,568
Maharashtra	34	33,605	29	39,725	73	72,000
Orissa	6	3,629	11	6,217	43	18,742
Pondicherry	6	1,819	7	2,405	14	1,372
Punjab	16	8,151	20	11,115	117	44,229
Rajasthan	31	9,294	73	16,799	144	23,565
Tamilnadu	145	87,258	146	77,695	486	130,000
Tripura	5	1,169	7	2,764	20	150,000
Uttar Pradesh	60	16,119	71	24,687	163	25,578
West Bengal	457	408,606	583	476,458	1672	600,000
Total :	1306	817,805	1390	917,633	4214	14,86,275

N.B.— For Delhi, the figures given by the Registrar of Trade Unions relate to Delhi area alone whereas in the figures of last column, the union and the membership at Ghaziabad (U.P) and Faridabad (Haryana) are included.

PAMPHLETS PUBLISHED BETWEEN 4TH & 5TH
CONFERENCES OF CITU

	<i>No. of Copies printed</i>
1. Fight Unitedly for the cause of Indian Women (Proceedings of the All India Convention of Working Women — Madras April 1979) (English)	3,000
2. The CITU Resolves at Madras (Reviewing the Fourth Conference and resolutions adopted in it) — (English)	1,000
3. Universal Declaration of Trade Union Rights (adopted by the Ninth Congress of WFTU) — (Englishh)	1,000
4. Real Face of Welfare Schemes in Coal Mines — (Hindi)	3,000
5. Conditions of Working Women in Mines — (Hindi)	2,000
6. Computer Menace in Indian Railways — (English)	2,000
7. Rising Attacks, Growing Struggles — (English) (Speech of Com. B.T. Ranadive in the Karnataka State CITU (Conference))	2,000
8. Badhta Daman, Shaktishali Sangarsh — (Hindi) Inaugural Speech of Com. B.T. Ranadive at All India Coal Workers Conference, Raniganj	2,000
9. Buildup a Formidable Force — (English) (Documents of Bombay Convention June 4, 1981)	2,000
10. -DO- (Hindi) -Do-	10,000
11. The E.S.I. Scheme — A Hoax—(English)	2,000
12. Defend Right to Strike — (English)	4,000
13. -DO- (Hindi)	9,000
14. Intensify the struggle for minimum wages (Hindi) Certain other publications taken in hand could not be completed yet	10,000

Apart from the pamphlets, Special Numbers of the journals "The Working Class and "CITU Mazdoor" have been brought out on various occasions covering many issues and special sale was organised as a measure of campaign and ideological campaign.

Month		Number of Copies Printed	
		The Working Class	CITU Mazdoor
May	1981	4,500	5,000
September	1981 (16 pages supplement Presidential Address)	3,500	—
December	1981	5,000	4,500
April	1982 (8 page supplement Tenth World Congress)	3,300	3,800
May	1982	4,500	3,800
September	1982	4,000	6,000
October	1982 (Rajasthan CITU Conference)	—	9,000

The following table would give a comparative picture of the sale of the journals

	April 1979	August 1980	August 1981	July 1982	December 1982	March 1983
The Working Class	4000	3500	3550	3300	3300	3800
CITU Mazdoor	4000	3000	2800	3200	3700	4200

The above shows that the number of journals sold had dipped low by August, 1981 and has again picked up to a position near about April 1979 figures.

There is however some difference. In the years 1979 and 1980, there were practically no occasion when more than 16 pages each were published. But in 1981 and 1982 the position changed as follows which means that more coverage could be given to news as well as ideological campaign.

Year	Average number of pages of the journal	
	The Working Class	CITU Mazdoor
1981	22	19.66
1982	25.17	25.5