



THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITU

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Editorial Board

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May Day Manifesto Of The CITU 1974

THE WORKING CLASS AND THE TOILING MILLIONS of India during the last one year participated unitedly and heroically in innumerable struggles in defence of their standard of living as well as for trade union and democratic rights. The Centre of Indian Trade Unions on the occasion of MAY DAY—the great international day of working class solidarity—conveys its warmest greetings to all the valient fighters in these struggles.

The CITU pays homage to the memory of hundreds of martyrs who fell fighting the bullets of trigger-happy police in Gujarat, Bihar, Maharashtra, M.P. and other States during agitations against scarcity and high prices of food and other essential commodities. The CITU further pays homage to the martyrs who laid down their precious lives resisting murderous attacks of the gangsters of the management and the ruling party. The CITU cannot but remember over 30,000 political prisoners who are languishing inside Congress jails without trial under DIR, MISA and other preventive laws. The CITU demands that the emergency should be withdrawn immediately and the DIR and MISA scrapped.

Over 300 trade unions in West Bengal are still under occupation of the Congress goondas, while murderous attacks against the CITU activists still continue unabated. Several areas are still out of bounds for the CITU workers. The CITU congratulates the working class of West Bengal for its struggle against these gangsterism and appeals to the trade union and democratic movement in India to raise their voice of protest against the supression of trade union rights in West Bengal.

The CITU greets lakhs of workers and employees in several industries who fought doggedly since the May Day last year. It conveys its greetings to the 3 lakh jute workers all over India, 2 lakh textile workers of Bombay and one and a half lakh textile wotkers

May Day Greetings !

in Tamil Nadu for their united and longdrawn strikes. It greets the Loco running staff who had to resort to strike twice in one year demanding 10 hour duty, the LIC employees for their firm and determined struggle against lockout and for economic demands and the employees of the Indian Airlines for their protracted struggle against arbitrary proposals of the authorities.

The CITU congratulates the doctors, engineers, teachers, students, women and other sections for intensifying their struggles against the inroads into their living standards. It greets the State and Central Government employees for the remarkable unity they have achieved in this year to forge mighty struggles in the forthcoming days. The unprecedented all India Strike of State Government employees on April 9 was just a beginning of still bigger struggles.

The CITU notes with pleasure the remarkable growth of the UCTU during the last one year which only reflects the growing urge among various sections of working class for united actions. In contrast, the discredited National Council of Trade Unions riddled with internal conflict and could not give a single call for struggle on common issue facing the Working class. The CITU is confident that the organisation of the UCTU will be further strengthened in the forthcoming year.

CITU welcomes the formation of the National Co-ordination Committee of Railway unions with more than 100 unions in railways. The unity

which was eluding the railway workers for decades is an important and historic development. The accumulated discontent among the railwaymen is reaching a bursting point and an all India indefinite General strike is on the agenda. The strike when it materialises will be a historic landmark in the trade union struggle and will immediately strengthen the struggle of all sections of workers and give a push forward for the democratic movement.

The working class and the people of India are facing an unprecedented offensive by the capitalists and the landlords on their standard of living. The recent crushing burden of taxation and increase in the railway fare by the General and Railway Budgets will impose additional miseries on the people. The Government's decision to increase price of cotton textile cloth and abject surrender before the landed interests by going back from the earlier decision of take-over of wheat trade will further aggravate the situation.

The prices of essential commodities have risen to new heights during the last 12 months. The All India Consumer Price Index Number has gone up by 26 per cent in this period. The registered unemployment has increased up to 83 lakhs and continues to rise menacingly. The closures, lay offs and increasing unutilised capacity of industries continue to haunt the working class which is faced with serious threat to his job security. The power crisis has made the matters still worse which has resulted in further loss of earnings to the workers.

The bankruptcy of the capitalist planning was never so clear to the workers as it is to-day. The Fifth Plan is in doldrums even before its launching. Despite talk of self reliance, the Indian Government is increasingly relying on foreign doles. The whole economy is corroded with all round stagnation and every effort to find out a solution within the present framework is bound to lead to utter failure.

When the working class and the people of India are raising their voice against these policies they are faced with most brutal Police repression as recently witnessed in Gujrat and Bihar. Their trade union and democratic rights are trampled under foot with a new threat of one party dictatorship looming large. The proposed Industrial Relations Bill that will soon be introduced in Parliament, will attack at the roots of trade union rights of workers. The onerous conditions of work imposed by the Indian Airlines management if allowed to succeed will reduce workers into slaves. Under these circumstances the call of the 9 Left parties to be organised on May 3 as a National Protest Day all over the country is most welcome. CITU calls upon all sections of working class and the people to observe strike and hartal on that day so that the call of Bharat Bundh will be a resounding success. This mighty action will express the firm determination of the entire working class and the toiling people of India to launch still

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Fascist Hell In Chile

Reberto Priosto

Roberto Priosto is a member of the Secretariat of the Standing Congress for Trade Union Unity of Latin America (CPUSTAL). On September 11, 1973 he was arrested at the headquarters of CPUSTAL and was in Jail for 85 days. In his interview to World Trade Union Movement he describes the shocking condition in jails,

The physical and mental tortures began at the Ministry of National Defence. Mercenaries insulted us and threatened us with immediate execution. In addition, we were made to undress and sit on the ground in the basements of this building, suffering the dampness and intense cold there. Then, with a rope they attached fifteen to eighteen Comrades in a line and left us in this way for five six hours. Our transfer was made in the same condition, that is, a soldier pulled on the end of the rope, dragging along the ground those who fell until we came to the barracks of the Second Tank Regiment of sinister reputation. This was where, in fact, the attempted coup d'etat of June had started. I remained there two nights and one day and I was maltreated, particularly during the interrogation which I underwent by two soldiers and one civilian belonging to the fascist organisation "Fatherland and Freedom". Just when one least expected it, fists and rifle butts began to rain blows. During all this time I was given nothing to eat or drink.

Once I had passed through this "stage", I was transferred to the Chile Stadium in the centre of Santiago which has

room for 40,000 spectators. This stadium had become a veritable place of torture and murder, of terror and death. As soon as we arrived, having beaten us with rifle butts we were put into an enclosure exposed to the weather, since it was only closed off by a grille. We remained there lying on our stomachs with our hands behind our head for 42 hours without being allowed to change our position even to satisfy the requirements of nature. Obviously, we satisfied them on the spot and, during this period, our gaolers trampled on us, insulted us and beat us.

Another method of torture was to make "human pyramids" of four persons per layer. It is unnecessary to say that those Comrades who were underneath were smothered and suffered terribly. When our torment came to an end those below were black and blue all over. Thus, the main aim of the soldiers was to attack the human dignity of the individual and then to destroy us physically.

They came to watch the "show" behind the grille, exclaiming: "The more of them who die, the better it will be; we'll have less work shooting them".

From where we were we could

perfectly well see the groups of Comrades who were led to the firing squad; we could even hear their cries. Often, they were made to walk in front so that they could then be shot in the back by an automatic rifle.

Our lives hung by a thread; they depended on the slightest whim of the soldiers if they had the "itch" to fire.

The narrow street which leads to the Chile Stadium became a "Street of death" for hundreds of patriots. Torture, suffering, horrors of all sorts which the soldiers took good care to hide from the rest of the prisoners, were such that two young detainees threw themselves from the top of the stadium, preferring death to moral degradation and torture. Two others of Argentine nationality were summarily shot in front of the other prisoners.

Along with us there was imprisoned the celebrated Chilean composer Victor Jara whose songs glorified the work of the people and castigated the reactionary and imperialist conspiracy. All the fascist hate let loose on him did not succeed in shaking him. Through the windows of the adjoining room to ours which was his cell he he replied to our greetings and our signs with his unchanging smile. Victor gave proof of an absolute calm and dignity which made the traitorous soldiers besides themselves with rage. His life as a prisoner was very brief, for at dawn on September 16 he was killed and his body was thrown into a ditch dug for the Santiago underground

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CITU Supports Proposed All India Railway Strike

Com. B.T. Ranadive, President CITU has issued the following statement to the press :

"The obdurate attitude taken by the Union Railway Ministry towards the longstanding demands of the 14 lakh railmen has left no other alternative before the railway unions but to give strike notices. If the Railway Ministry does not meet the demands of the workers in time, the strike of railway workers on May 8 will be inevitable. The CITU is of the opinion that if the railway strike materialises, the entire responsibility for the dislocation of the railway traffic will be on the Government.

The CITU congratulates all the Railway Unions who have served strike Notices and assures them full support in their just struggle. The CITU appeals to the entire trade union movement to rally behind the railway employees in their hour of strike. The demand for need based wage for parity with the employees in Public Sector undertakings as well as for bonus are reasonable and should have been accepted by the Government long ago. Their struggle for trade union and democratic rights and against the victimisations is fully justified.

The CITU appeals to all the Central Government Employees to express their active solidarity with the railway employees since these demands are the demands of the Government employees movement.

While demanding immediate acceptance of the demands of the railwaymen, the CITU appeals to all railway employees to remain firm and united till the demands are achieved".

AIPWF Working Committee Decides On Programme Of Struggle

A MEETING OF THE ALL India Plantation Workers' Federation was held on the 8th April, 1974 at Visakhapatnam under the presidentship of Com. K. Padmanabhan. Comrades B. T. Ranadive, President CITU, M. K. Pandhe, Secretary CITU, R. Umanath and K. Ramani were special invitees. The following decisions were taken unanimously :

1. To observe "Demands week" from 25th to 31st May all over India, to highlight the serious situation facing the Plantation Industry as a result of closures of gradens leading to several deaths due to starvation and unemployment of thousands of workers.

2. To collect 2 lakhs signatures of plantation workers and a petition to be submitted to Parliament in the month of August on the above demands.

3. To protest against the proposal of the Central Government to include the Plantation Industry in the ESI scheme.

4. To hold the Second Conference of AIPWF in Kerala before the end of the year 1974.

5. To co-opt Com. R. Umanath on the Working Committee of AIPWF and to nominate him to the first unitary meeting called by TUI at Madras on the 15th of April to consider the preparation of the proposed Asian Plantation Conference to be held this year.

It was also decided that all the unions should send their views on the proposal made by some trade unions before the Parliamentary Select Committee regarding a cess to be collected by the Government on the production of plantations and the amount thus realised should be utilised for the welfare of the Plantation workers for Medical benefits, housing etc. through a Welfare Board to be constituted for the purpose.

ERRATA

[Readers are requested to make the following corrections in Comrade B. T. Ranadive's Address to the CITU General Council meeting—titled "Forward To New Militant Struggles"—which appeared in our April 1974 issue. We deeply regret these printing errors. —Ed.]

Page	Col.	Para	Line	Read
10	1	2	3	"fell by 0'8" in place of "felt by 8"
10	2	3	4	"crime" in place of "clime"
12	1	last	12	"pot" in place of "plot"
14	1	last	1	"no" in place of "on"
15	1	4	4	"urge" in place of "sugre"
16	2	2	17	comma after "accepted", "where" in place of "When" and "worker is" in place of "workers"
21	1	6	5	"exploitation" in place of "explanation"
21	1	6	6	"he" in place of "i.e."
21	2	1	2	"6447" in place of "64447"
21	2	last	7	"13" after "committee of ..."
22	2	1	3	"moot" in place of "most"

Public Sector Undertakings and their attitude to labour—A Sample

TIME and again life has proved that mere nationalisation cannot be equated with socialism as certain reformists declare to be. Engels, in his *Anti-Duhring*, calls such attempts of reformists to impart a socialist tinge to bourgeois nationalisation "spurious socialism". Further, such measures cannot be regarded as "a socialistic measure, directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously" (1). Lenin warned the working class that "the erroneous bourgeois reformist assertion that monopoly capitalism or state-monopoly capitalism is *no longer* capitalism, but can now be called 'state-socialism' and so on, is very common" (2). As Lenin further says, the "proximity" of state-monopoly capitalism to socialism is used only as an argument for the "facility, feasibility, and urgency of the socialist revolution, and not at all as an argument for tolerating the repudiation of such a revolution and the efforts to make capitalism look more attractive, something which all reformists are trying to do" (3).

Indeed, unlike capitalism which ripened within the womb of feudalism, socialism does not ripen within the womb of capitalism, nor are the socialist forms ready-made when the socialist revolution begins. The abolition of capitalist property and the conversion of the means of production into socialist property

become feasible only after the working class has taken power.

Unless we keep in mind these principles of Marxism-Leninism, we are apt to get shocks when we find the management of public sector undertakings indulging in anti-labour activities. Instead, such antilabour activities should convince the working people of the urgency of the socialist revolution.

16 workmen of Barsua Iron Ore Mines owned by the Hindustan Steel Limited were dismissed on the ground of their conviction in a criminal court, and the management did not even wait for the period of the appeal to end. The order of conviction by the criminal court was quashed in appeal by the Additional Sessions Judge of Sundergarh within 6 months on 19 September 1972. But the management of the Government undertaking did not reinstate the dismissed workmen though the order of conviction was set aside, when even a reasonably honest private employer should have done the same. These nationalised undertakings do not care to behave as ideal employers.

If only matter had rested there!

The harassed employees got the dispute referred to the Industrial Tribunal and judgement by the Tribunal was given as late as 31 December 1973. The Tribu-

nal held on the basis of the various judgements cited before him that, when a person's conviction is set aside by a higher court, he must be deemed not to have been convicted at all. It is as if such order of conviction was never in existence. And once the conviction is set aside or quashed, the dismissal order passed on the basis of such conviction must fall to the ground.

In fact, the position in law recognised by the Labour Tribunal is of long standing and has been repeatedly affirmed and reiterated by the different courts in India (4). The management of Hindustan Steel Limited was expected to know this legal position. They should not have driven the workmen to seek redress in a Tribunal, keeping them unemployed for so long a period. Ignorance of law is no excuse and cannot also be pleaded by the management.

Indeed, the conclusion is inescapable that the bureaucrats who are connected by visible and invisible threads to the capitalist order are not disposed to be considerate to the workers who continue to be wage-slaves and are treated as such by these bureaucrats.

Even, after the judgement of the Tribunal as early as December 1973, the management has not yet thought fit to reinstate the workmen though the Tribunal directed that they should be re-instated with back wages. It is being bragged by them that they would appeal from the Judgement of the Tribunal to the High Court. We

are sure, and the management cannot but be so, that the result of any appeal to the High Court would not improve matters for the employers. The only motive seems to be to wear the workers out. Law courts are expensive and, above all, time-consuming places. The employers use them on the chess-board of their struggle against the employees to gain time. The processes of court are deliberately abused by them.

It seems that management is fighting a sordid political game also. These dismissed workers are active and effective organisers on behalf of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions among the workers. Obviously serious attempts are being made to keep these workers out. The criminal case was also rigged up at the instance of the management who set up one Shri R. L. Srivastava, Assistant in the B.I.M. section and who belonged to the rival union. The said Shri Srivastava, according to the workmen, filed a false complaint against the workmen alleging that they had trespassed into his house and abused him.

In any event, the law is clear and that has been pointed out with sufficient clarity in the award of the Tribunal. The management should no longer drag their feet and waste no time in reinstating them with all back wages and benefits.

Arun Prokas Chatterjee

- 1) *Engels, Anti-Duhring*
- 2) *Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 25, p. 442-43*
- 3) *ibid., p. 443*
- 4) *AIR 1961 Madras 486; AIR 1950 Punjab 410; AIR 1960 All 538; AIR 1965 Punjab 153; AIR 1965 Calcutta 75*

Consumer Price Index Numbers (INDUSTRIAL WORKERS/BASE 1960-100)

State/Centre	1973-74			Amritsar	262	264	269
	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.				
Andhra Pradesh				Rajasthan			
Hyderabad	257	257	263	Ajmer	265	275	280
Assam				Jaipur	272	278	284
Digboi	252	249	255	Tamilnadu			
Bihar				Coimbatore	226	232	236
Jamshedpur	259	268	275	Madras	233	238	241
Jharia	276	284	286	Madurai	248	254	251
Gujarat				U. P.			
Ahmedabad	262	264	260	Kanpur	259	268	272
Bhavnagar	289	293	289	Saharanpur	—	276	280
Haryana				Varanasi	—	302	307
Yamunanagar	261	272	275	West Bengal			
J & K				Calcutta	238	240	241
Srinagar	213	219	218	Howrah	252	256	255
Karnataka				Delhi	271	278	280
Bangalore	274	280	284	Other Centres			
Kolar Gold Field	—	284	289	Cuttack (1949)	308	312	307
Kerala				Berhampur (1949)	349	352	353
Alleppey	—	293	297	Jabalpur (1949)	320	336	342
Alwaye	267	265	273	Beawar (1951-52)	309	311	312
Mundakayam	266	271	272	Himachal Pradesh (1965)	192	197	199
M. P.				Goa (1966)	170	173	177
Bhopal	262	270	277	Tripura (1961)	219	229	232
Gwalior	280	290	299	All India (1960)			
Indore	285	294	298	do (1949)	260	264	264
Maharashtra					316	321	325
Bombay	238	241	243				
Nagpur	278	275	275				
Sholapur	298	293	282				
Orissa							
Barbil	—	244	248				
Sambalpur	257	262	263				
Punjab							

* The index for other Centres are on different bases given in bracket.

Source : Index Sheet, Labour Bureau, Simla

Rising Unemployment In Developed Capitalist Countries (Registered Unemployment in thousands)

Year	U.S.A.	U.K.	Fed. Germany	France	Italy	Japan	Canada
1965	3366	360	139	142	1285	390	280
1969	2831	597	173	223	964	570	302
1970	4088	640	144	262	961	593	495
1971	4993	849	178	338	1120	639	552
1972	4840	977	264	391	1137	588	569
1973 (Jan.-April)	4551	776	308	390	1200	790	630

Source : World Trade Union Movement, October 1973.

Policy Statement On Productivity

Adopted by the General Council Meeting,

Visakhapatnam, April 4-7, 1974

C. I. T. U. considers that under capitalism where means of production are owned by handful of exploiters and profit is the only motive power for all productive activity, the productivity measures are just proposals to extract more work from the workers, for intensification of exploitation and add to the profitability of the employers. Moreover every such proposal has either led to reduction in the employed workers or stoppage in new recruitment.

The capitalists have considerably added to the productivity of the workers by introducing new advanced machines, mechanisation, modernisation, rationalisation which has led to the swelling of the vast army of the unemployed. The introduction of computers have made the problem of educated unemployed more serious.

The CITU therefore is opposed to all plans of increased exploitation whatever pretty name they may be given. This is our basic position. And the working class has to fight the capitalist designs put forward through innocent looking proposals for higher production, with all the enticements and inducements they offer.

The Government of India constituted the National Productivity Council in 1957 with the sole purpose of increasing the productivity of workers and add to the profitability of employers.

The NPC is not merely a body formed for the purpose of exchange of views etc., but it has administrative functions. It renders services to employers by taking assignments of consultants in various productivity measures. The NPC has provided several productivity schemes to the employers which amounted to an attack on the workers. The so called tripartite character of NPC is only a smokescreen to cover up its pro-employer activities. Therefore there is no question of our participation in NPC or its Committees which is likely to be used against us by the employers.

Trade Unions, however, cannot ignore the fact that the employers and the agencies created by the employers, knowing fully well that the workers will not agree with any proposal to increase the workload, make every effort to create illusions in the minds of workers by stating that they would also benefit by the scheme. Under such circumstances it would not be enough to state merely our basic position but to thoroughly study these proposals with a view to correctly expose their harmful effect on the working and living conditions of workers. In some cases trade unions will have to make counter proposals in order to mobilise the workers in the fight against the employers' proposals.

For example, we are opposed to job evaluation, work study, time and motion study and simi-

lar other devices of increasing productivity. However, an impression is sought to be created that these are most scientific methods of determining remuneration to workers and in fixing wage differentials. Since these schemes at times give more earning to the workers by intensifying the workload, they do not realise that this also enables the capitalists to grab higher profits and thus amounts to intensification of their exploitation. Trade Unions should expose their real class content by concretely placing facts about the increased exploitation and pseudo-scientific character of these devices.

In the name of sharing the gains of productivity some crumbs are thrown at the workers. The incentive schemes are just used as donkeys' carrot to extract additional workload with less cost of production per unit. The norms fixed are usually high and workers are cheated through statistical jugglery under the mask of so-called techniques of industrial engineering. Therefore their real content has to be uncovered with proper criticism and education of the workers.

The revisionists and the reformists oppose some of the productivity measures within the framework of the proposals placed by the employers. They put up a show of small demands and allow the entire plan of the Capitalists to succeed. They are satisfied with a little compensation for additional work-load. Our trade unions should resolutely oppose such erroneous attitude

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RAILWAY WORKERS TO GO ON GENERAL STRIKE FROM MAY 8

THE FANFARE OF THE bourgeois Press that negotiations to avert the rail strike are on and the prospect of a negotiated settlement is bright was proved to be yet another attempt to deceive the public. On April 15, the Member Staff, Railway Board, informed the members of the Action Committee that the decisions so far taken by the Government need no change. He refused to even accept that a drive for large-scale victimisation and wanton arrest is on and refused to stop them in order to create a congenial atmosphere for negotiations. Even the modest proposals of NFIR for some improvements in the recommendations of Third Pay Commission were turned down. The Railway Minister, who had earlier assured his availability to smoothen difficulties in negotiations, refused to meet the representatives of railwaymen. George Fernandes, Convenor, National Co-ordination Committee for Railwaymen's Struggles (NCCRS) immediately addressed a letter to the Railway Minister asking him to clarify if 'Mr. Warriar's word is the last word' and if not, what the Govt. proposed to do in the matter.

The meeting of the NCCRS started at 3 p.m. on the same date in this background. Quite a large number of ordinary railwaymen, belonging to various

organisations, had assembled to know the decision. They were also allowed to attend the meeting as visitors. George Fernandes who presided over the meeting, explained the situation to the members. All those, who spoke in the meeting, favoured immediate fixing up of the date of the strike. They were bristling with indignation at the shabby treatment by the Government and the cavalier fashion in which the negotiation was conducted. The reports given by the members indicated that a tremendous enthusiasm has been roused amongst the railwaymen. There were some minor difficulties at some levels about forging complete unity, but they were only of a minor nature, which could be easily overcome. While the meeting was in progress, the Railway Minister informed the Convenor of the NCCRS over telephone that he would like to meet the representatives on April 18. After thorough discussions, a resolution was moved in which it was stated that "the only conclusion to be drawn from the discussions so far is that the Railway Ministry is keen on a confrontation with the workers and will concede nothing unless the workers have gone through a struggle."

The resolution further stated that "the intentions of Railway Ministry are clear from the

massive repression let loose on the trade union activists on railways since the February 27 Convention. There have been penal transfers, suspensions, dismissals, and arrests of workers on a large scale, especially, on the N.F., Eastern, Northern and South Eastern Railways. The Territorial Army units have been moved to various railways, Border Security Force and Army have been called to duty, prospective strike breakers have been offered fat rewards and concessions and the Administration is indulging in other unfair labour practices. The propaganda machinery of the Govt., principally the radio, TV and newspapers, has been working overtime to run down the railwaymen and to drive a wedge between them and the people."

"In the circumstances, railwaymen are now left with no alternative but to take a decision to launch an indefinite general strike. The National Co-ordination Committee for Railwaymen's Struggle calls upon the railwaymen to go on an indefinite general strike from 6 hours on 8th May, 1974."

In the resolution, it was pointed out to the public that the strike is being forced upon the railwaymen by the Government and urged upon "the Government to revise its stand and bring about an amicable settlement." It was however pointed out that "no meaningful talks would be possible if the repressive measures let loose by the Railway Administration are not withdrawn forthwith."

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Railway Workers Strike From May 8

From Page Eight

Warning about the coming days, the resolution said that "the railwaymen today are at the threshold of the biggest ever struggle of their history. On the outcome of this struggle depends not only the future of the railwaymen, but of the entire working class movement and of the movement of the exploited and downtrodden people in the country. There is no doubting that the now inevitable struggle will be a bitter one. From past experiences, from the attitude shown by the Railway Administration during the negotiations and from the repressive measures already let loose, it is obvious that the Government will come down with all its might against the workers. Railwaymen will be called upon to make the greatest of sacrifices before they are able to wrest their just and legitimate demands from the Railway Ministry."

While directing all organisations to serve strike notice before April 23, the resolution appealed to NFIR to join the strike so that "the struggle may be quick and decisive." The railwaymen were asked to consolidate the unity already achieved and strengthen links with wider masses and frustrate the attempts to isolate railwaymen from the people. An appeal was also made to the people of the country and various mass organisations "to extend their support to railwaymen in their hour of trial."

In another resolution an appeal was made to all organisa-

tions of railwaymen "to suspend their sectional agitations already launched or proposed to be launched and concentrate all their energies and efforts to making the general strike a resounding success."

With ringing slogans of unity and struggle, the meeting ended with a note of determination for the ensuing struggle.

Strike By 6.5 Million Japanese Workers

SIX and half million workers and employees in both public and private transport services in Japan went on a nation-wide strike on April 11 demanding 30 per cent rise in wages and recognition of the right to strike for public sector workers.

The strike paralysed all forms of transport as workers in public and private railways, airways, bus transport, taxis and other forms of transport joined the strike, bringing production in all sectors to a grinding halt.

The workers of national railways have demanded wage rise of 30,000 Yen (100 dollars) per month plus an equal amount as ad hoc anti-inflation payment, whereas private railway workers are demanding monthly wage rise of 35000 yen plus a special anti-inflation allowance.

The Government, which earlier offered a 20 per cent wage rise, had to climb down and start negotiations on the workers' demands.

Policy Statement On Productivity

From Page Seven

towards productivity so that interest of the workers are protected.

We are totally against linking of wages or bonus to productivity. Our opinion is that at the existing level of productivity there is a prima facie case for increase in wages. Any attempt to link wages with productivity should be unitedly resisted by the trade union movement.

While fighting against every productivity measure trade unions should always take into account the sentiment of democratic public opinion. In days of scarcity of all essential commodities, the capitalists seek to create an impression that "productivity is key to plenty". The opposition to productivity drive is quite often used to create a public opinion against the struggle of the workers, by emphasising that scarcity is due to low productivity. Trade unions should take note of this democratic opinion and try to educate the same exposing the profit greed of the employers and justifying the case of the workers in order to win sympathy of the people in favour of their struggle.

Trade unions should use every opportunity to express their views on the question of productivity, through all suitable forums without making any commitment on their part, so that the game behind the productivity drive of the employers is exposed and all sections of people understand the anti-working class and anti-people character of the productivity movement.

THE GENERAL COUNCIL of the CITU met at Visakhapatnam on April 4-7, with 149 members and invitees attending. Com. B.T. Ranadive, President CITU presided.

The General Council meeting evoked considerable enthusiasm among the working class and Trade Unions in the area who spared no efforts to make the meeting a grand success. A broad-based Reception Committee was formed with local trade unions, majority of them non-CITU unions, and about Rs. 15,000 was collected from among the workers for the meeting. Volunteers from the Hindusthan Shipyard, Bharat Heavy Plates, Coromandel Fertilisers and Visakha Port worked day and night to look after the conveniences of the members.

Com. Bhushan Rao, Chairman of the Reception Committee cordially welcomed the members, after which Com. B.T. Ranadive delivered his presidential address (see April, 1974 issue of *The Working Class*).

The General Council paid warm homage to the memory of Comrades Muzaffar Ahmed, Satish Pakrashi, Dr. Narayan Roy and others and also martyrs who laid down their lives facing police bullets and assassins' daggers.

The General Council welcomed the decision of the nine Left parties to observe May 3 as All-India Protest Day against the anti-people policies of the Government and, by a resolution, called upon all CITU Unions to organise country-wide strike and

CITU General Council Calls For Country-wide Struggle

hartal to protest against these policies.

General Secretary's Report

Comrade P. Ramamurti, General Secretary of the CITU then placed his report which reviewed the advance of the working class movement in the country and the activities of the CITU since the last meeting of the Working Committee.

At the outset he paid homage to the memory of those who fell victims to the bullets of Congress police and daggers of Congress goondas in West Bengal, Kerala, Maharashtra and other places as well as the martyrs who laid down their lives in Gujarat, Bihar and other States while fighting the anti-people policies of the Government.

New Strike Wave

Reviewing the upsurge of militant working class struggles all over the country, he observed "During the last six months, the entire country witnessed a new strike-wave involving several lakhs of workers. These strikes have been long-drawn, in character and have shown the growing awareness among the masses for resisting capitalist onslaughts with united strength and determination. The impact of some of the most important strikes on the industrial relations in the country was phenomenal."

Referring to the 41 day's strike of the Bombay textile workers, 33 days' strike of 3 lakh Jute workers all over the country and the strike by 1.5 lakh

textile workers of Tamilnadu, he observed: "The three major strikes alone thus have resulted in a total loss of over 18 million man-days. The total loss of man days during 1972 was a little over 17 million and according to available indications, the man-days lost during 1973 was almost the same. These 3 strikes during the last six months have taken a greater toll than the whole of 1972 or 1973 and it was slightly less than the peak year in 1971 when the total man-days lost was about 20 million."

He also referred to the strike of the Loco Running Staff in August and December last year and the struggle of the 40,000 LIC employees which he characterised as "among the most tenaciously fought struggles in this period".

Urge for United Struggle Growing

He also gave a detailed picture of the united struggles conducted in different States during this period and drew the attention of members to some other notable struggles of this period, viz. the long-drawn struggle of the employees of Indian Airlines, the struggle of junior doctors and engineers for better allowance and service conditions and the indefinite strike of 7500 doctors and engineers of West Bengal. The CITU, he pointed out, lent its wholehearted support to these struggles.

Summing up the lessons of these struggles, he observed "All the movement and struggles I have referred to here underline the unprecedented desire among all sections of the working class to take the path of unity and struggle. This feature is most welcome to our organisation and we have to strive our best to see that these trends are further strengthened which alone can create powerful forces to defeat the policies of the Congress Government."

United Struggles of Railwaymen and State Government Employees

He welcomed the new turn in the movement of 4 million State Government employees, specially the decision of the Working Committee of the A.I. State Government Employees Federation to go on one-day strike on April 9 as a "step in the right direction." The CITU, he said, fully supported the 7 point charter of demands and expressed its solidarity in their forthcoming strike.

Referring to the magnificent unity achieved by 17 lakh railwaymen on a common charter of demands, he pointed out that the meeting convened by the AIRF of all category-wise organisations in the railways and central trade unions on February 27 was a welcome move as this convention "for the first time brought all the fighting forces inside the railways on a common platform for common action."

Attacks on CITU Unions

Protesting against the continued incarceration of more than 30,000 political prisoners in the jails of Indira Gandhi, including thousands detained without trial under MISA, DIR and trumped up charges of murder, he pointed out that the thousands in jail also include our own comrades, fighters in the cause of workers and kisans. Our organisation, he said, has to take up this question.

Referring to the continued attacks on CITU unions in West Bengal, Com. Ramamurti said, "In West Bengal about 300 unions are still occupied by Congress hoodlums and trade union rights of a large number of workers are suppressed. The murderous attacks on trade union workers continue unabated and our unions are even now engaged in fighting this reign of terror."

"The national emergency," he added, "is deliberately being allowed to continue only to suit the interests of the ruling party. The DIR is being recklessly used during trade union struggles. I, therefore, reiterate our demand for immediate withdrawal of the emergency and to the use of DIR in industrial disputes."

Further advance of the UCTU

Com. Ramamurti reviewed the growth of the United Council of Trade Unions and pointed out that "it is gradually taking the shape of a form of unity of all sections of workers and

employees." He referred to the formation of State and Regional Committees of UCTU in Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala and other places and added, "We should do everything to strengthen such organisations wherever they have been formed and try to form them wherever they have not yet been formed."

Growth in CITU Activities

Reviewing the activities of the CITU in this period, he observed — "There has been a remarkable growth in the total activity of the CITU unions. Apart from the struggles conducted by our unions on demands of their members, they are increasingly participating in solidarity actions with other sections of the working class as well as with students, kisans etc. There have been several common actions in which the working class participated along with the entire people in the area or even State."

He went on to state, "Sections which were earlier not in the movement are also joining the mainstream of struggle and naturally they look upon the CITU for guidance and help. They have also seen through their experience that the CITU is the foremost champion of their cause and naturally, expectations about the CITU are being raised higher and higher."

Organisational Weaknesses

Comrade Ramamurti then pointed out some organisational weaknesses and emphasised that these must be overcome

to enable CITU to meet the challenge of the situation. He observed: "The situation is extremely favourable for us. The possibility of immense growth of the CITU in the near future is there if we utilise this situation properly. In this respect the organisation of the CITU plays an important part and we have to take immediate steps to meet the challenge of the situation."

He added, "Our success in the recent past should not blind us from the reality that we are at present unable to utilise the situation to the fullest extent. The radicalisation of the working class and the masses is taking place at a very fast rate but our organisational framework is lagging behind and at times we are only floating with the current."

"Under these circumstances we can ignore our organisational weakness only at a very heavy cost. I propose to speak about it frankly with the hope that all the members of the General Council will pay serious attention to it and make efforts to overcome it as soon as possible."

Comrade Ramamurti then discussed in detail the problems of small size unions and suggested formation of industry-wise unions to improve their functioning. He also dealt at length with the problems of industry-wise co-ordination, work among women workers, CITU's participation in seminars and bi-partite wage negotiation committees, etc. and suggested ways for meeting these problems.

Resist Attacks on People

While outlining the tasks

before the CITU, Comrade Ramamurti stressed the need for resisting the new attacks on the people and added, "Only one week ago the Central Government surrendered the earlier policy of wheat take-over. It was a boon to the hoarders and profiteers who would exploit the situation to boost the prices of wheat. The 80 per cent rise in the prices of textile cloth and increase in the margin of distributors from earlier 12 per cent to 20 per cent will further push up the already high prices of textile cloth."

"These two steps constitute another big attack on the poor people after the General and Railway budgets. All these measures put together will cause heavy inroads into the standard of living of the working class and the poor people. They are bound to join the resistance against these draconian measures."

"Our unions will have to play an important role in mobilising the working class in defence of their standard of living. Our policy of unity and struggle will be further tested in these struggles and the success of this line will give powerful blows to the machinations of disruptive forces."

Struggles of Other Sections

Comrade Ramamurti then pointed out the possibility of big struggles of agricultural workers and peasants and stressed, "We should not forget the rural poor who are hit more than others and there is every possibility of their joining the arena of struggle. The CITU should do everything to express its solidarity with the

struggles of the agricultural workers and peasants. The task of building worker-peasant alliance is of supreme importance in the forthcoming days."

In defence of T.U. Rights and Civil Liberties

Stressing the need for building up struggle for T. U. rights and civil liberties, Comrade Ramamurti said, "Faced with the growing isolation, the Government is resorting to more and more repressive measures and trade union and democratic rights of the working class are being attacked every now and then. The CITU should stand behind all sections of society facing repression and champion the cause of civil liberties and resist authoritarianism."

Comrade Ramamurti concluded with these words, "Comrades, I am confident that the deliberations of the General Council will enable us to fulfil our tasks in the present period and prepare the working class in carrying forward the struggle against the present capitalist-landlord Government and for proletarian Socialism."

Discussions on the Report

While taking part in the discussions on the report of the General Secretary, comrades narrated their experiences gained in the field of struggle and pointed out the betraying role played by the AITUC and INTUC leaderships, although their ranks very often participated in the common struggles.

Comrades Kamal Sarkar, Panchu Bose, S. P. Bhattacharya, Md, Ismail, Abul Hassan, Shanti

Bose, Chatur Ali, P. K. Kurane, Karmegham, D.D. Shirali, Bisweshar Ganguly, Vishwanatha Menon, M. K. Pandhe, Balaji Das, Hrishi Banerjee, Motilal Sharma, Shanti Ghatatak, Padmalochanan, Ghanashyam Saran Sinha, Dilip Mazumdar, Ravindranath, Robin Chatterjee, Ananda Pathak, Yeshwant Koli, Biren Dutta, Manjrekar (Goa), Hari Krishna, Gyan Sen, Shivaji Patnaik, K. Ramani and S.Y. Kolhatkar participated in the discussion, after which the report was adopted unanimously.

The meeting discussed in detail the question of CITU's stand on productivity and the National Productivity Council, in which twentyfive members participated. A policy statement was adopted in the meeting, calling upon the CITU unions to fight against all aspects of the productivity movement.

The meeting also discussed the Code of Discipline and the extension of ESI to plantations, mines and other establishments.

Com. B. T. Ranadive, President CITU reported on his visit to Vietnam and depicted the heroic resistance of the Vietnamese people against U.S. aggression.

Resolutions

The meeting adopted several resolutions on current issues before the working class. Com. Jyoti Basu, Vice-President CITU moved the resolution on the railway workers' struggle and congratulated the 17 lakh railway men for their decision to go on an indefinite strike if their demands were not met. He welcomed the unity of all fighting

forces in the railways and paid tributes to the valient struggle of the loco running staff. He called upon all CITU unions to rally behind the railway workers in their strike.

Com. Krishnapada Ghosh moved the resolution condemning continued reign of terror in West Bengal and demanding an end to it.

Com. Niren Ghosh moved the resolution greeting the Vietnamese people and workers for their valient fight against US imperialism and its puppets and supporting their demands.

Com. Samar Mukherjee moved a resolution expressing concern at the setting up of the US military base at Diego Garcia and demanding a firm stand by the Government of India to get the base vacated.

Comrade Monoranjan Roy moved a resolution condemning repressive measures by the Government and demanding their immediate withdrawal.

Comrade P. Ramamurti moved a resolution greeting the people of Gujarat for their heroic resistance and condemning police repression.

The General Council also adopted a resolution condemning the rise in prices and calling upon the working class to unitedly resist it. In another resolution it held the Government responsible for the power crisis and opposed all measures to shift the burden of the crisis on the workers.

By separate resolutions, the meeting congratulated the Jute workers, LIC employees, Indian Airlines employees, road transport workers, port and dock

workers, doctors and engineers, as also cashew, refractories and ceramics and aluminium workers for their heroic struggle.

The General Council greeted the decision of the four million State Government employees to go on strike on April 9 and also the decisions of the New Delhi Convention of March 15 for united movement of Central Government employees.

Resolutions were also adopted demanding withdrawal of emergency, demanding implementation of Beedi & Cigar Act, condemning police repression in Bihar, etc.

The meeting unanimously adopted the audited statement of accounts for the year 1973 presented by Comrade Samar Mukherjee, Treasurer of CITU. The meeting also adopted a report of the Credentials Committee granting affiliation to 65 unions with a total membership of 13,448.

The meeting decided to co-opt Comrades A.P. Chatterjee, Prakash Ghosh, Bishwanath Dasgupta, Vimal Randive and Sukhomoy Paul in the General Council.

Industry-wise Meetings & Open Session

Industry-wise meetings were held for plantations, road transport, port and docks, engineering, electricity, paper and beedi industries to discuss the question of co-ordination of CITU unions.

After the meeting, a well-attended mass meeting was held at Vishakhapatnam on April 7 which was presided over by Comrade N. Prasada Rao. Comrades B. T. Ranadive, P. Ramamurti and Jyoti Basu, in their speeches, explained the decisions of the General Council and called upon the working class to unitedly resist the impending attacks on their standard of living.

All India State Government Employees Strike

—A Grand Success

FORTY Lakh State Government employees throughout India participated in the strike on 9th April 1974 at the call of All India State Government Employees' Federation. This is the first strike of State employees on an all-India basis after Independence on basic and common demands, which include (1) Bringing down of prices of essential commodities, and ensuring adequate supply of food articles ; (2) Need-based minimum wage according to 15th Indian Labour Conference ; (3) Uniform D.A. formula providing full neutralisations for the price rise ; (4) Bonus for all ; (5) Release of the Chairman of the Federation and other Government employees arrested or detained under DIR and MISA ; (6) Repeal of Article 311(2)(c) of the Indian Constitution and reinstatement of all employees' leaders dismissed under this Article ; and (7) Scrapping of Government servants conduct rules and anti-labour legislations.

Why this strike ?

Since Independence the State Governments have always rejected the demands of the employees on the spacious plea of paucity of funds, while the Centre has refused to do anything on the ground that this is the responsibility of the States. The State Government employees draw the lowest pay packet without any fixed pay structure, price index allowance and other allowances. Trade union and other rights

denied to them by the British rulers have not been granted to them even to-day.

The State Government employees before going in for the strike decision explored all other forms of movement like meetings, demonstrations, badge-wearings, mass squatting and others. In April '73 a memorandum signed by 10 lakh State Government employees was submitted by a delegation of more than 1000 members to the Parliament.

But the Central and State Governments turned a deaf ear to all their reasonable demands and representations.

In such a situation the All India Federation gave a strike call which was supported by all Central Trade Unions and leftist parties, Convention of Railwaymen and the Central Government Employees, All India Insurance Employees Association, Confederation of Central Government Employees, Reserve Bank Employees' Association and others. The ruling Congress and its trade union wing INTUC did not support the strike.

On the eve of the strike the State Governments issued circulars threatening the employees with pay-cut, service break, forfeiture of pension and gratuity and other penal measures. The Ruling party threatened the employees with dire consequences and gangsters in their employ entered Government offices and

assaulted the employees and commanded them at the point of daggers and revolvers to come to office on the 9th. In many places, employees including ladies were severely beaten and taken to offices and were forced to sign attendance registers. One student who supported the strike was murdered in West Dinajpur.

But defying all these threats and attacks the strike proved a grand success in Assam, Tripura, Bihar, West Bengal, Maharashtra Madhyapadesh, Karnataka, Gujarat and Kerala. In Maharashtra, Zilla Parishad employees, School Board and University employees also participated in the strike. In Gujarat and Karnataka gazzeted officers also came forward in support of the strike. In West Bengal hospital, nursing and water supply employees joined the strike.

The Government, instead of negotiating on the demands, is out to take revenge. In West Bengal in particular, thousands of show-cause notices have been served. In Kerala 100 cases involving thousands of employees have been lodged and 2000 employees have been arrested. The Government have issued orders for the suspension of employees involved in cases. Similar victimisation measures have been adopted by other State Governments.

The CITU, while congratulating the State Government employees for their heroic united struggle has extended full support for their struggle in achieving their just demands.

West Bengal Newsletter

Call For 'Bundh' On May 7

Nine Left and democratic parties in West Bengal excluding the CPI, supported by four Central T. U. organisations—CITU, UTUC, UTUC (Lenin Sarani) and TUCC—have called for a General Strike and hartal in West Bengal on May 7 to protest against the anti-people policies of the Government.

In a joint statement, the four Central T.U. organisations have called upon the workers and employees of all industries, offices, shops and establishments, tea gardens, coal mines and transport services in West Bengal to unitedly observe State-wide General Strike on May 7. They have also appealed to the AITUC to unitedly observe the General Strike. The Statement also urges upon the workers and employees of West Bengal to observe effectively the All India Protest Day on May 3 and participate in the mass violation of laws.

Jute Workers Demonstrate Against Power-crisis

The severe power crisis in West Bengal has created a serious situation in almost all the 62 Jute Mills of the State. Many of the Jute Mills have completely stopped production and the workers have been laid off. Many other mills are working for only a few hours each day resulting in huge loss of earnings to the workers.

The mill-owners are shifting the burden of the crisis on the workers. Protesting against this

and demanding full wages for the period of non-functioning of mills due to power crisis and implementation of earlier agreement, jute workers held a demonstration before the IJMA office in Calcutta on April 26. The call was given jointly by Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor Union (CITU) and Jute Unions affiliated to five other Central T.U. organisations.

Central & Western Railway Workers Prepare For A. I. Strike

Over 20,000 workers of Central Railway, including 500 lady clerks, went in a procession to the General Manager's office on April 23 to submit the strike notice for the all-India Railway strike from May 8. The demonstration had a tremendous impact and has raised the morale of workers high.

A huge meeting of the workers of Western Railway was held on the same day at Churchgate after which the strike notice was served.

Earlier, on April 2, Dharna for 24 hours was held all over Central Railway branches. Meetings and demonstrations were held for a week onwards culminating in a mass meeting on April 8 which was attended by over 20,000 workers. Meetings and demonstrations were also held everywhere between May 8 to 23. Comrade S. Y. Kolhatkar, Ahilya Rangnekar and other CITU leaders addressed many of these meetings and

pledged the support of the CITU for the Railwaymen's impending strike.

Death of Loco Worker Sparks off Strike

Fredericks, a Steam-man of Vijayawada Loco Shed, South Central Railway, died while on duty because he was forced to work for more than sixteen hours at stretch and was refused sick memo by the authorities. The Loco Running staff took the lead and the entire railwaymen of Vijayawada including the clerks of Divisional office, came out in protest.

Central Govt. Employee to Observe "Accept Charter Day" on May 2

After the National Convention of Central Govt. Employees held in New Delhi on March 15, the various Central Govt. Employees Organisations have finalised a Charter of Demands and in their meeting on April 19 resolved to observe May 2 as "Accept the Charter Day" all over the country.

Beedi Workers to Observe All India Demands Day on May 15

A meeting of the representatives of CITU unions working in Beedi industry held on April 8 at Visakhapatnam decided to observe All India Demands Day on May 15 demanding implementation of Beedi and Cigar Workers Act, payment of arrears to all workers from the date of enforcement of the Act and on Charter of Demands.

It was decided that the day should be observed by organising one day strike wherever possible and by holding mass meetings and demonstrations in support of the demands.

Reports From Unions

Andhra Pradesh I. L. T. D. Co. Workers' Federation held its 4th Annual Conference on March 31 and April 1. The Conference adopted resolutions against Price rise and indirect taxation on the common man, demanding supply of food through fair price shops etc. The Conference elected a Central Executive including Venkateswarlu as President and G.S. Balaji Das as General Secretary.

Kerala Plantation Workers get increase in Wages

The Government of Kerala has notified the Minimum Wages for Plantation Industry after the continuous struggles, strikes, picketing of Govt offices etc conducted by the AIPWF, Kerala unit. There was a one-day strike on the 8th February last in which nearly 50,000 workers participated. After the strike, the Government of Kerala announced the increase of Rs. 1.68 paise for Rubber, Rs. 1.20 for Tea, Rs. 1.32 for Coffee and Rs. 1.34 for cardamom workers, bringing the total wages upto Rs. 6.49 for Rubber, Rs. 4.89 for tea, Rs. 5.22 for coffee, Rs. 4.89 for cardamom.

The UPASI and other employers' organisations are trying to torpedo the notification. The Plantation Workers Federation, Kerala is preparing to put up fight to protect the gains achieved by the workers.

Led by the CITU, powerloom workers in Sangli Industrial Colony, Madhavnagar and Budhgaon went on strike demanding payment of wage increase of Rs. 26/- awarded by the Tripartite committee appointed on the 1st of March. The owners refused to pay the increased wages and the workers demonstrated all over the city demanding the implementation of the Tripartite committees decisions.

Hundreds of workers of Lufthansa German Airlines demonstrated outside the Janpath Office of the Airlines protesting against management's anti-labour policy. They demanded an end to contract system in Lufthansa and immediate reinstatement of a victimised driver.

The Engineering Staff Association of N. F. Railway, Dibrugarh, in a recent meeting adopted resolutions demanding immediate release of arrested leaders and workers, urging upon the railway authorities to refrain from declaring relaying works as project, demanding immediate sanction of authorised scale of pay to all labourers in relaying and welding and supply of essential commodities to the workers at subsidised rates etc.

Civil Accounts Association and the Audit & Accounts Class VI Union, Shillong, held a joint mass rally on April 8. The rally adopted resolution supporting railway employees struggle. The rally called upon all sections of

employees to prepare for a broad-based militant struggle to realise their long standing demands. In a separate resolution the rally supported the All India State Government employees strike of April 9.

The 23rd Conference of Darjeeling District Chia Kaman Mazdoor Union was held on March 29 and ended in a public meeting at Kurseong Town on March 31. It was attended by 150 delegates of which more than twenty participated in the discussion on General Secretary's Report. Monoranjan Roy, M.P., General Secretary of AIPWF and Secretary of CITU greeted the Conference. An Executive Committee of 35 members was elected unanimously with Ratanlal Brahmīn M.P., as President and S. P. Lepcha as General Secretary. The Conference adopted a 18-point Charter of Demands including Nationalisation of Tea Industry, need-based minimum wage, re-opening of closed tea gardens, supporting All India State Government employees strike of April 9 etc.

1600 sugar workers of the Sangli Shetkari Sahakari Sabakar Karkhana went on an indefinite strike for the first time in 16 years, on the demands for increased pay according to the recommendations of the wage Board, promotions on the basis of seniority, house rent and confirmation of workers serving the factory since its inception. The strike was organised by the co-ordination Committee of the Sangli District Co-operative Workers Union and the Sugar Factory Workers Union.

Tamil Nadu Newsletter

Led by the CITU Union, 400 workers of Singampunari Enfield and Ancillary Units were on strike from 2nd March demanding reinstatement of two dismissed workers, increased wages, overtime, withdrawal of transfer orders etc. The strike concluded on March 17 on an assurance from the State Labour Minister that the dismissed workers will be taken back and other demands will be negotiated for settlement.

Led by the Kisan Sabha, the united struggle by women workers of Lakshmi Nayakan Patti for increased daily wages concluded successfully on 19th March. Women workers will now get Rs. 2.50 per day instead of Rs. 1.75.

The strike of Madurai Powerloom workers for increased wages still continues. The anti-socials employed and supported by ruling party and mill owners are making all attempts to break the strike and even attacked Com. Balakrishnan, Working Committee member of Tamil Nadu State Committee of CITU on March 18th.

Workers of Srinivasa & Company at Madhavaram in Madras were on strike from 6th March 1974 demanding wages for one-day strike held earlier and Rs. 30/- as interim relief. The strike was called off on March 13 only when the demands were achieved in full.

The 4-month old strike by 400 workers of Vaddalore Ceramic factory, led by CITU

Union, for higher Bonus still continues.

Kovai Paineer Fertiliser workers, led by CITU, got increased wages from Rs. 90/- to Rs. 100/- as per agreement arrived at on March 25th.

The strike of Jeevanlal workers in Madras since March 13 for Uniform Grade, still continues.

CITU nominees won in the P. R. C. Co-operative stores election held in Madurai on April 2, defeating their INTUC and DMK rivals.

The strike of the Standard Lithographic workers, followed by an illegal lockout declared by the management, is continuing for the last 3 months.

All 24 workers dismissed from 2 printing works in Sivakasi were taken back at the initiative of the CITU union on April 5th and stay-in strike by the workers started from 4th April was called off.

The Churut workers at Erode will get Rs. 25/- to Rs. 40/- more from April according to an agreement arrived at with the Erode Dist. Churut Workers Sangh (CITU).

200 workers of the Birla-owned Hindhustan Motors at Thiruvallur near Madras Town are on strike for the last 30 days demanding reasonable wages, allowances, trade union rights etc.

The struggle of the Enfield India workers, led by the CITU, concluded successfully following an agreement on April 12th.

The over-all benefit will range from Rs. 25/- and above.

Beedi Workers' Struggle

More than one lakh Beedi workers of Tamil Nadu, went on strike from April 9 on their demands for implementation of Beedi & Cigar Act. 1966, minimum wage of Rs. 5.75 for one thousand beedis, D.A. linked with CLI, arrears of wages and 8.33 per cent Bonus. A Joint Action Committee consisting of CITU, AITUC and ADMK unions is conducting the struggle.

The strike proved completely successful in N. Arcot, Madras, Trichy and Salem districts. Although the AITUC withdrew at a later stage, the workers are firmly united and the strike is continuing. Meanwhile, the Joint Action Committee met at Madras on April 16 and decided to launch hungerstrike on April 18-20 and satyagraha on April 22. The workers are conducting morchas in all the beedi centres and hungerstrike in some places.

Strike by Neyveli Workers

The workers of Neyveli Lignite Mine went on strike from April 16 protesting against the betrayal of AITUC and DMK unions.

Earlier, a Joint Action Committee consisting of six unions functioning in Neyveli mines was formed which demanded a minimum wage of Rs. 338. It also resolved that no union shall sign below the above demand. But on April 16, the AITUC and DMK unions signed an agreement before the Labour Minister accepting Rs. 312/- as minimum wage and withdrew their strike notice. This was

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Electricity Employees' Successful Struggle In Madras

IN NOVEMBER 1970, a Wage Board decision was arbitrarily imposed on the Tamilnadu Electricity workers, numbering nearly 1 lakh. Nearly 55,000 casual workers who had put in service of 8 years were not made permanent. The DMK and AITUC unions accepted the recommendations of the Wage Board and signed a special agreement in the presence of the State Chief Minister to the effect that even if Delhi were to modify the agreement, they would not ask for the implementation of these modifications. The CITU refused to sign the agreement and conducted a State-wide agitation against it.

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condemned by the workers who went on strike from the afternoon of the same day. The State Government let loose police repression on the workers to break the strike. Later, the CITU union had to call off the strike after the INTUC and ADMK unions also withdrew the strike unconditionally.

Struggle of Government Boat Construction Workers

Workers of Government Steam Boat Construction Centres at Madras, Negapatam, Cuddalore and Mandapam went on strike from March 27 on their demands for revision of wages, D.A. and interim relief. An Action Committee comprising of CITU, AITUC and DMK unions is conducting the struggle.

Recently, the Government of India convened a meeting of all the Electricity Boards and Central Trade Union organisations. A Electricity Wage Guideline Committee was set up and this committee unanimously recommended that—(1) with effect from 1.10.73 an interim relief of Rs. 30 per month should be given to each workman, and this would be adjusted against the new wage structure to be evolved; (2) the revision of D.A. should, with effect from 1.10.73, be on a quarterly instead of a yearly basis, and this would be based on the All India consumer price index.

The Tamilnadu Government and State Electricity Board were unhappy about these recommendations. They argued that these proposals could not be implemented as they were, but that the particular benefits in Tamilnadu would have to be negotiated. The DMK union, echoing its masters, began a false campaign that since interim relief was an advance without interest this amount would be later deducted from the wages of the workers. The AITUC demanded the interim relief, but advised the workers not to press both demands (interim relief and quarterly revision of D.A.) on the plea that this would lead to a strike.

The CITU, with its mass influence among the one lakh State Electricity employees, organised State-wide demonstrations before the office of the

Electricity department to demand that both the recommendations should be accepted from 1.10.73. The CITU union made a special effort to mobilise the city employees of the Electricity Board. A dharna was staged before the Ennore Thermal Station and the Basin Bridge Power House on February 6. The first week of March saw a powerful unity signature campaign among the workers in Madras city and the suburbs stressing that only a strike would enable the workers to win their demands.

On March 15, the heroic workers of Basin Bridge Power House, numbering 2000, went on a spontaneous strike despite the opposition of the AITUC and DMK leadership. As in the textile workers' strike, the mass of the DMK and AITUC workers defied their leadership and joined the strike. This was followed by the walk-out from the City office by 1500 employees working in the head office of the Electricity Board. The 3000 workers of the Ennore Thermal Station threatened a strike on May 19 and an Action Committee consisting of the DMK and AITUC unions was set up. The State Ministers for Power, Industry and Labour urgently invited the CITU leaders for negotiations which began on March 16. On the 18th the Electricity Board gave a written assurance to the unions accepting the two demands in principle and stating that the details would be announced on the 19th. Accordingly, the strike was withdrawn.

The Government and the Board have now agreed to pay Rs. 33 as interim relief from 1.10.73 to permanent workers, Rs. 30 per month to temporary workers and to revise D.A. on a quarterly basis from 1.10.73. The workers are jubilant over this victory.

Fascist Hell In Chile

From Page 3

installation. Perhaps the fascists have silenced his voice but his songs will always remain alive.

Among us also was Litre Quiroga, the Director of Prisons under the Government of Popular Unity. He was arrested in his office and had been part of my group since we had been taken to the barracks of the tank regiment. Although savagely tortured in front of us, he bore his sufferings bravely, with a stoicism and firmness worthy of admiration. In the same way as was Victor Jara, he was murdered on September 16.

My stay in this Dante's inferno lasted four days, during which we had nothing to eat; later, I was transferred with other prisoners to the National Stadium (capacity 80,000 spectators). At that time there were between 12,000 and 14,000 detainees there, up until October 16, according to the calculations of various prisoners, between 25,000 and 28,000 detainees passed through it.

The regime was no better at the National Stadium, but we were given food, if one can use this expression for a cup of water containing a few drops of tea or milk which smelled of disinfectant, and a morsel of bread. We later learned that sulphur was added to this. In the evening we received a vermicelli soup with chick-peas of beans and a piece of bread; this, it goes without saying, was far from satisfying our hunger.

Living conditions at the

National Stadium were hard and inhuman. There was nothing but harassment, insults, blows and tortures. The regime little by little undermined our health. For instance, we were kept in an annex where a maximum of forty people could sleep on the ground, but we ended up with between 130 and 140 being crushed in. Often we had one blanket among three. We were so crowded that we could only sleep in turns. But there was worse still. In the middle of the night our gaolers made us get up suddenly, threatening us with their weapons: "The first person to move will get a shot between his eyes", they said. On other occasions, the pretext was to check up on the number of foreigners, always with the same threat: "You are going to be shot" for "in Chile it is the army which gives the orders now, not the Marxists". The same scenes were repeated in this way every night.

Among those detained were workers, trade union leaders, students, professors, doctors, philosophers, journalists, leaders of the different parties of Popular Unity and Latin American trade union leaders, notably Simon Reyes, a leader of the Bolivian Workers' Centre. This Comrade was tortured with particular savagery.

Interrogations took place in the cloakrooms underneath the seating, or at the velodrome which was near the stadium.

The journey to the cloakrooms was an endless purgatory.

Although a prisoner loses the idea of time, for everyone it seemed to be an eternity. The interrogations last two, six, eight, ten and up to twelve hours, according to the case. The wait, the cries and the condition of those who had passed through the interrogation and whom, purposely, they showed to other prisoners, while increasing our anguish also gave rise among us to a deep hatred which gave us the strength to face up to this test.

The tactic was to show everyone the state of those who had been tortured in order to terrorise us and to weaken our resistance. But it did not produce the expected results although this was part of an overall plan. Thus people who had been hanged were in various places, other corpses were in the showers, prisoners were killed on the most futile pretexts. For instance, for having "looked out of the window" which was practically impossible because of its height, a young detainee was killed after an intense volley of fire had been let loose, according to our gaolers, to repel a so-called "attack from outside against the National Stadium."

Despite this regime of torture, I would like to emphasise the dignity, courage and firmness of the detainees. Unbreakable bonds of solidarity and unity were established among us; in general, all the prisoners expressed their deep desire to remain faithful to the ideas which had inspired the Government of Popular Unity, even although there were men of the most diverse opinions, with

non-party people and many youth. The fact should be emphasised that the soldiers completely failed in their attempt to turn the thousands of detainees in the National Stadium into informers against their own brothers. In fact, the very conditions in which we found ourselves permitted us to establish contacts and to develop an activity of solidarity and mutual encouragement which strengthened our spirit of resistance.

The crowded conditions and the lack of sanitation, lack of food and the tortures experienced have undermined the health of many prisoners, without counting the hundreds of political and trade union leaders who have been brutally killed. It is known that from time to time, a group of prisoners are forced to come

on deck and that sailors are then forced to stab them with bayonets and throw them into the sea; if this is not done the recalcitrant seaman is himself shot.

Recent telegrams have informed us of the death at Dawson of Daniel Vergara, General Secretary of the National Union of Miners, who was wounded on the day of the coup d'etat. The lack of attention and the the conditions existing at Dawson have done the rest.

And so, the working class of the whole world must understand that death constantly threatens the prisoner in two ways: violent death in the form of a automatic fire or some other rapid way, and slow death by methodic and systematic weakening of the prisoner's physical resistance as a result of the terrible prison regime and the inhuman living conditions.

MAY : 3 ALL INDIA PROTEST DAY

AT a joint meeting of eight left political parties held at New Delhi on April 4 and 5, it was decided to observe May 3, 1974 as a day of nationwide protest action against the anti-people policies of the Congress Government.

Left and democratic parties and mass organisations in five States—Delhi, Maharashtra, Kerala Assam and Tripura—have already decided to observe State-wide General Strike and Hartal on that day. In Karnataka, apart from observance of protest actions on May 3, a Bundh will be observed on May 15. In Gujrat demonstrations before Govt. offices and in Andhra squatting and demonstration will be observed on the day. Other states will observe the day suitably.

In West Bengal, the day will be observed through State-wide mass violation of laws.

Editorial

From Prge 2

bigger united struggles to defeat the anti-people policies of the Congress Government.

The growing urge for unity among all sections of workers is bringing them together for common actions all over the country. The forces of disruption are increasingly finding it difficult to go ahead with their machinations in the usual manner. The CITU on the occasion of May Day takes pledge to carry forward the line of unity and struggle with additional vigour which alone is a guarantee for successful struggles.

The CITU expresses its solidarity to the poor peasants and the agricultural workers who have been hit hard most as a result of the economic crisis. The CITU will continue to support every struggle of the rural poor through which alone a firm worker peasant alliance can be built to fight the common enemy.

The CITU conveys its greetings to the working class in socialist countries and wishes them further success in socialist construction, to the fighting workers in advanced capitalist countries for their innumerable strikes in defence of their working and living conditions and to the working class

of Asia, Africa and Latin America in their struggle against imperialism and for national independence. The heroic people of Vietnam continue to inspire the working class of India in their struggle against imperialism and for establishment of proletarian socialism.

Let this May Day be a day of further struggles of the international working class against imperialism and for world peace.

—Long live unity and solidarity of the working class the world over.

—Forward to the United Struggles of the Indian workers against capitalist exploitation.

—Long live UCTU

—Long live CITU