



THE WORKING CLASS

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NATIONAL SEMINAR ON WORKERS' PARTICIPATION IN MANAGEMENT

Secret Ballot Accepted as Mode of Representation

M.K. Pandhe

The two-day national seminar on workers' participation in management, jointly organised by the Ministries of Labour and Industry on January 8-9 in New Delhi, expressed its consensus on an important issue, viz, that the representation of workers for participation in management would be decided by holding secret ballot of all the workers. This major issue that was kept undecided for several years has thus finally been clinched in the seminar. The lone voice of dissent expressed by the INTUC representatives and some employers in the private sector could not cut much ice and the seminar thus came to positive conclusions in the matter.

About 600 representatives from trade unions, employers' organisations, State and Central Governments, public sector managements, universities and training institutes participated in the seminar.

Ajit Singh, Union Minister for Industry, while presiding over the inaugural function emphasised the need for a change in the approach to workers' participation in management, since all the schemes tried in the past had failed to make any impact. He underlined the urgency of introducing industrial democracy as a necessary component for India's march towards self-reliance. "Without giving due dignity to labour the involvement of workers cannot be achieved", he said.

Genuine Workers' Participation.

Inaugurating the seminar, Prime Minister V. P. Singh criticised the previous Government's policy in appointing the so called worker-directors based on political patronage. He categorically stated that in the existing scheme the real spirit of participation was missing, and for that participation to be genuine and at all levels, the voice of the workers has to be enhanced in the undertakings. He stressed that without participative management even the talk of economic growth with social justice was meaningless. The Prime Minister set the tone for the debate when he advocated secret ballot as the method for determining the workers' representation in all parti-

cipative fora.

George Fernandes, Union Railway Minister, while delivering his address, traced the history of the concept of workers' participation in management and noted that there was no genuine participation in the past since the participative forum had no powers. "Without secret ballot the entire scheme becomes meaningless" he observed. Fernandes also talked of the constitution of a workers' parliament wherein the workers would be given a voice to decide the destiny of the country.

Harkishan Singh Surjeet, Member, Polit Bureau CPI (M), initiated the discussion in the seminar (*Text of speech follows hereunder*).

Vasant Sathe, former Energy Minister speaking on behalf of the Congress (I) assured support to the Government in implementing the scheme but opposed secret ballot to decide the workers' representatives.

Bhai Mahavir of BJP urged for giving comprehensive powers to the joint forum and also supported introduction of secret ballot to decide the workers' representation:

C. Rajeswar Rao while speaking on behalf of the CPI criticised the bureaucratic bungling of the public sector and hoped that workers' participation would set matters right.

Professor G. Laxman spoke on behalf of the Telegu Desam Party and emphasised the need for preparing a legislative mechanism to implement the scheme effectively.

Representatives from Yugoslavia, USSR, USA and West Germany spoke on the experiences in their country and presented some case studies to explain their conclusions.

Subhashini Ali, newly elected CPI (M) M.P., while speaking in the seminar assured the National Front Government that the working class of India would solidly stand behind the new government if

the participative forum with full powers to workers and secret ballot were introduced in the country.

On behalf of the Ministry of Labour a Status Paper was presented which pointed out why all the schemes in the past failed to give genuine representation to the workers and how participation was limited to some issues only. For the first time in the official documents there was open advocacy of secret ballot to decide representation of the workers.

M.K. Pandhe, Secretary CITU, welcomed the new atmosphere created in the country to discuss the scheme in proper perspective. Quoting from the Status Paper he pointed out that all previous schemes were only show pieces without giving any real powers to the workers. So long as the master servant relationship prevailed in the industry no real participation could be ensured. He gave the examples of confidential files and police verification in the public sector, anti-working class Standing Orders in the both public and private sectors, draconian articles in the Constitution of India like Articles 309, 310, 311 which empower the authorities to dismiss workers without assigning any reasons. Such practices are against the very spirit of participative management.

The CITU representative pointed out that the participative forum should be given all powers of management. Participation in management and collective bargaining should be complementary to each other, while the participation should not substitute for collective bargaining.)

On the purchasing of equity shares by workers, the CITU stand was that this would not create any involvement of workers. Tatas with only a six per cent shareholding can control TISCO while the public sector financial institutions with over 40 per cent of shares have no say in the company. The CITU welcomed the overwhelming support to the proposal in the seminar for secret ballot and appealed to the Government to take expeditious steps to introduce it.

The CITU was also in favour of the demand of the officers to associate in the participative forum. There was urgent need also to check the interference of the Bombay Industrial Relations Act and the M.P. Industrial Relations Act which recognise only the scab unions. The CITU called for making the hitherto secret accounts of the private sector available for scrutiny by the participative forum which would check all tax evasion in the country.

Secret Balloting

Among those who spoke in the plenary session from the trade unions were K.L. Mahendra (AITUC), Umaraomal Purohit (HMS), Prabhakar Ghate (BMS), Gopeshwar (INTUC), S.R. Sengupta (UTUC), D.D. Shastri (TUCC), Pritish Chanda (UTUC-LS), Naren Sen (NFITU), N.M. Barot (NLO) and Sharad Rao (HMKP). Except for the INTUC all the T.U. representatives spoke in favour of secret ballot. Ashok Rao who spoke on behalf

of the National Confederation of Officers' Association also advocated secret ballot of workers.

Union Labour Minister Ram Bilas Paswan noted the overwhelming support to the concept of secret ballot and participation at all levels with full powers as reflected in the seminar.

Never before was the INTUC so isolated as in this seminar. Impact of the loss of its decades-old official patronage was clearly visible during the entire deliberations of the seminar.

On the 9th the seminar split up into two commissions. The first commission deliberated on the mode of representation in the participative forum. In this commission the INTUC was again completely isolated. Most of the speakers pressed the idea of holding elections of workers' representatives through secret ballot and argued that details could be worked out by a smaller team. The speakers suggested proportional representation so that more than 70 per cent of the opinion of the workers could be covered by the participative forum.

At this stage, the INTUC expressed its readiness to accept secret ballot provided the largest union was also permitted to be represented in the participative forum. The group discussion also agreed on having a legal framework to provide enabling clauses giving flexibility to decide the details according to the requirements of different industries.

Participation should be at all levels and all areas of operations should be included in the participative forum. M.K. Pandhe and P.K. Ganguly spoke on behalf of the CITU in the first commission.

Equity Participation

The other commission mainly considered the question of equity participation by workers in the undertakings. The CITU did not support the idea of equity participation since it only creates the illusion among workers without giving any material benefit to them. Several other TU representatives supported the stand of the CITU.

The INTUC and BMS however emphasised that workers should be asked to purchase equity shares in the undertakings. The employers and some academicians argued in favour of equity participation. The final consensus in the group was against workers taking equity shares in the companies. Jiban Roy and Mrinal Banerjee spoke on behalf of the CITU in this group.

The Reports of the Commissions were submitted to the final plenary session by Prof. Suri of NPC and Chandramouli of NLI orally. The draft conclusions could not be circulated among the participants for want of time. P.K. Ganguly and Jiban Roy intervened on behalf of the CITU in the final plenary session.

Madhu Dandavate, Minister of Finance, while delivering the valedictory address strongly pleaded for developing a new orientation to the concept ensuring a greater role for the workers in industrial

undertakings. He strongly endorsed the proposal for secret ballot and assured the National Front's commitment to introducing genuine workers' participation in management. It was however unfortunate that he brought in controversial issues on the developments in Eastern Europe to support some of his ideas.

The notable achievement of the seminar was undoubtedly the acceptance of the principle of secret ballot for the purpose of recognition of the trade union as a collective bargaining agent. The earlier proposal of check-off as stated in the notorious Industrial Relations Bill failed to receive support from any quarter and the INTUC found itself in miserable isolation.

The conclusions of the seminar were announced in the Plenary session by V.P. Sawhny, the Labour Secretary. The representatives of the central T.U. organisations congratulated the National Front Government for accepting the democratic right of the working class to decide their representative organisation. This had been a long standing demand of the trade unions for which they had been fighting for decades.

The seminar thus ended on an optimistic note. It is now the urgent task of the National Front Government to ensure full implementation of the conclusions by taking suitable positive measures.

Com. Surjeet's Address at the Seminar

I am glad to have this opportunity to speak in this National Seminar on a subject of great importance, in the context of the economic and political situation in the country. The National Front Government deserves to be congratulated for this early move to realise the importance of the role of workers in production, and to evolve a pattern of workers' participation in management. All of us know that this is a theme which had been advocated by most political parties and trade unions, and about which much has been said but little done in the last four decades. Let me express the hope that this Seminar will hasten the process of consultations to evolve an effective mechanism and that specific measures to implement the scheme will be initiated without much delay.

Modern industry is such that all the processes of planning, production and distribution require the conscious participation of all sections concerned. The absence of such conscious participation has been adversely affecting, and will continue to affect, performance at all levels. Hence the need to associate employees in all the aspects of production is being realised throughout the world, and various efforts are being made in different countries. This is the general concept. We in India, who are determined to catch up with the industrial nations of the world, depending on self-reliance, cannot afford to neglect the importance of workers' participation in this process.

In India we are faced with a very critical situation

in the economy, as has been pointed out in the Economic Report published recently. It indicates the need for urgent and drastic measures to improve the economy. The question of labour participation in management is directly linked to this task.

Role of Public Sector

In our economy, as in many Third World countries, the public sector plays a vital role in making the economy self-reliant and strong, and thus strengthening and defending the independence of the country. We can rightly feel proud of our achievements in this direction.

However, a common complaint has been that the public sector's performance in terms of ensuring the rapid advance of the economy, and in terms of returns on capital invested, has been, to put it mildly, most unsatisfactory. The reasons for this condition are multifarious. However, the major criticism of the functioning of the public sector has been on its inefficiency, directly linked to bureaucracy, red-tapism, corruption and mismanagement. We have to apply ourselves to the task of combating this bureaucratism, red-tapism, corruption and mismanagement, and eradicating it to the greatest extent possible.

One of the most potent weapons in this effort would be effective association of the employees in the management and administration of public sector undertakings. The workers, the technicians, the scientists and the engineers must be fully involved in the running of the public sector institutions. This Seminar will have to make concrete suggestions on how this can be ensured.

Genuine Representation

The machinery for workers' participation will have to start from the Board of Directors level. There should be adequate representation of the employees at this level if the scheme is to be effective. In the past, as in the case of nationalised banks, employees were given nominal representation (one representative on the Board of Directors), but the question of how far this had contributed to effective participation, has to be examined in depth. The very meagre nature of representation made it a case of window-dressing.

The numerical inadequacy of representation is only one aspect of the matter. The employees' representatives have to be given full access to all informations, full right to participation in decision-making at all levels for the scheme to be effective. The term 'workers' participation' had in the past been reduced to a matter of having floor-level committees, plant committees, workers' committees, etc, wherein production targets were passed on to the workers without giving them any say in the determination of these targets, or of the steps for the achievement of these targets. Thus the workers' participation schemes, upto now, have been by and large confined only to ineffectual, peripheral aspects. Hence any genuine and effective scheme must em-

brace the following:

1. Effective representation of employees;
2. Access to all informations;
3. Full opportunity to participate in all aspects of decision-making and implementation.

The next important aspect of this problem is that of the modus operandi for selection of representatives on the Board. This has to be properly worked out. The practice of nominating certain favoured trade union representatives not only does not meet the needs, but is also harmful. The representatives of the employees must be elected by secret ballot of all the workers. And committed as we are to the strengthening of democracy, there should be no hesitation or delay in the matter of applying this basically democratic concept. This undoubtedly will create a new confidence among the workers that they have been really given the right of representation.

Then I come to an important question. Whereas the workers must necessarily have the opportunity for effective participation in management, there are other sections of employees—the officers, the engineers, the scientists, the technicians—who are fully involved in the scheme of production. These sections also must have representation at all levels. Their role in the efficient running of the enterprise cannot be underestimated.

Attitude of Private Sector

Lastly, though I have referred to the public sector and its key role in strengthening the economy, and in the defence of the country's independence, this does not however mean that this scheme should be confined only to the public sector. With its present important role in the country's economy the private sector has also to be vitalised. The major and serious criticism against the private sector industry—their highhandedness towards labour, the corruption and other malpractices—have to be taken note of.

Employees' participation at all levels is essential to strengthen industrial development in this sector also. The difficulties put forward, and the resistance to genuine workers' participation in the private sector, will have to be overcome in the context of the total needs of the country.

I have only put forward a few ideas on this theme. I hope that by drawing the proper lessons from the past experience, the deliberations in this Seminar will be fruitful, and specific suggestions will emerge. I also hope that following this Seminar the Government will, without delay, take concrete measures to implement the scheme for labour participation in management, and will not be lacking in political will to do so, as was the case with the former Government.

Amir Hyder Khan

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions expresses profound grief at the passing away of Com. Dada Amir Hyder Khan, the legendary communist leader and one of the accused in the famous Meerut Conspiracy case. Com. Amir Hyder Khan passed away in Pakistan on December 26 at the age of 89. Born in Sealian village, now in Pakistan, Com. Hyder came to Bombay at a young age and started to work as a ship loader and organising the workers in trade union. On board the ship, he came in contact with the Indian revolutionaries and was attracted towards Marxism-Leninism and the communist movement. Braving all repressions by the police under the British Government, he travelled to various places to organise the Communist Party. Defying all British efforts to apprehend him, he travelled to Moscow and returned to organise the communist movement. A number of young revolutionaries recruited by Com. Hyder became forefront leaders of the communist movement in India like the late Com. P. Sundarayya, the former General Secretary of the CPI(M).

Com. Hyder had to undergo jail life several times before, during and after the freedom struggle. In Meerut Conspiracy case he had to undergo rigorous imprisonment for three years. Later he settled at Rawalpindi, Pakistan and continued his revolutionary activities by mobilising the working class against the military dictatorship, and had to undergo imprisonment in the process.

Com. Hyder came to India in 1988 for the first time after partition. He was given a warm reception by the CPI(M) and other progressive forces at Delhi. His devotion to Marxism-Leninism and his indefatigable struggle against imperialism and for socialism throughout his checkered career will serve as a beacon light to the young generation. The CITU pays revolutionary homage to the memory of Com. Hyder and dips its red banner in his honour.

CITU & NCC Delegations Meet Labour Minister

P.K. Ganguly

Before the National Seminar on Workers' Participation in Management was held and the concept of secret ballot was accepted for implementation, the CITU took the initiative of meeting the Union Labour Minister and submitting a detailed memorandum on the various issues and problems faced by the workers during the long regime of the Congress (I) and accentuated during the period of the Rajiv Government.

On 8th December, 1989, a delegation consisting of Samar Mukherjee, the General Secretary and M.K. Pandhe, P.K. Ganguly and Ranjit Basu, Secretaries met the Labour Minister, Ram Vilas Paswan and apprised him of a number of burning issues the working class were fighting for a long time for resolution. These were on the question of secret ballot for recognition of trade unions; a genuine scheme for workers' participation in the management of the industries; on the plight of the vast sections of unorganised labour including agricultural labour, on scrapping of the new Series of Consumer Price Index; on the withdrawal of the retrograde Industrial Relations Bill which is still in the Rajya Sabha; on the growing closures and industrial sickness; for the ratification of the ILO Convention Nos 87 and 98 on Freedom of Association and Right to Collective Bargaining; on the non-functioning of the Tripartite DA Committee and other Committees; on the problems of working women; on deletion of Article 310, 311 of the Constitution; on removal of ceiling in Bonus Act, etc.

The Labour Minister requested for a detailed memorandum on all the issues. Accordingly, the CITU prepared a memorandum and a delegation consisting of Vimal Ranadive, P.K. Ganguly and

Kanai Banerjee met the Labour Minister on Dec. 27, 1989 alongwith Subhashini Ali, MP (CPI-M). The Labour Minister gave a patient hearing and wanted further discussions on each point to prepare notes to be placed in the Cabinet meeting scheduled to be held on 29th December, 1989. He was particularly interested to discuss in more details on three major issues, viz. the question of secret ballot for recognition of trade unions, on workers' participation in management and on the question of unorganised labour. On these issues as the Labour Minister said, the Government had already planned to call national seminars. Accordingly, P.K. Ganguly and Kanai Banerjee met him again in the Parliament the next day. The Private Secretary of the Labour Minister took detailed notes on each and every point of the CITU's memorandum.

Meeting with NCC: To give weight of all the trade unions on the issues, the CITU fixed up the appointment of the National Campaign Committee of Trade Unions with the Labour Minister. A delegation of the NCC met the Labour Minister on December 31, 1989 and submitted a joint memorandum on the above issues. The Labour Minister agreed to have a detailed discussion with the NCC leaders in presence of the Labour Secretary and other officers. This meeting was held in the Labour Ministry, on 11th January, 1990. Those who represented in the two NCC delegations were Samar Mukherjee, M.K. Pandhe, P.K. Ganguly, Jibon Roy (CITU); Indrajit Gupta, T.N. Siddhanta, Homi Daji, K.L. Mahendra (AITUC); Brij Mohan Toofan, Umraomal Purohit (HMS); R.K. Bhakt (BMS); J.S. Dara (ITUC); Pritish Chanda (UTUC-LS) and D.D. Shastri (TUCC).

Issues Discussed: By this time of course, the

Recommendations of the Seminar on Workers' Participation

Secret Ballot for recognition of unions and representation of workers for participation in management. The workers will participate in equal numbers and in decision-making at all levels ie at shop, plant and Board level. At the Board level, non-workers ie Central Trade Union leaders, etc. will also be included. Recognition of the trade unions will be made on the basis of secret ballot by all workers. The sole bargaining agent and the bargaining council will be determined on the basis of proportional representation and the trade unions will nominate their representatives in the participative forum accordingly.

The Seminar further unanimously recom-

mended for an enabling Legislation to give statutory effect to the question of secret ballot as above, providing for flexibility to cover all Central and State public sectors and private sector. A small group to be formed, where the Central Trade Unions will be represented, to work out the details of the scheme and the legislation. The scheme to also include supervisors, officers, technicians, etc.

The idea of linking the workers' share in equity capital with their participation in management was rejected. The question of purchasing equity shares by workers will be independent of and without having any bearing on workers' participation.

demands for secret ballot for recognition and for workers' participation in management were already clinched in the national seminar held on January 8 and 9.

Regarding the Industrial Relations Bill, the NCC leaders explained how it aimed at scuttling all trade union rights, the right to strike and aimed at putting the trade union activities into a straight jacket to toe the line of the former Congress Government. The Labour Minister assured to withdraw the Bill from the Rajya Sabha and draft a new Bill in consultation with the trade unions. The Hospital and Other Institutions Bill, which was in Lok Sabha, the officials pointed out, had already lapsed as the former Lok Sabha had lapsed.

On the question of arbitrary exclusion of the defence employees from the purview of the Industrial Disputes Act and the victimisations of the Central Government employees under Article 319, 310 and 311 of the Constitution, there was indepth

discussion, and the Labour Minister assured to look into the matter positively and sought time for the same.

The NCC leaders demanded scrapping of new series of Consumer Price Index based on 1982 and briefed him how the erstwhile Congress Government had imposed the fraudulent series which was further based on the defective 1960 series. The former Government refused to accept the points which were unanimously recommended by the Rath Committee and also ignored the memorandum submitted by the NCC. As demanded by the NCC, the Labour Minister agreed to call a meeting of all the Central Trade Unions including the INTUC in the first week of February to discuss the matter thoroughly.

On the question of unorganised labour and a central legislation and on the fixing of minimum wage, the Labour Minister informed that a national seminar will be called like that on the workers' participation to discuss all aspects of the issue. (*The seminar has now been called on February 12, 1990*).

The Labour Minister also assured to call the meeting of the Tripartite Committee on DA. On the question of removal of ceiling in the Bonus Act also he assured to look into the matter in consultation with the Ministry of Finance and Law. Similar assurance was given on the question of ratification of the ILO Convention Nos. 87 and 98.

An indepth discussion was held on the growing closures and industrial sickness. Various points connected with the problem came up in the discussion, like that of the basic economic and industrial policy of the Government, the path of privatisation and denotification embarked upon by the Congress Government, the joblessness it created and the right to work, corruption and mismanagement as the main causes of sickness, the victimisation unleashed on the workers for identifying the corruption even by the public sector managements, the role and functions of the BIFR, the question of viability, the huge amounts locked in the sick units, etc. The NCC demanded

ban on closures. The question of take over and nationalisation as a policy matter was also discussed. The Labour Minister said that as during the Congress regime this was one of the major issues of campaign by the opposition itself, the present Government naturally is seized with the problem and will act in a positive manner for its resolution which would require time.

Problems of Working Women : The NCC memorandum however did not include this major issue of the problems of working women, which constitute a substantial part of the workforce. The CITU memorandum submitted to the Labour Minister on December 27, 1989 brought out the problems of the working women. The CITU delegation drew the attention of the Labour Minister to the deplorable conditions of the working women. Apart from growing joblessness and lack of employment opportunities, working women are always the first victims of attack and retrenchment. They suffer widespread discriminations in the sphere of employment and service and working conditions. The specific problems and demands of working women like maternity benefits, creche, toilets, etc are generally not attended to. The Committee on Equal Remuneration, employment, etc do not function. The Equal Remuneration Act is not properly implemented. Over and above, sexual harassment has become almost a regular affair.

The CITU memorandum further pointed out the appalling conditions of working women in the entire unorganised sector. The earnings of the agricultural workers, the handloom weavers, etc were grossly inadequate to make even a square meal a day. The Anganwadi women, i.e. those working in the Integrated Child Development Scheme and the helpers get a paltry amount of Rs. 100/- to Rs. 300/- per month only. They are treated as social workers, but the Congress Government refused to treat them as Government employees. They are thus deprived of all statutory benefits concerning minimum wage, labour laws and other enactments especially for working women. Maternity benefits, creche, etc, are unknown to them. In this respect, the memorandum pointed out that a mass deputation of Anganwadi women led by the CITU had met the former Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi and submitted a memorandum of demands to him. But Rajiv Gandhi had refused to look into their problems and rejected the demands. The CITU delegation further demanded inclusion of the functionaries of working women in the various Committees. The Labour Minister promised to look into the problems.

The Workers Must Remain Vigilant.

The above delegations apprised the Labour Minister of the various problems faced by the workers, which got accumulated and accentuated during the long spell of the Congress regime because of its anti-labour policies. The discussions held with the Labour Minister and his officials were of the nature of first round. The Government has certainly shown a positive attitude by accepting in principle a major

and basic demand of the trade unions like recognition of trade unions by secret ballot and participation of workers in management with equal rights at all levels of decision making. But the trade unions and the workers will have to remain vigilant to see that it is implemented. While supporting the National Front Government, they have to carry forward the struggles for tilting the Government's policies towards labour for the resolution of their intractable problems created by the Congress rule.

Memorandum of Understanding Signed in IDPL

After a long drawn struggle extending over 15 months the wage negotiations in the Indian Drugs & Pharmaceuticals Ltd (IDPL), the Central Public Sector Undertaking, were completed and a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the management and the trade unions at Madras on 5.1.1990.

CITU Condemns Lock-out by Indian Express

Com. Samar Mukherjee, M.P., General Secretary of the CITU has issued the following statement on 28.12.89 :

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions condemns the management of Indian Express for refusing to implement the Bachawat Wage Board recommendations and locking out the concern. The CITU extends full support to the employees, who were compelled to go on strike as the management refused to implement the recommendations. The lock out has revealed the rabid anti-worker attitude of the management and its adamancy to extend the benefits of the recommendations to the employees.

The CITU demands immediate lifting of the lockout and implementation of the recommendations of the Bachawat Wage Board. It calls upon all its State Committees and unions and appeals to all other trade unions to raise the voice of demand.

Demonstration by CITU : CITU affiliated unions led by Com. Suraj Bhan Bhardwaj, Gen. Secretary, Delhi State CITU and Com. Puran Chand demonstrated before the Indian Express building on December 26 in support of the striking workers of Indian Express and Jansatta. They demanded that the management concede the genuine demands of the workers and immediately lift the lockout. They warned the Delhi Administration and the management that if the workers' demands were not conceded within a week, the struggle of the newspaper employees will be linked to the struggle of industrial workers for demands like Rs. 1050/- minimum wages and carried to the industrial areas.

The demonstrators included 1000 workers of Punjsons, Okhla Industrial Area who have been on strike for the last 27 days. Also present to express solidarity were the struggling workers of Le Meridien Hotel and those of Batra Bros Transport Company, who are on a countrywide strike from the last 6 days. While expressing solidarity with the employees of Indian Express and Jansatta, these workers appealed to the newspaper employees to support their struggles as well.

Leaders of unions in Banks, LIC and the Public Sector also participated in the demonstration.

The long delay was caused due to the management's insistence on the guidelines issued by the Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE), which the workers had rejected long ago and which were thrown overboard in all other public sector settlements. The main points of confrontation in this regard were concerning the limits imposed by the BPE on wage increase, recovery of the interim relief paid and on extension of the period of agreement by one year. All these points however were rejected by the trade unions and the Memorandum of Understanding were signed amicably.

The main features of the agreement were as follows :

1. The entire agreement including the wage component and all other fringe benefits and allowances will be from the retrospective date 1.10.88 and will be for four years without any extension.

2. The minimum and maximum wages will be as follows with Fixed D.A and Variable D.A :

Description	Minimum Wage	Maximum Wage
(a) Basic Pay	Rs. 1150.00	Rs. 3010.00
(b) F D A	Rs. 200.00	Rs. 520.00
(c) V D A	Rs. 108.90	Rs. 108.90
Total	Rs. 1453.90	Rs. 3638.90

3. The minimum wage represents an increase of Rs. 190.20 over the existing minimum wage. This includes a Fitment Benefit of Rs. 90.00

4. The management agreed to finalise the promotional policy also, and a meeting with the trade unions at apex level has been called at the Corporate office at Gurgaon on 22nd January, 1990 for this purpose.

5. 50 percent of the lumpsum amount of Rs. 2,000/- and three months of I R paid prior to 1.10.88 which however was not due will be recovered from the arrears.

On behalf of the CITU, P. K. Ganguly, Secretary and S.S. Rawat from the Rishikesh union participated in the negotiations. The other Central Trade Unions which took part in the negotiations were AITUC, BMS and INTUC with its three factions. At the later stage however, the INTUC factions did not participate due to squabbles on their representative character.

CITU's Memorandum to Industry Minister on IDPL

The agitations launched in IDPL in pursuance of the demand for early settlement of wage negotiations were withdrawn. However, several areas of friction still remained, as a number of union functionaries especially of the CITU organisations have been victimised and charge sheeted by the management. Agitations on these issues would continue unless the management makes negotiated settlement of the cases. In this regard a delegation of the CITU led by Samar Mukherjee and consisting of P. K. Ganguly and Jibon Roy had met the Industry Minister, Ajit Singh earlier on December 28, 1989 and submitted the following Memorandum to him :

Text of the Memorandum

28. 12. 89

Shri Ajit Singh
Minister of Industry
Government of India
New Delhi-110001

Dear Shri Ajit Singh,

I would like to bring to your notice some serious cases of corruption on the part of the management of Indian Drugs & Pharmaceuticals Ltd (IDPL), a Central Public Sector Undertaking and the series of victimisations and unfair labour practices resorted to by the management on the cadres and organisations led by the CITU, of which I am the General Secretary, when they identified the corrupt practices by management.

2. The corruption case by the management of IDPL at its Karnataka Branch was identified in 1987 by the office bearers of the Federation of Medical Representatives Association of India (FMRAI), an organisation led by us and recognised by the management. The then Karnataka Government instituted a Commission of Enquiry headed by the Commissioner of Labour, Karnataka.

3. The enquiry report revealed that in the hospital purchase of medicines by the State Government, the IDPL appointed several private parties as middlemen, indulged in corrupt practices in over-pricing medicines, paid huge commissions to these private middlemen, caused substantial loss to the State Government to the tune of Rs. 7.63 lakhs, sharing the loot by the middlemen and the officers of IDPL.

4. The entire matter was brought to the notice of the then Industry Minister, Shri J. Vengala Rao by me on 10th June, 1989 and earlier to that, to the former Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi on 4th March, 1987. My colleague Shri Basudev Acharya in the Lok Sabha also brought the matter to the notice of the Central Vigilance Commissioner on 4th March, 1987. The entire matter was also brought to the notice of the Chairman of IDPL, Shri K. Venkataraman by Shri J.S. Majumdar, General Secretary of FMRAI on 22nd February, 1987.

5. I also understand that the CBI also started investigations in the matter. But it appears that

the entire matter has been hushed up.

6. In the wake of revelation of the corrupt practices, the management of IDPL started a spate of victimisations, derecognised the two federations led by us in the company and floated puppet organisations under coercion and threat. I am giving below the following rabidly anti-labour actions taken by the management :

7.1 The management transferred over 22 medical representatives, who are important functionaries of FMRAI from extreme North to South, West to East and vice versa, including Shri Y.S. Satish Chandra, the General Secretary of the Karnataka unit of FMRAI, who gave deposition before the Enquiry Commission and the CBI.

7.2 Out of the above, services of six medical representatives have been terminated.

7.3 The management derecognised FMRAI, under which the medical representatives of IDPL are organised, and floated a puppet organisation sponsored by it.

7.4 The management locked out the Calcutta depot in August, 1989 on a false pretext of violence. Although they lifted the lock out just prior to the elections, they are refusing to open negotiations on the issues of malafide transfers and service terminations.

7.5 The management also derecognised the IDPL Kamgar Federation, under which the factory and office employees are organised, and floated another puppet organisation with some office employees. They are refusing to call the Kamgar Federation in wage negotiations which are currently being held.

7.6 The management launched a severe attack on our CITU affiliated union at Hyderabad plant, viz IDPL Hyderabad Kamgar Union. According to the management's own contention, two representatives from recognised unions and one representative from unrecognised unions are called in wage negotiations. On refusal of the management to call the union in negotiations, the workers staged a peaceful demonstration on 18th November, 1988. The management ordered lathi charge by the CISF, in which several workers including women workers were injured. The management continued its repressive action by suspending the General Secretary and two other office bearers of the union and Charge Sheeted a number of others. Although the management's contention was that the union will be included in the negotiating team one year after its registration, they have not yet abided by its assurance despite the fact that the union has completed more than one year after registration. The office bearers also have still remained suspended. The charge sheets on others also have not yet been withdrawn.

My colleague Shri M. Hanumantha Rao, Member of Rajya Sabha raised this matter before the former Industry Minister on 20th December, 1988 But no positive action was taken for resolution of the matter.

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CITU Secretariat Calls for Protest Actions against IDPL Management

The Secretariat of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions met at Delhi on January 19 evening. In absence of Com. B.T. Ranadive, who is admitted in hospital in Bombay for investigations, Com. E. Balanandan, Treasurer presided over the meeting. The meeting was attended by Com. M.K. Pandhe, Com. Kanai Banerjee, Com. Ranjit Basu, Com. Jibon Roy and Com. P.K. Ganguly, Secretaries. The meeting wished quick recovery of Com. B.T. Ranadive and his return to normal activities.

The Secretariat noted that the top management of IDPL was involved in the corruption and the industrial relation in IDPL was in turmoil due to the rabid anti-labour and anti-CITU attitude of the present Chairman of the company, whose removal was demanded by the workers.

The Secretariat called upon all the CITU unions in all Public Sector Undertakings to send protest telegrammes to the Union Ministers of Chemicals, Industry and Labour demanding immediate withdrawal of all victimisations, reinclusion of the CITU organisations in the negotiation committees and stringent action against all management personnel involved in the corruptions.

Other Decisions of the Secretariat

Lathi Charge by CISF at IISCO : Burnpur : The Secretariat condemned the brutal lathi charge by the CISF on the workers at IISCO, Burnpur on January 11, when a number of workers were injured including Com. J.N Karchowdhury, the CITU leader, who sustained multiple fractures. The meeting congratulated the workers for launching successful strike action and the bundh observed at Burnpur on January 12 demanding removal of the CISF and the Managing Director.

General Council Meeting: The Secretariat decided to hold the General Council meeting at Kerala tentatively in April. The dates will be finalised in consultation with the Kerala State Committee.

NPC Seminar : The meeting decided to send a four-member delegation comprising of P.K. Ganguly, Kanai Banerjee, Ranjit Basu and Mrinal Banerjee to attend the seminar on Role of Trade Unions and Productivity Improvement being organised by the National Productivity Council and the ILO at Delhi from February 1 to 3, 1990. P.K. Ganguly will submit a paper. M.K. Pandhe will attend the panel discussion on February 3. The Delhi State Committee will also be contacted to depute one delegate.

Asian Pacific Seminar : The Secretariat expressed its inability to send any delegate to the seminar being organised by the Asian Pacific T.U. Co-ordination Committee at Kuala Lumpur in March.

Central Apprenticeship Council : The Secretariat nominated Ranjit Basu Secretary to attend the meeting of the Central Apprenticeship Council being

held at Delhi on January 30.

Visit of AUCCTU Delegation : The Secretariat welcomed the visit of a delegation from AUCCTU, USSR on January 23 for detailed discussions on the proposed mass meeting of Soviet-Indian Trade Unions in India.

Right to Work Convention : The Secretariat decided to hold the proposed convention on Right to Work at Durgapur at the end of March. The dates will be finalised by the Preparatory Committee in consultation with the Reception Committee.

Government's Acceptance of Sugar Wage Board Report : The meeting expressed surprise and concern at the Government's acceptance of the recommendations of the Third Sugar Wage Board, which the National Sugar Workers' Co-ordination Committee had demanded for rejection because of its retrograde nature. The meeting called upon all the sugar unions to send protest telegrammes to the Labour Minister urging for its rejection and talks with the Co-ordination Committee for resolution of the workers' demands.

Convention by Lawyers' Union : The Secretariat nominated P.K. Ganguly, Secretary to attend the convention on Restructuring of Judicial System being organised by the All India Lawyers' Union at Delhi on February 3 and the preparatory meeting on January 22.

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8. The above facts, you will appreciate reveal the attitude of the top management, which is not befitting for a prestigious Central Public Sector Undertaking. While we are always for the advancement of the cause of public sector with harmonious employer-employee relations, the management of IDPL has been undermining the cause. While the workers identified the corruption, which was also established by the Enquiry Commission, and wanted its rectification, the management came down heavily on them and created a turmoil in the entire establishment resulting in an extremely volatile situation. The erstwhile Government, including the former Prime Minister himself, who promised for a clean administration, kept totally silent over the matter, which has obviously given encouragement to the management to carry forward its corrupt practices and unfair labour practices and repression on workers.

As the matter is extremely serious and concerns a Central Public Sector Undertaking, I request you to intervene in it without delay and take appropriate punitive steps against the corrupt officials of the management and also bring back full normalcy in the establishment by withdrawing all malafide transfers, victimisations and restoring recognition to the two federations.

For your ready reference I am enclosing herewith a book published by the Federation of Medical & Sales Representatives Associations of India (FMRAI) on the corrupt practices in IDPL, which contains the report of the Enquiry Commission and other relevant correspondences as mentioned above.

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,
Samar Mukherjee, M.P.
General Secretary

Struggle of Tripura Jute Mill Workers

A mass deputation of workers was led by the CITU to the Chief Secretary of the Congress (I)—TUJS Government at Agartala on December 27 in support of the struggling workers of Tripura Jute Mills. The procession started from Ravindra Satabarshiki Bhawan and passed through the main roads of the town and came to the Fire Brigade Chowmuhani where the rally was held, having attended by over 500 workers. The rally was addressed among others by Baidyanath Majumdar, President of the State CITU; Shiv Das Baidya, State Secretary; Chitta Chanda, Vice President; Piyus Nag, President of Tripura Chatkal Karmi Samity; Tarun Chakrabarty Secretary and others. A delegation of these leaders then met the Chief Secretary and submitted a memorandum of demands. The demands included reinstatement of all retrenched workers; full security arrangement inside the mill and the surrounding areas; the murderers of Com. Tapan Das be arrested immediately, etc.

A meeting was held thereafter in front of the Fire Brigade, which was presided over by Manik Dey. Among those who addressed the meeting were Baidyanath Majumdar, Piyus Nag, Sudarshan Das (CITU); Rajendu Bhattacharya (SFI); Dulan Das (GNS), etc. The speakers assailed the Congress (I)—TUJS Government for unleashing a semi-fascist terror in the state which was intensified after the 30th August Bharat Bandh. Over 400 workers were obstructed by the gangsters to join duties in conjunction with INTUC and a reign of terror was going on inside the factory and the surrounding areas. The rally resolved to step up the struggle to fight the terror-regime and instal the rule of democracy in the State.

State Committee Meeting : The State Committee of the CITU met at Agartala on December 31 and January 1 and took up a programme to carry forward the struggle. The meeting noted that due to the terror being spread in the jute mill and dismissal of a large number of workers, the productions in the mill had come by 4 to 5 times.

The meeting decided to observe February 2 as the Save Jute Mill Day all over the State by holding rallies, meetings and deputations by workers, peasants, students, women and youth. To make this programme successful, mass democratic conventions will be held from January 15 to 17. The meeting also decided to take out a mass procession and rally on 10th January to protest against the conspiracies of the Government to dissolve the Autonomous District Council.

The meeting directed all organisations and appealed to the people to participate in a massive way in the march to Assembly programme on 23rd January protesting against the semi-fascist terror and demanding ouster of the Congress (I)—TUJS Government. The meeting further supported the struggle of

the Tripura Motor Shramik Union, Textile Workers Union and other organisations and called upon all sections of workers to participate in the programmes. The meeting also decided to hold the State CITU Conference in May/June.

CITU Delegation Meets Steel Minister

A CITU delegation met the Union Steel Minister, Dinesh Goswami on 10th January at Udyog Bhawan. The delegation included M.K. Pandhe and Jibon Roy, Secretaries of CITU; Mihir Joardar, General Secretary All India Co-ordination Committee of SAIL Employees' Union and Tapan Sen, Secretary, SWFI.

The delegation apprised the Minister about the general industrial relation in the industry and discussed various issues concerning modernisation of the Public Sector Steel Plants. It demanded immediate finalisation of the IISCO modernisation programme. Besides, the delegation submitted three memoranda concerning CMO, Durgapur Steel Thikadar Workers' regularisation and delay in giving cabinet approval to MSTC wage agreement.

The memorandum submitted by the Co-ordination Committee of unions in the Central Marketing Organisation of SAIL protested against the CMO management's pressurisations on the individual units to sign separate agreements bypassing the practice of clinching issues with All India Co-ordination Committee which is a recognised body. The memorandum demanded that the special allowances sanctioned to some of the small units in the name of introduction of 48 hrs duty should also be extended to workers who are working 36½ hours duty on pro-rata basis. The memorandum expressed concern at the growing trend of corruption in CMO. It sought intervention of the Minister to make an end to the vindictive attitude of the SAIL management in CMO through indiscriminate transfers. The memorandum demanded the inclusion of Co-ordination Committee of CMO unions in national bipartite negotiating machinery.

The memorandum of United Contractor Workers Union, Durgapur expressed dismay at the failure of the SAIL management to implement the 1981 Tripartite agreement between the union and the DSP management to absorb the contract workers in permanent and perennial nature of jobs, as notified by the W. Bengal Government. The delegation demanded of the Union Minister to take steps for immediate implementation of the agreement.

The memorandum from the MSTC Employees Union requested the Minister to intervene so that the wage agreement signed in MSTC is cleared by the Cabinet at the earliest. The delay in approval of the agreement was causing delay in finalising the agreement in Ferro Scrap Nigam Ltd.

The Minister gave a patient hearing. He assured
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Delegation of Water Transport Workers' Federation Meets Transport Minister

The leaders of the Water Transport Workers' Federation of India in a deputation met K.P. Unnikrishnan, Minister of Surface Transport, Government of India on 10.1.90 and submitted a memorandum concerning some problems of Water Transport Workers.

During the course of discussion, the Federation drew the attention of the Minister as to how the benefit of revision of wages following the settlement dated 12.6.89 was snatched away due to ceiling imposed on entitlement to productivity linked Bonus.

The federation demanded a national policy for distribution of Cargo for proper utilisation of the Port's capacity and nationalisation of the shipping industry along with import-export trades and private stevedoring business.

The Minister was also apprised of the non-implemented items of the earlier settlements such as, time bound promotion, classification and categorisation, decasualisation of Cargo handling workers and registration of additional categories of dock workers, elimination of contractors from all types of perennial nature of jobs and regularisation of all casual workers etc. The issues of revision of incentive schemes, special pay and allowances, anomalies etc., arising out of the last settlement, were also represented.

The federation requested the Minister to expedite the decision for extending the benefits of the IV Pay Commission's Recommendation in relation to payment of Pension and Gratuity to remove the sufferings of the retired employees and to take measures for filling up the vacancies in the ports and extend employment to the outstanding cases of dependants of the those employees who died in harness.

Apart from the issues concerning the Port & Dock Workers, the problem of Indian Seamen arising out of non-employment, clandestine employment of Indian Seamen in foreign flag vessels etc., were discussed with the Minister. The issue of fishing trawlers and irregularities and malpractices in the matter of tapping the marine resources were brought to the notice of the Minister.

The federation represented for revocation of the anti-labour actions taken by the previous Government in the matter of dealing with the period of strikes in 1984 and 1989 and also for participating in the Bharat Bandh on 30th August, 1989. Attention was also drawn to some of the schemes/rules/regulations which are basically anti-worker and based on the concept of master-servant relation.

The Minister gave a patient hearing to the pro-

blems and assured to convene an early meeting of the federations to discuss and resolve the issues concerning the Port & Dock workers.

He agreed to remove the penal action taken against the Port & Dock workers for participating in the Bharat Bandh on 30.8.89 and nomination of the Labour representatives in the Port Trusts and Dock Labour Boards through Secret Ballot.

The delegation consisted of M.K. Pandhe, Md. Ismail, K.K. Roy Ganguly, A Banerjee, Hemlal Chatterjee, P. Sampat, S. Kanjilal, L. Seth, Santosh Kumar, T. Nambirajan, V.S.P. Raju, S. Doloi and S. Manjrekar.

A meeting of the Working Committee of the federation was held at new Delhi on 9-10th January, 1990 and called upon the Port & Dock workers to observe a day on 22nd January, 1990 to press the demands.

Enhancement of Provident Fund Contribution to 10%

The minimum rate of Provident Fund contribution has been enhanced to 10% subject to the exemption in some cases. The Government of India has issued notification to this effect on 17.5.89. The new rate of recovery both from the employer and the employee will be effective from 1.6.89. Exemptions are given in respect of the following cases :

1. Any establishment in which less than 50 persons are employed.
2. Any sick industrial company as defined in clause (0) of section 3 of the Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Act, 1985 (1 of 1986) which has made a reference under Section 15 of the said Act to the Board of Industrial and Financial Reconstruction established under section 4 of that Act and
3. Any other establishment which has at the end of any financial year accumulated losses equal to or exceeding its entire assets and has also suffered cash losses in such financial year and the financial year immediately preceding such financial year.

All the unions are requested to check up whether new rate of recoveries are effected in the establishments. In case of default immediate attention of the Provident Fund Commissioner should be drawn with information to the CITU Centre.

Meeting of AICWF

The Working Committee of All India Coal Workers' Federation in its meeting held on 2nd and 3rd January at Calcutta decided to initiate campaign on the issues of 'right to work' as fundamental right and for adequate land reforms. It decided to rouse public opinion for the repealment of the anti-working class legislations introduced by the previous Government. The Working Committee appreciated the Government's decision of introducing a bill in the next session of the parliament proposing secret ballot to determine the recognition of union and for formation of collective bargaining forum on proportionate representation. The meeting also demanded withdrawal of both the ceilings on bonus payment and the admissibility. The Committee expressed anguish at the deliberate act of the previous Govt to keep hanging the deliberations of the DA Committee for public sector and urged the Labour Minister of the N.F Government to settle the issue early. Unilateral introduction of the 1982 series of Consumer Price Index by the Cong(I) Govt also came for criticism. The meeting demanded reversion to the old system pending preparation of a new series in consultations with the Central Trade Unions.

The Working Committee strongly criticised the decision of the Coal management to divert the additional 2% contribution by the management towards provident fund which is made obligatory through a Government notification, to the pension fund. The Working Committee demanded for payment of 2% management contribution towards the scheme also to the workers who have since retired after the signing of the national agreement. The meeting demanded the restoration of the system of extending grant towards capital expenditure of established school in coal mines area and also supported the demand of the teachers in those schools for a wage rate similar to BCCL.

While explaining the change in the political situation in the country, M.K. Pandhe, President of the federation cautioned against any type of complacency. He called upon the AICWF to start the campaign for the creation of new jobs in the collieries in consonance of the fact that by 2000 AD the coal production in the country would reach 360 million tonnes. Sunil Basu Roy, the General Secretary reported the details of the Mahabir Colliery accident. Haradhan Roy expressed concern at the distressing safety situation in coal mines and at the non-availability of the rescue arrangements. He appreciated the role of the West Bengal Govt for extending quick help in rescue operation.

The Working Committee decided to organise a seminar on Welfare, Safety and Land Subsidence. It also decided to participate in Durgapur Convention on 'right to work'. The Committee constituted four sub-committees i.e (1) for Seminar with Sunil Basu Roy as Convenor, (2) on contract workers with Haradhan Roy as Convenor. (3) on excavation with G.P. Goswami as Convenor and (4) on Safety with S. Kumar as Convenor.

Struggle of Anganwadi Women

Various reports coming from states show that the Anganwadi women are on the path of struggle. Signature campaigns and deputations, dharnas and demonstrations were held in different states showing their urge to fight to improve their inhuman conditions.

Pondicherry : The Pondicherry State Anganwadi Staff Association submitted a memorandum with 915 signatures from various centres in Pondicherry to the former Prime Minister. The memorandum states, "Our poor wages, neglect of our children, denial of maternity benefits and leave, corruption by CDPOS and sexual harassment by male employees are the conditions under which the ICDS scheme is being implemented generally all over the country. No one can live on this paltry sum paid to us. Even the amount of Rs 325/- indicated by the Central Govt circular has not been paid...over 50 lakh unemployed women are on the employment register as a result of the economic policies of the Congress Govt." The memorandum then specified the demands of the Anganwadi women and hoped their demands would be accepted without any further delay.

Saharanpur : Report from Saharanpur informs that after the President of the Samiti sent a letter on the demands of Anganwadi workers and helpers to the concerned authorities, no reply was received from the Dist. officer, Saharanpur. In the letter dated 25. 10.89 the Samiti made some suggestions with regard to their demands of maternity benefit, promotion, nutritioned food, the needs of the centres, regular payment of honourarium etc. In the absence of any reply from the authorities the Samiti decided to hold dharna on 3.11.89. It also threatened to go on indefinite hunger strike if the authorities did not reply to their memorandum. The memorandum was signed by about 200 workers and helpers of Saharanpur.

On the 3rd of October, hundreds of Anganwadi workers and helpers from different villages in Saharanpur held a magnificent dharna at the headquarters of Saharanpur demanding regularisation of employees, payment of arrears, proper distribution of food items etc. The President of the Mahila Seva Vikas Samiti, Sarala Sharma led the deputation to the authorities.

Andhra Pradesh : Another memorandum signed by 296 women in different projects in different districts in Andhra Pradesh was submitted in the month of October to the Prime Minister demanding recognition to the Anganwadi workers as Govt. employees and Rs 600/- & Rs. 400 as wages to the workers and helpers respectively, besides three months maternity leave, travelling allowances, training facilities etc. The demand was also made to appoint one representative of the union on the Project Committee. The memorandum urged the Government to appreciate the inhuman conditions and hardships of the Anganwadi workers and settle their reasonable demands as early as possible.

Death Anniversary of Com. Safdar

The first death anniversary of Com. Safdar Hashmi was observed on January 1, 1990. Various organisations, artists, journalists and intellectuals observed January 1 and 2 throughout the country to pay homage to the noted street-theatre artiste who was brutally murdered by the Congress(I) gangsters on January 1, 1989, at Sahibabad, where the Jana Natya Manch was performing the street drama Halla Bol in support of the working class struggle for minimum wage. Following are the reports of the observance :

Delhi : A big procession of people with a number of vans proceeded from Ravindra Bhawan to Sahibabad at the place where Com. Safdar was murdered. The caravan was decorated with big posters and paintings and poems by renowned artistes. Among the processionists were famous artistes like Bhisam Sahni, MK Raina, Vivan Sndaram, etc. The caravan was received by a huge crowd at Sahibabad. The programme started with songs rendered by Parcham. After a brief speech by Bhisam Sahni, the Jana Natya Manch performed its latest play, Natak Jari Hai, which was written by Com. Safdar himself. Later, Com H K S Surjeet, P B Member of CPI(M) laid the foundation stone of Safdar Memorial at the place and addressed the big gathering. In the evening also a meeting was held at the Constitution Club, which was addressed among others by Com. EMS Namboodiripad, Com. Prakash Karat and Com. Joginder Sharma. On 2nd January again another programme was held at the venue. The cultural audio-visual programme of progressive songs, recitations, etc. was conducted by Sashi Kumar.

W. Bengal : The Ganatantric Lekhak - Shilpi Sangha organised various programmes all over the state. A huge rally was taken out at Calcutta, which was participated by a large number of artistes from various districts of the State.

Kerala : Organised by the Purogami Kala Sahitya Sangam, the day of homage was observed all over the State. Natak Jari Hai was staged in Malayalam at several places.

Tripura : The Tripura Cultural Co-ordination Committee conducted various programmes at different places of the State on both the days.

Tamilnadu : The Tamllnadu Progressive Writers' Association organised meetings, seminars, street plays and Kavi Sammelans at various places. Various other organisations also conducted several programmes at different places.

Andhra Pradesh : The Praja Natya Mandali group staged street theatres in more than 100 places. The Sundaryya Vignana Kendram organised a seminar at Hyderabad, which was participated by various noted artistes.

Karnataka : A Painting Jatha entitled "Sahmat" was organised by the Samudaya group from December 29 to January 5.

Rajasthan : A procession and rally were held at Alwar on January 1 at Vivekananda Chowk, where the Jana Natya Manch had staged street plays about two months before his murder. On January 2, a poem dedicated to Com. Safdar was recited in 210 villages in the State.

Maharashtra : In Bombay, the Jagar Ladhu Lok Kala Aghadi staged the theatre Natak Jari Hai on both January 1 and 2. At Pune mass meetings were organised on the both the days by Udgar Path Natya Manch with the street play, Apaharan Bhaichare Ka. Cultural programmes were held at Bhusawal and other places.

Gujarat : The Lok Kala Manch, Creative Centre, and other organisations staged street plays, organised rallies and meetings on both the days at several places, university campus, etc.

Himachal Pradesh : A large number of people attended a Kavi Sammelan organised at Mandi on January 2.

Haryana : A programme of songs, poem recital and dramas was organised jointly by Janwadi Lekhak Sangh and Janwadi Vichar Manch at University Assembly Hall, Kurukshetra on January 2.

UP : A seminar was organised at Aligarh, which was participated by several artists and litteratures. The Janawadi Lekhak Sangh organised various programmes at several places in the state. A number of street theatres of Jana Natya Manch were staged at different places.

Bihar : The Janawadi Sanskriti Morcha, the Birla Institute of Technology, Jana Sanskriti Manch, Kalakar Sangharsh Samity, the IPTA, etc. observed both the days at different places in the State by holding street theatres, songs, poem recitals, seminars and meetings which were attended by large number of people from all walks of life.

MP : The Safdar Hashmi Smiti Samarch Samity, Janwadi Lakhak Sangh, IPTA, Madhya Pradesh Vignana Sabha, Awami Abhinaya Manch and other organisations organised street plays, poster exhibitions, seminars, rallies, poem recitals, songs and other programmes at various places in the State on both the days. At Indore on January 1, a human chain was formed from Gandhi Chauraha to Gandhi Hall followed by a pledge taking programme, meeting and the street theatre, Natak Jari Hai.

J & K : The Duggar Manch, staged a play, Mulzim Farar at Ranipai on January 1 and at Purani Mandi on January 2. A Seminar was also held on January 2.

Lock out in Chowgules Workshop and Ship-Building Yard Withdrawn

The tripartite agreement between the Chowgule management and the CITU union under the supervision of Regional Labour Commissioner(C) Bombay and the Commissioner of Labour & Employment, Goa has brought about an end to the lock outs declared in the Sirigao Ship Building Yard and Loutulim and withdrawal of the lay off in Head Office. The agreement was signed on 30th, December '89. The agreement also simultaneously settled the disputes concerning wages and fringe benefits.

The dispute arose out of the refusal of M/s Chowgule & Co. Ltd. and the M/s Chowgule Engg. Co. Pvt. Ltd. to negotiate an agreement which expired on 31st December '88 and their deliberate attempt to off load jobs to the contractors. The workers of the shipyard refused to unload to contractors. The suspension of 4 workers sparked off the movement. To stall the tool-down agitation which started on 10.6.89, Sirigao Yard was locked out w.e.f. 19.6.89 when the matter of lock out and the other disputes of shipyard were pending under conciliation, M/s Chowgule Engineering Company Pvt. Ltd. authorities on the other end declared lock-out at Loutulim workshop w.e.f. 2.8.89 on the plea of workers' obstruction to contractors.

The Chowgule Employees Union (CITU) on the other hand declared strike in the Head Office of the Companies and in the mines owned by the same set of managements from 14.9.89.

With this development the Regional Labour Commissioner(C), Bombay intervened. At the mediation of Regional Labour Commissioner and the Commissioner of Labour and Employment, Panaji, a protracted negotiation was conducted during Oct., Nov. and Dec. '89. S.Y. Kolhatkar, the CITU Vice President led the negotiations from the union side.

From CITU Centre M.K. Pandhe, Secretary visited Goa to help the negotiating team for a respectable solution of the disputes.

Agreement provides the withdrawal of the lock out and all punitive measures of suspensions and dismissals. For the period of lock out a non-recoverable ex-gratia of Rs. 2000/- for shipyard and Rs. 1000/- for each workmen in Loutulim workshop will be paid.

The agreement settled rates of 16 pay scales for Mines & Khandepar Workshop, 6 for Head Office and 12 for Sirigao and Loutulim Workshops. The scales ranged between Rs. 700/- as minimum and Rs. 2400/- as maximum with Rs. 15/- as minimum increment and Rs. 50/- as maximum. Scales were fixed at 500 pts of AICPI. Beyond that workers will be entitled of VDA @ Rs. 1.65 upto 650 and @ 1.80 for every point above 650. A minimum flat rise of Rs. 165/- was guaranteed. In case of Chowgule Engineering Co. Pvt. Ltd. it will be Rs. 145/-. Over and above, workers, who rendered service between three years and 15 years will get an advance increment between a range of one and three increments. Workers who will be reaching at the top of pay scale during the operation of the agreement will continue to get the increment which they were getting till the next agreement is finalised. House rent allowance will be paid @ 15%. Besides these facilities, workers will get enhanced rate in washing and daily allowances, canteen and the transport allowances.

The wage of daily rated workers was increased from Rs. 20/- to Rs. 27/- exclusive of VDA. For Khandepar the rate will be Rs. 35/-. The contract workers got an increment of Rs. 7/- over and above of their daily wage of Rs. 28/-.

CITU Demands Review of Foreign Vessels Chartering for Deep Sea Fishing

A CITU delegation with the representatives from All India Deep Sea Fishing Technocrats Association met the Union Minister of Food Processing & Textile, Sharad Yadav on 11th January. The delegation apprised the Minister through a memorandum about the corroding effect of foreign vessel chartering arrangement in ruining the marine resources at Indian Exclusive Economic zone. The delegation told the Hon'ble Minister that the chartered trawler operators in league with the Indian absentee license holders, many of whom are Cong.(I) henchmen, are engaged in large scale unaccounted shipments of precious species of fish, shrimp and lobsters to foreign countries. Taking advantage of the system,

huge number of unlicensed holders from South Korea, Taiwan and other countries are engaged in haunting spree. Provision of the Act to recruit 20% of crews are violated. The delegation requested the Minister not to process the new licenses for Pair Trawler Chartering which is being pursued by a section of the bureaucracy. This type of trawler under every single operation catches every thing within a length of one mile and the catchnet can spread upto the soil level of the deep sea.

The Minister instructed the Ministry to enquire into the matter. The delegation was led by M.K. Pandhe and Jibon Roy, CITU Secretaries.

Implementation of Revival Package of ACC-Babcock Demanded

A delegation of the Co-ordination Committee of ABL & Babcock unions (CITU) headed by M.K. Pandhe and Md. Ismail, Secretary and Vice-President of CITU respectively and consisting of B.P. Chakravarty, A.B. Das, A.K. Bhattacharjee, A.B. Konar, B. Bhattacharjee, B Banerjee and Shant Kumar representing the unions from Durgapur, Shahabad and Calcutta met Arif Md. Khan, Minister of Energy on 12.1.90.

The delegation urged the Govt. to implement the revival package drawn by Govt and Financial Institutions since it resumed its operation in June 1988 after suspension of operations from October 1986. It was contemplated in the said package that ABL would get orders for 1200 MW by 1989 and 400 MW every year. The Govt could not so far live up to its commitment and the company could only get order for 400 MW, which would frustrate the rehabilitation schemes and render the company sick again.

The delegation also urged the Minister to nationalise the company for greater interest of the country. The Minister gave the delegation a patient hearing and assured to look into the matter.

The delegation also met the Chairman of ACC-Babcock Ltd and urged him to persuade the Govt to implement the revival package. The Chairman was also urged to resolve the long standing grievances of the employees for increased co-operation and harmony in the company.

NBCC Delegation Meets Minister

A delegation of National Buildings Construction Corporation Workers Union (CITU) met the Union Minister of Urban Development Shri Murasoli Maran on 28th December, 1989. The delegation consisted of Com. Amal Krishna Kundu, Com. Samiran Ganguly, Office Bearers of the Union and was accompanied by Com. K.C. Ghose on behalf of Construction Workers Federation of India. The delegation was led by Com. Sukomal Sen, M.P.

The delegation submitted a memorandum to the Minister. The Memorandum highlighted the issues of very urgent nature like abolition of Sub-Contract system and departmentalisation, removal of deputationists from other Government departments as C.P.W.D., E.P.I. etc. to facilitate the senior people to the get higher promotion regularisation of all workmen in Works Establishment/Nominal Muster Roll/Departmental Casual serving for more than 15-20 year, reinstatement of 300 workmen retrenched so far and revision of wages which is long over due.

The Minister assured the delegation that within a fortnight's time he will meet the worker's representatives through a forum at the ministerial level and try to do all justice to the workers.

Conference of A.I. Postal Employees

The delegates to the 14th All India Conference, representing about two and half lakhs Postal employees consisting of Postmen and allied cadres working in about 1,48,000 Urban & Rural based Post Offices in the Country, meeting in Jaipur (Rajasthan) from 15 to 18 December, welcomed the formation of the National Front Government.

The All India Postal Employees Union-Postmen, Class-IV & EDA greeted the Postal Employees, who are a part of the people for their verdict against the misrule of the Congress(I) Government which has inflicted mass misery, huge unemployment, unbearable work load on the working people, practised a worst system of exploitation of worker by resorting to mass scale casualisation, privatisation, cheap labour devises such as Extra Departmental Agency and indiscriminate use of job killing Hi-Tech, Mechanisation and also was surrounded by scandals and corruption.

The 14th All India Conference especially welcomed the wide participation of the Postal Employees organised by the Union, in the electoral battle against anti-worker, anti-people Cong (I) Government. In particular it greeted the Postal workers of West Bengal, Kerala and North Eastern states for their participation in the 30th August 89, Bharat Bandh, a prelude to the defeat of the Rajiv Government.

The Conference welcomed the assurance given by Prime Minister V.P. Singh that an important priority of his Government was to control prices, job guarantee (Right to Work), repeal of 59th amendment to Constitution, dropping of the infamous Trade Union Bill, withdrawal of Postal Bill, not resorting to indiscriminate computerisation aiming at replacement of work force by machines where it is not necessary.

The 14th All India Conference also welcomed the new Government's assurance regarding the effort for national consensus to solve the Punjab, Ramjanambhoomi/Babri Masjid dispute.

Convention of NHPC Workers

NHPC workers' convention was held on 24.12.89. at Pathankot attended by representatives from projects from all over the country. The Convention decided to form an All India Union under the banner of CITU. The new union was named as "Akhil Bharatiya N.H.P.C. Workers and Staff Union". The convention elected a Central Committee with M.K. Pandhe as President; Nanak Chand as Working President; K.C. Ghosh Vice President; Mulk Raj as General Secretary and Bhola Mondal as Secretary with nine Committee members.

The Convention adopted a charter of demands and this will be submitted to the Chairman of the NHPC and the concerned Ministry with the request to settle early. In case there is no fruitful progress in the matter, the workers will organise countrywide movement to achieve their demands.

Com. Chacha Shadiram

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions deeply mourns the passing away of Com. Chacha Shadiram, President of the Delhi State Committee of the CITU and a member of the Delhi State Committee of the CPI (M). Popularly known as Chacha, Com. Shadiram died on December 27, 1989 at the age of 80.

Com. Shadiram joined the then CPI in 1945 and then joined the CPI (M) after its formation in 1964. He was the oldest member of the Party in Delhi. He started trade union work as a Municipal Corporation worker and organised the unions there. His trade union activities were spread soon in different industries. He was one of the founders of the Delhi State Committee of the CITU. He had to undergo imprisonment several times for his revolutionary activities as a communist and for his militant trade union activities.

The CITU dips its red banner paying homage to Com. Shadiram and sends heartfelt condolences to the bereaved members of his family.

Donation to CITU by Balmer Lawrie Employees' Union

Subsequent to the wage settlement in Balmer Lawrie, a Central Public Sector undertaking, the Balmer Lawrie Employees' Union (CITU) of Bombay has donated an amount of Rs. 10,000/- to the CITU Centre.

(From page 10)

of early clearance of MSTC agreement and proposed to meet again after two other memoranda were scrutinised by the Ministry. He reaffirmed the commitment on Durgapur Steel modernisation and said that the Government will take early decisions on IISCO modernisation. When the delegation drew the attention of the Minister to the order of the SAIL management to recover 8 days' wages in CMO and in Salem for participation in the 30th August 1989 Bharat Bandh, the Minister assured that the deduction order will be repealed.

Editorial Board

M.K. Pandhe (Chairman)

P.K. Ganguly (Working Editor)

Manoranjan Roy, Niren Ghosh,

M.M. Lawrence, Vimal Ranadive, Ranjit Basu

(From page 18)

The AIRF did not send any charter of demands earlier to the new Govt. It had only sent a message of greetings to the Minister and requested for a formal meeting to discuss outstanding issues. The resolution adopted in their Working Committee meeting held on Jan 10-11 once again welcomed the new govt and the new Railway Minister and mentioned the outstanding issues about which "the workers are very much concerned" eg, right to work, rising prices etc and of course the wage review committee and wage parity. It also welcomed the decision to introduce secret ballot for union recognition.

The LRSA held its working committee meeting on Jan. 5. Report on discussion with the Railway Minister was placed. The meeting welcomed the NF Govt and also discussed the organisational matter including the question of Annual Convention scheduled for Feb 19-21, 1990. The resolution adopted in the meeting naturally emphasised the victimisation issue.

AIREC had held its central executive committee meeting on 7-8 Jan. 1990. The Secretary General reported on his discussion with the Railway Minister. Pledging support to the NF govt the resolution adopted in the meeting expressed hope that all victimisations will be vacated expeditiously. It requested for immediate restoration of channel of negotiation for AIREC. The meeting adopted a programme for strengthening the organisation. A delegation of the AIBEC met the Railway Minister after this Meeting.

(From page 20)

a living wage; the right to work;

2. That the demand for a Constituent Assembly of the oppressed and exploited is in opposition to all attempts of the regime to divide us in the name of 'power sharing', 'group rights' and negotiated settlement;

Thereby Resolves :

1. To adopt the Harare Declaration on how the conflict in South Africa could be resolved and acknowledge the solidarity and support of the Organisation of African Unity and the Frontline States in particular;

2. To call for a Constituent Assembly established on a non-racial basis representing all the people of South Africa to draw up a New Constitution for our country;

3. To call on our people and organisations to mobilise our forces, to organise and intensify the struggle for the creation of a single non-racial democratic South Africa with a single Parliament and a single universal suffrage;

4. To call the international community to intensify the isolation of the South African regime and to impose comprehensive and mandatory sanctions;

5. The real democracy be given to the freely elected delegates of the people, united in the Constituent Assembly on the basis of one person one vote in a unitary South Africa;

6. Only the constituent assembly has the right and duty to define a new constitution as well as the form and social content of a new and just society.

Federations' Delegation Meets Prime Minister on Right to Work

A delegation on behalf of the Preparatory Committee for the Convention on Right to Work met Shri V.P. Singh, the Prime Minister on 10th January evening to discuss the question of Right to Work which the National Front Govt has assured to enshrine as a Fundamental Right in the Constitution. The delegation submitted a memorandum to him.

The delegation was led by Samar Mukherjee M.P., General Secretary of the CITU and consisted of P.K. Ganguly and Jibon Roy, Secretaries of CITU; Dilip Majumdar, Working President of the Steel Workers' Federation of India (SWFI) and the Convenor of the Preparatory Committee; Mrinal Banerjee, General Secretary of SWFI; B.K. Banerjee of the National Federation of Postal Employees; S.M.A. Jinnah, General Secretary of All India Audit & Accounts Association and K.K. Roy Ganguly, General Secretary of Water Transport Workers' Federation of India.

The delegation congratulated the National Front Government for its assurance for right to work and extended full cooperation of the national federations for realisation of the task in a phased time bound programme of job oriented measures both in the industrial and agricultural sector. To achieve this objective, the delegation emphasised the need for reorientation of the economic policy based on self-reliance and job orientation.

The Preparatory Committee was formed with a number of all India federations of workers and employees belonging to public sector, private sector and Central and State Governments to work out measures for employment generation and wage united struggles for the right to work.

The memorandum drew the attention of the Prime Minister to the reckless modernisation, automation and computerisation launched by the Congress (I) Government and the ban on recruitment imposed by it, which aggravated the unemployment situation in the country instead of generating more employment. It pointed to the systematic destabilisation of the public sector which was built up for providing more jobs and a self-reliant economy and the path of privatisation and giving a free entry to multinationals as embarked upon by the former Government, which led to further accentuation of the problem.

The memorandum brought to the notice of the Prime Minister the colossal number of closed and sick undertakings amounting to over two lakhs, which the Congress (I) Government did not take cognizance of, nor it made any efforts to reopen them or revive the sick units. The delegation pointed to the deteriorating purchasing power of the people due to growing unemployment that led to the squeezing of the domestic market.

The import liberalisation policy of the previous Government permitting import of a large number of items which could be produced in the country led to closure of many indigenous units.

The failure of the Congress (I) Government to introduce genuine land reforms and lack of development of rural based industries led to growing joblessness in the rural sector. Ruination of the traditional industries likewise augmented the number of unemployed.

The delegation pointed out that programmes like Jawahar Rojgar Yojana never touched the tip of the iceberg. The memorandum stressed for mobilisation of resources for massive employment generation programme and taking radical measures like unearthing of black money which was estimated to be above Rs. 40,000 crores.

The delegation informed the Prime Minister that the Preparatory Committee was going to hold a National Convention on Right to Work at Durgapur in March, 1990 which would endeavour to formulate positive measures to ensure employment generation.

The Prime Minister listened to the points carefully and participated in the discussions. He welcomed positive suggestions and national interactions to meet the problem and assured the Government's full efforts in this direction.

CITU Opposes Government's Acceptance of Wage Board Recommendations on Sugar Industry

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions expresses concern and surprise over the reports appearing in the Press regarding Central Government's acceptance of the recommendations of the Third Wage Board for the Sugar Industry.

The All India Convention of the Sugar Industry workers held in August 1989 under the auspices of the National Co-ordination Committee of Sugar Workers comprising of all the Central Trade Unions and Sugar Federations had fully rejected the retrograde and anti-worker recommendations of the third Sugar Wage Board and had demanded of the Government to settle the long pending demands of the Sugar Workers through negotiations with the Co-ordination Committee.

CITU feels that this ill-advised step of the Government to overlook the legitimate demands of the Sugar Industry workers which are pending for more than a decade may create widespread resentment and force them to go for industrial action for redressal of their grievances.

CITU therefore, protests against this move and urges upon the Government to reject the Sugar Wage Board recommendations and start negotiations without delay with the Co-ordination Committee which is the authentic representative of the Sugar Industry workers and settle the issue amicably.

(The AITUC also issued a protest statement likewise.)

Railway Trade Unions in the new phase

All railway trade unions excepting the INTUC affiliates called upon railwaymen to make all possible efforts to defeat the Cong (I) in the 9th Lok Sabha elections. Probably this is the first time that all these trade unions have come out almost openly with a political call. So far the leadership of many trade unions in railways had always been trying to keep their organisations "free from politics". But the deepening crisis with the hardships imposed on the people, policies pursued by the Rajiv Govt in the interest of the exploiting classes spelling disaster to the life of the common workers—all this had some lessons to impart to the railway workers too. They realised that to give Cong(I) rule a further lease of life would mean inviting their own ruin. In this situation to keep their organisations away from election campaign in the name of "politics-free trade unionism" would be suicidal. So it was found that in the AIRF annual convention held in Calcutta on Oct 16-18, 1989, both in the inaugural session as well as in the delegate session the speakers, common delegates and the leaders, all emphasised the importance of putting an end to the pernicious rule of the Cong(I) under Rajiv's leadership. The resolution almost directly indicated that during the ensuing period the main task would be to carry on campaign for a change in the Govt. Similarly the leaders of AILRSA, the AIREC and a number of organisations had issued instructions to the organisations, generally on the basis of their executive decisions, to make organised efforts for change of Govt. Thus the railway trade unions during this election shunned their grand isolation and joined the mainstream of democratic movement to accomplish, in the interest of the people as a whole, which of course include the working class also, the political task of supreme importance—changing the Govt. It is only natural that these organisations will greet the new Govt with warm enthusiasm. All the organisations of railwaymen have sent their message of greetings to the new Railway Minister George Fernandez who was the leader of the 1974 historic Railway strike. He was not only the President of AIRF, he was the leader of 17 lakhs of railwaymen who had rallied round the united forum of the National Coordination Committee of Railwaymen's struggle which became famous in trade union history of the country as NCCRS, in which all the non-INTUC unions the AILRSA, the AIREC etc were constituents besides AIRF. It is also natural that these unions and the railwaymen in general would expect fair deal from this Govt, from the Railway Ministry with George Fernandes presiding over it. Through memorandums and also in the course of discussions during their visit, the leaders of these organisations have made the feeling of railwaymen known to the Railway Minister.

The railwaymen's leaders are not lacking in the understanding that the new Govt as well as the new

Railway Minister will need some time to set the house in order—they have taken over an administration where only chaos reigned—and some time will also be required for processing. Moreover, the leaders are aware that in view of the "empty coffer" left by the previous Govt, it will be difficult for the present Govt to take up immediately the issues the settlement of which involve large financial commitment. The organisations have, as is expected, taken a positive and considerate stand. They of course expect a beginning, may be with the smallest of issues.

One major issue before the railwaymen is the issue of victimisation—about a thousand workers stand dismissed/removed from service, most of them since the beginning of the eighties. The Cong(I) gov't had thrown them out by application of Rule 14 (ii) of the Railway Servants (D&A) Rules, without enquiry, without giving opportunity for self defence for participation in trade union action. The workers had no other alternative but to take the refuge of the court of law. A good number of cases are still pending but in many cases the courts/Tribunals had ordered reinstatement of removed/dismissed workers and in many other cases they have ordered enquiry. The Railway administration had dragged the cases from High Courts/Tribunals to Supreme Court whenever the judgement has gone in favour of workers and has been trying to evade court orders in as many cases as possible. Vacation of victimisation is a common demand and has been put forward by all the organisations for immediate action by the Govt. Everyone hopes that the victimised railway workers will soon come back to their jobs.

Another demand, put forward by the unorganised unions particularly, is the demand for a channel of negotiation. Only the two recognised federations AIRF & NFIR and their affiliates enjoy the facility. During the Janata rule, it was extended to the AIREC at some level. The Railway Minister has given assurance to the leaders who met him that victimised workers would be taken back. As regards channel of negotiation, he has pointed out that a new legislation was going to be enacted providing for recognition of unions through secret ballot.

Then there are long term demands like the demand for wage parity, etc. Nobody feels that the new Govt can immediately grapple with this issue. So none is insisting on its immediate settlement. But everyone hopes that some day this issue will come up for consideration.

Executive Meet : In the meantime many organisations have held their Central Working Committee meetings. The common feature is that the meetings once again congratulated the new Govt. and once again enlisted the urgent issues for drawing the attention of the Govt in a more formal manner.

(Cont'd on page 16)

Declaration of the Conference for a Democratic Future

(4,600 delegates from a wide range of organisations opposed to apartheid took part in the Conference for a Democratic Future at Johannesburg on December 10, 1989. We are publishing hereunder the Declaration and the Resolution adopted in the Conference—Ed)

1. The struggling people of our motherland stand at the threshold of a new South Africa. Centuries of struggle against the forces of evil and oppression are now bearing fruit. We are certain of our future and through our concerted will, South Africa will be free and democratic.

2. We, the thousands of representatives of organisations from throughout South Africa, gathered here in Johannesburg to plan the next steps of our march to freedom, find our country in a chaotic state, in that: the minority rulers hold on to power against the will of the majority; they perpetrate violence against our people; the economy is in total ruin; the suffering of our people increases daily—unemployment, low wages, high rents, high cost of living.

3. Our people have made it clear that: no minority government is acceptable; apartheid must be completely dismantled; only a united, democratic, non-racial South Africa is acceptable; we will continue to resist apartheid, even defy and actively dismantle it, whatever the cost.

4. Despite its total isolation, the De Klerk regime is fighting back. It has launched its own offensive against our people, our movements and our allies abroad.

5. The strategic objective of the regime remains that of reshaping apartheid to make it palatable to the South African people and the international community. More importantly, the clear intention is to protect the privileges of the white minority.

6. We are convinced that the De Klerk government is not interested in creating a democratic South Africa, nor is it interested in genuine negotiations. Clearly, De Klerk is buying time to re-order the forces of minority domination and win over some of our people of his fraudulent schemes.

7. De Klerk is presenting proposed 'reforms' as his great beginning and calls on us to de-escalate our struggle and to end international isolation.

8. We ask our people and the world community to note that the security forces of the De Klerk regime continue their merciless assault on our unarmed people: the 'hit squads' remain intact and have been given a new mandate to continue the elimination of our leaders and activists; over 3000 patriots are serving sentences in De Klerk's jails;

More than 70 await De Kerk's hangman on Death Row; over 600 remain under De Klerk's restriction orders.

9. The oppressed people of South Africa shall be masters of their own history—not De Klerk. The campaigns of mass action by our people have inspired millions of South Africans, both Black and White. We have broken the shackles of the State of Emergency; our gallant detainees won their release through the hunger strike; our marches have challenged De Klerk to restrain his 'dogs of war'.

10. The campaigns of mass action have attracted thousands of new people into the fold of the anti-apartheid forces. The moral appeal of the democratic movement has never been greater. This moral appeal has even been extended to the police force where the number of policemen and policewomen, who refuse to be used against their own people, will increase.

11. We want to end apartheid and exploitation as soon as possible. We want democracy as soon as possible. If De Klerk can convince us that he is serious about genuine negotiations on the creation of a democratic South Africa, and he has created the necessary condition for negotiations, we are ready to talk about the creation of a democratic South Africa.

12. De Clerk has done nothing which convinces us that he is genuine. There are not actions to back up his vague promises.

13. We cannot and will not wait until De Klerk is ready. Our struggle to dismantle apartheid and exploitation and to build a democratic future will go on: we will continue to galvanise every section of our society—Black and White—into united action against apartheid; we will build the maximum unity among all anti-apartheid forces; we will continue to demand that the international community intensify its efforts to isolate the De Klerk government.

14. We have put the question of political power first on the agenda today. Today we will jointly map out a programme to intensify our struggle against apartheid and exploitation to unite our people as never before.

We will not rest until all the people of South Africa—Black and White—govern in a non-racial, democratic and united South Africa.

Resolution on Negotiations and the Constituent Assembly

We, the 4,600 delegates to this historic Conference for a Democratic Future of the broad anti-apartheid liberation forces:

1. Salute the fighting forces of our people who have conducted armed struggle, in view of the situation in which all peaceful avenues have closed.

of laws and police against the legitimate strike. Auto workers have organised caravans of support from as far away as Michigan. Top officers of the AFL-CIO allowed them selves be arrested with the other protesters to show support for the strike.

The anti-union conspiracy centering on Pittston is only an advanced thrust of the general anti-union offensive of US big business, which is willing to accept unions so long as they are powerless. The press, TV and all media have responded to the wave of support for the miners by 'blacking-out' all news of the strike in the US. At the same time the same press gave abundant coverage to the recent Soviet mine strikes.

The miners responded to the blackout by seizing the key coal-processing plant at Carbo, Virginia in a swift, well-planned and non-violent operation and over 2,000 supporters gathered around the plant to prevent attack by Virginia armed forces. After four days of stopping production completely, the miners withdrew, again without violence.

Due to monopoly control of US press and TV, the news blackout is extremely effective. For this reason messages of international support from miners' unions, other unions and all friends are most strengthening to morale and are urgently needed so that the miners have clear evidence that they are not alone.

Mexico : More than ten thousand miners and metallurgical workers from sections 65 and 271 of the National Union of Miners are on strike, in Mexico, in a bid to defend their Collective Contract for work, which is an acknowledged constitutional trade union right. The strikers work on copper extraction at the Minera de Cananea S.A and SICARSTA enterprises. The constitutional right to strike is under issue. the management have declared the company bankrupt in order to prevent a continuation of the strike, and the revision of the Collective Contract, which has been rejected by the workers as both enterprises have a very high production rate—up to 100% of the installed capacity.

This same Cananea manages to sell the whole of its output, being one of the largest producers in the world. The reason for this anti-trade union offensive lies in the policy of modernization through the mutilation of collective contracts of work and the introduction of 'sub-contracting', i.e. indirect employment through secondary enterprises. It is a case of the abolition of posts of employment and social guarantees.

Haiti : The capital of Haiti, Port-au-Prince was brought to a complete standstill by a strike called by the Independent Haitian Workers Centre (CATH). Workers were protesting against the arrest of three opponents of the Government. The strike took place

on 7 and 8 November and was broadly supported by all strata of the population.

The three detainees are members of the opposition, the Rassemblement National or National Union and include CATH's Executive Secretary. They were accused of conspiring to topple the Government which came to power in a military coup in 1988 and assassinate leading members of it, like General Avril who was part of the defunct Duvalier regime.

This latest repressive measure is a desperate attempt by the dictatorial regime to stifle the growing broad mass movement struggling for restoration of democratic freedoms and human rights.

The lives of those detained are in danger. The Haitian regime is notorious for its brutal methods in dealing with opposition figures, and those detained have already been seen on Haitian television with bruised and bloody faces.

Sudan : The military junta ruling Sudan has unleashed further attacks against the Sudanese working people. Increasingly isolated both inside the country and abroad, and against a background of increased resistance to its dictatorial rule, the Government of the National Islamic Front on November 16 dismissed 15 medical officers and 37 diplomats.

This followed its earlier attack on democratic freedoms and human rights which resulted in the banning of all political parties and trade union organisations. Over 300 political and trade union leaders are languishing in Sudanese prisons in appalling conditions. The junta has also started deporting political and trade union detainees to various notorious prisons in the eastern and western parts of the country.

Recently the Sudanese Democratic Forum was established. It is composed of all the active political parties and over 50 trade union organisations. In its first declaration it called on the Sudanese people to resist the dictatorial rule of the National Islamic Front and to fight for their democratic rights and the release of all detainees, as well as the reinstatement of all dismissed personnel. Only through gradual escalation of popular struggle, the declaration said, leading to the overthrow of the regime by a general political strike, civil disobedience and well prepared popular insurrection, could the goals of the mass movement be obtained.

In another development 107 trade union organisations from all over the world demanded the immediate lifting of the ban on trade unions, the release of all political and trade union detainees, and the reinstatement of those who have been dismissed from their jobs. Among the protesters are prominent trade union leaders from the capitalist, socialist and developing countries.

Greetings from AUCCTU on Republic Day

(We are publishing herèunder the greetings received from AUCCTU, USSR on the occasion of the Republic Day and the reply by CITU-Ed.)

Centre of Indian Trade Unions

6, Talkatora,

January 17, 1990

Dear Comrades,

On behalf of soviet working people and trade unions, the All Union Central Council of Trade Unions extends cordial greetings to the working people and trade unions of India on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of Indian National Holiday, Independence Day. It gives us profound satisfaction to mark that long time close cooperation between our respective trade union centres has resulted in building up a firm and friendly relationship which has contributed to a better meeting of minds and enhanced solidarity between the working people of our two countries. The Peace, Friendship and Cooperation Treaty signed by two of our countries as well as the wide channel of two way Soviet-Indian relationship and Soviet Indian political cooperation have become a factor in world affairs. On this day, notable for the Indian people as it is, we would like to extend to Indian working people our wishes of further success in solving social and economic tasks confronting them as well as in fighting for unity of trade union and workers movement and in consolidating national independence for the sake of peace, democracy and social progress. We reiterate our desire to further contribute to the development of long time Soviet-Indian trade union ties in the interests of better friendship and cooperation between the peoples of USSR and India.

All Union Central Council of Trade Unions
CITU'S Reply

The Secretary

22.1. 90

All Union Central Council of Trade Unions,

42, Leninsky Prospect

Moscow—1171119

Dear Comrade,

Please accept our sincerest thanks for your greeting telegrams sent on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of our Republic Day to be celebrated on 26th January, 1990.

We express our deep satisfaction at the development of close cooperation and traditionally friendly relations between our two countries and our two Trade Union Centres. The Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation and the Indo-Soviet Declaration are landmarks in this respect, and our new National Front Government has pronounced to consolidate the same.

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions puts immense values to the international significance of the growing friendship between our two countries to safeguard the independence of our country from the imperialist conspiracies and the US imperialists' drive for world domination and carryforward the struggle for peace, democracy and socialism.

We look forward towards further consolidation of the fraternal bond and cooperation between our

two countries and our two Trade Union Centres. With warm fraternal greetings,

Yours comradely,
P. K. Ganguly
Secretary

US Binary Modernization

In 1987, following an 18 year break in Chemical Weapons (CW) production the US began producing new binary chemical weapons. Binaries so called because they consist of two relatively non-toxic chemical agents which are only mixed to produce one lethal agent when fired or detonated. The three binary weapons being developed are a 155 mm artillery shell, a warhead for the Multiple Launch Rocket System and the Bigeye gravity bomb. The US intends to produce hundreds of thousands of binary CWs at an estimated cost of 3\$ billion. The weapons will replace old US stockpiles and their production is linked to the intended withdrawal of old CW stocks from West Germany and Johnston Atol. Binary deployment plans are vague but Jane's NATO Report (13.6.89) suggests that some could be based on naval ships off the European coast. The Bigeye bomb, currently plagued by production delays, would most likely be used in Third World contexts.

Notwithstanding the multilateral Geneva talks for a CW ban and the work done by US—Soviet bilateral meetings on CW data exchange and verification, the Bush administration seems intent to push ahead with binary production.

For the last two years peace activists from the Rhineland-Palatine state of West Germany have held demonstrations and blockades outside the US military base at Fischbach. Unlike most protests against military bases, those at Fischbach are not concerned with nuclear weapon deployments but are focused on what activists believe to be the largest stockpile of chemical weapons (CWs) in West Europe. They are 99 per cent sure that, that is where the US stores its European deployment of CWs, but they can't be certain. What they do know is that the 400-500 agent tons of nerve gas stored somewhere in their country are sufficient to wipe out the human race.

Chemical Weapon Agents

Nerve agents are colourless, odourless, tasteless chemicals of the same family of organophosphorus insecticides that poison the nervous system and disrupt vital body functions. They constitute the most modern war chemicals known.

Blister agents, or vesicants mainly burn and blister the skin within hours of exposure. Mustard gas is an example,

Choking agents irritate and injure the lungs causing death from choking.

Blood agents also enter the body through the respiratory tract and cause death by preventing the use of oxygen by body tissues.

Toxins are highly toxic biologically produced chemicals.

Tear and harassing agents are sensory irritants widely used for 'riot-control',

Source United Nations

Appeal by National Democratic Front of South Korea

(We are publishing hereunder an appeal made by the National Democratic Front of South Korea to support the anti-US and anti-nuclear war struggle of the South Korean people for peaceful reunification of Korea—Ed.)

The Central Committee of the National Democratic Front of South Korea (NDFSK) writes this letter to you, peace-loving governments, political parties, organizations and international bodies to ask you to pay your due heed to South Korea, immersed in the greatest danger of nuclear war in the world and render your active support to our people's anti-war, anti-nuclear movement.

Today the world moves toward peace and detente, and voices are toned up throughout the globe for removal of nuclear arms. However, in South Korea alone, nuclear arms and bases increase in large numbers day by day.

Of late, the United States introduced up-to-date fight bombers and missiles into South Korea under the cloak of changing conventional weapons, while building new nuclear bases even in Jeju Island in the Sothern tip of South Korea.

In South Korea, there are over 1000 nuclear weapons.

The density of nuclear deployment is 4 times higher than that of NATO nations and the explosive power totals to 13,000 Kilotons or more.

The density and explosive power in South Korea increase more and more owing to Washington's moves to reinforce nuclear potentiality here.

The nukes in South Korea are never "symbol of peace" for safeguarding South Korean people. They are for forestalling attack upon socialist countries.

To carry out the aggressive strategy for world supremacy, Washington not only marked the Korean peninsula as nuclear war test ground but also worked out even plans of nuclear forestalling attack against socialist countries. We believe you know it.

These reckless nuclear war plans, called "9 days striking strategy" and "3-day nuclear war plan", are being put into practice through large-scale military exercises including "Team Spirit", "PACEX" and "RimPac", thereby redoubling the danger.

South Korea is so densely covered with nuclear and other military bases that our people cannot freely tread, nor travel even their territory.

Our people are now living on a big nuclear magazine that may be ignited at any moment. They cannot sleep in peace, nor can get out of uneasiness even a day.

Really the South Korean people face with a life-and-death crisis. It is entirely because South Korea has been turned into a colony of the United States.

South Korea has the state name, the President and army, as if it is an independent state. In fact, however, South Korea is more than a colony destitute of sovereignty and prerogative of the army's supreme command. The United States, without South Korea's permission, introduces any kind of nuclear weapons at any time and conducts whatever

nuclear war exercise in any place of South Korea.

If the United States provokes a nuclear war on the Korean peninsula, the Korean nation will totally perish and the three thousand-ri territory of this peninsula be devastated to ashes.

Our nation is now in danger of nuclear holocaust in addition to the tremendous tragedy of national division caused by the United States. It is indeed an unbearable misfortune.

We cannot pardon Washington's plot to use nuclear power, a fruit of modern civilization, for murderous war against human beings, not for human welfares.

At this grave juncture, the NDFSK has already proclaimed the anti-nuke drive as an important goal of struggle and our people launched the anti-nuke movement under the slogan of "Nukes to America, South Korea into a nuclear-free, peace zone."

The danger of nuclear war from South Korea is not a problem limited only to our nation's life and death.

If a nuclear war breaks out on the Korean peninsula, it will inevitably develop in a flash into a world-wide nuclear war. It is a matter of common knowledge.

The nuclear weapons deployed in South Korea far surpass the scope of the Korean peninsula in their total amount and radius of operation, and the US nuclear war exercises frequent in South Korea have exceeded long ago the limit of exercise in regard of its scale and danger.

Nobody can assure that these reckless nuclear war exercises will not develop into a real war to bring terrible mushroom cloud which will exterminate our nation and the whole mankind.

So the struggle of our people to expel the US military troops and nuclear weapons from South Korea and turn this territory into a nuclear-free peace zone is directly connected with the progressive people's cause for peaceful world.

We earnestly ask all the governments, political parties and organisations of the world to unanimously denounce Washington for its reinforcement of nuclear arms and continuous nuclear war exercises in South Korea and join altogether in our people's anti-war, anti-nuclear peace march for converting South Korea into a nuclear-free, peace zone.

These days, voices for denuclearization, peace and reunification of the Korean peninsula go higher in socialist and peace-loving countries. It gives great encouragement to our people.

The NDFSK hopes that all the governments, political parties, organisations and international bodies will, in the future, too, render unreserved support to and solidarity with our anti-US, anti-war and anti-nuke struggle for peaceful reunification of the country, regarding the misfortune and agony of of the South Korean people suffering from the danger of nuclear calamity, plus the tragedy of subordination and division as your own.