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Vol 15 No 7 March 1986 Rupee One

THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITU

COUNTRYWIDE PROTEST ACTIONS

File

Government Guillotined Against Price Rise

REACTING sharply against the price hikes announced by the Government in essential commodities like rice and wheat, in all varieties of fertilisers and in the petroleum products the people swept into protest actions throughout the country right from January 30, the day of the first announcement. The spontaneous reaction of the people culminated in a massive show of unity in no time. The CITU,

All India Kisan Sabha, All India agricultural Worker's Union, the various State Committees of CITU, the National Campaign Committee and other trade unions immediately issued statements calling upon all sections of the working people and the trade unions to raise their united voice of protest demanding of the Government to revoke the price hike orders. Similarly, the CPI(M) and the different



opposition parties issued statements denouncing the Government for launching this offensive on the people. Several members of the parliament belonging to CPI(M), namely, Basudev Acharya, Dipen Ghosh, Amal Datta, Nirmal Chatterjee, Ajit Kumar Saha and Saifuddin Chowdhury also issued statements condemning the Government for denigrating the Parliament by issuing the administrative orders just on the eve of it.

In its two statements issued on January 30 and February 1, the CITU denounced the Government for sharply increasing the prices of the two most essential commodities like wheat and rice at the fair price shops, while the organised trade union movement demanded fixing of the prices of 14 essential items of foodgrains at lower prices and their distribution through the public distribution system. Only three weeks earlier the government had increased the prices of coal in a similar manner. The CITU criticised the paltry increase in the support price of wheat by Rs. 5 only which would not benefit the peasantry in any way, since their demand was for a minimum increase by Rs. 18. The pleas extended by the government spokesmen and the Ministers were totally untenable and contradictory. During the last increase in the prices of petroleum products in March, 1985 the reason was attributed to the rise in the international prices. But now despite the fall in the international prices, the prices of the petroleum products have been increased. It is surprising that while the former petroleum Minister, Nawal Kishore Sharma had pronounced that the decline in international prices would lead to huge savings in import of petroleum products, the Finance Minister, V.P. Singh now has extended the plea that excessive demands would lead to growing imports and thereby exert pressure on the country's balance of payment position. The actual reason which the Government was desperately trying to elude by using subterfuges was that by surrendering to the dictates of the World Bank and the IMF, the government was deep into a debt trap and a death trap, and to come out of the crisis of its monopoly subservient economic planning, connected with the Western economy, it has launched an open attack on the living standards of the common people, be it a question of slump or increased demand.

Bandh Calls at Delhi, West Bengal and Tripura

Rising up to the demands of the situation, the opposition parties and trade unions in Delhi including the CPI(M), and CITU met immediately and took the decision of Bandh at Delhi on February 10. Simultaneously the Left Fronts and trade unions in W. Bengal and Tripura took decisions of Bandh in West Bengal and Tripura both on February 11. The CITU Secretariat met on February 4 and extended full support to the Bandh. The National Campaign Committee met on February 6 and besides extending support to the bandh calls, announced the programme of All India Protest Day on February 20. The CITU, the opposition parties, the trade unions in West Bengal and those from all other Centres

immediately extended full support to this country-wide action programme and threw their organisational machineries into full gear.

Call for Bharat Bandh

The unison in thinking drove all the organisations towards calling for a Bharat Bandh for the first time in the country against the government policies. The eleven opposition parties were united on this point and wanted the cooperation of the National Campaign Committee. The National Campaign Committee met again for this purpose on February 17 and unanimously supported the programme for all India general strike and bandh. The CITU suggested for 26th February for the day, i.e. before the budget. Although the others preferred it to be held in March after the budget which was to be placed on February 28, yet it was opined that whatever date the opposition parties would finalise, the NCC would support it. The opposition parties in their meeting on February 18 fixed February 26 as the Day for Bharat Bandh. They also extended support to the State Government employees' strike on that day.

INTUC isolated

The INTUC and the Congress(I) were totally isolated due to the magnificent show of unity by all other opposition parties and the trade unions. There were however dissensions in their camps. They are committed to support the government's policies. But this blatant attack by the government had stupefied them. They were unable to give any reasoning behind the price rise and show their faces to the people. They could not so stupidly speak out like the Ministers that the increase in prices were necessary to eradicate poverty. The INTUC in West Bengal did of course meekly say against the hikes, but they were shy of participating in the united struggle against such policies of the Centre. Thus when all the trade unions went ahead with countrywide movements against the government in the interest of the working class and the common people, the INTUC remained tagged with the anti-people policies of the Government exposing their fake leadership over the workers.

The Bandh in Delhi

The Bandh in Delhi on February 10 was unique and the first of its kind. Apart from the price hikes, it also opposed the hike in the bus fares. Hundreds of volunteers of CPI(M), CITU, Janavadi Mahila Samity, SFI and DYFI courted arrests. Everywhere the police resorted to brutal lathi charge for picketing the buses, injuring a large number of women workers also. The women picketers were dragged by their hairs and kicked by the policemen. Angered by the unprovoked brutality of the police the bystanders also joined the picketing and deflated 25 buses. The policemen also arrested the members of Jana Natya Manch and Parcham for staging people's dramas and songs. All the major industrial

areas like Okhla, Mayapuri, Naraina, Nazafgarh, Virpur, G.T. Karnal Road, Shahdara, etc. remained completely closed. All restaurant and hotel workers struck work. The major markets like Connaught Place, Chandni Chowk, Khari Bowli, Nai Sarak, Patel Nagar, Fatehpuri, Kirtinagar, Sadar Bazar, Azad Market, etc remained closed. The private educational institutions remained closed. There was almost no teaching in the Govt. schools because of poor attendance. The University was already paralysed due to the strike by the teachers. O.J. Joseph, CPI(M) member of Rajya Sabha boycotted the consultative committee meeting of the Labour Ministry which was fixed that day.

Bandh in West Bengal and Tripura

The bandh in West Bengal was as usual total and complete. In several other bandhs the Congress(I) and INTUC created obstructions and hooliganism. But this time they could not dare to do that. The entire industrial belt in the state was silent due to stoppage of the factories and the machines. The streets of Calcutta City and other places were empty except massive processions conducted by the left front and the left trade unions. The educational institution were closed. There was no transport. The train and air services were cancelled and so the entire country was dislocated. There was no loading or unloading in the ports. The offices remained empty. Exactly similar was the case in Tripura. The two left front ruled states stood boldly as bulwark of opposition, the symbol of intense class struggle against the anti-people policies of the Government of India. They served as the beacon light to the entire country, getting support from all quarters.

*It was the left front government of West Bengal which had first raised the demand that the prices of 14 essential commodities should be fixed at a low level and should be available freely through the public distribution system. The demand has now embraced broad sections of the people throughout the country. But the government of India is transfixed by the dictates of the World Bank and the IMF and still refusing to accede to the demands of the people. The CITU and CPI(M) congratulated the workers and the people for the successful bandh at Delhi, West Bengal and Tripura.

Court Arrest in Orissa and Rajasthan

Responding to the call of CITU to demonstrate solidarity on the bandh days, CITU and other trade unions in different parts of the country staged demonstrations and rallies. In Orissa, at Cuttack and other parts of the State over 2000 workers including large number of women courted arrest, braving brutal lathi charge by the police. Similarly in Rajasthan the CITU activists courted arrest. The peasantry and agricultural workers at Jhunjhunu resorted to militant agitations. The police brutally resorted to firing killing one. At Kanpur, the trade unions and the State Government employees observed bundh on February 11. Massive protest actions were held on February 13 at Tamil Nadu.

All India Protest Day

The anger of the people continued and the All India Protest Day was observed in all places with great vigour on February 20, the opening day of the Budget Session of the Parliament. At Delhi, the entire opposition, save and except for AIADMK of course, boycotted the Joint Session of the Parliament addressed by the President. On February 19, they also boycotted the meeting called by the Prime Minister and met the President to hand over the memorandum urging upon him to advise the Prime Minister to withdraw the price hike orders. About 15,000 people which included opposition parties, MPs, trade union workers, women, students and youth courted arrest at Delhi. The majority belonged to CPI(M), CITU and Janvadi Mahila Samity, numbering over 8000. Out of about 100 MPs, 34 belonged to CPI(M) and out of about 750 women, 715 belonged to Janavadi Mahila Samity. Samar Mukherjee, Polit Bureau member of CPI(M) and General Secretary of CITU led the court arrest of the CPI(M) group. *(Picture on the front page.)* Amongst the MPs arrested were Basudev Acharya, leader of the Lok Sabha group and Dipen Ghosh, leader of the Rajya Sabha group of CPI(M).

As per reports received about other places, massive demonstrations and rallies were held in West Bengal and Tripura. Because of the still tense situation in Assam, the CITU unions sent scores of telegrammes to the Prime Minister protesting against the price rise and demanding withdrawal of the orders. Demonstrations were staged before the district authorities and tehsils throughout Rajasthan. At Shimla, a two hour dharna was observed by the workers before the Secretariat after which they went in procession to the Raj Bhawan to hand over a memorandum to the Governor. At Haryana, rallies and processions were held at Sonapat and other places. At Bangalore, a joint demonstration was held in front of the Raj Bhawan. At Patna volunteers of six left and opposition parties and trade unions marched to the District Magistrate and submitted a memorandum. Throughout U. P. dharnas and public meetings were held. At Bombay a 5000 strong joint procession, including large number of women from AIDWA, marched from Azad Maidan to Mantralaya to submit a memorandum to the government. At Chandigarh a joint memorandum was submitted to the Punjab Governor. At Raipur in M.P. a day long dharna was jointly staged by the opposition parties. At Hyderabad, CPI(M) and Telugu Desam demonstrated in front of the Assembly. At Cuttack a massive joint demonstration was staged before the Collectorate. At Bhubaneswar eight opposition parties staged demonstrations before the Secretariat. In Gujarat the entire opposition walked out just before the State Finance Minister started to place the budget. Protest rallies were taken out at Ahmedabad, Mehsana, Himatnagar and other places.

Preparation for Bharat Bandh

With the continuous programmes the opposition parties and the trade unions are preparing for the
(Contd. on page 21)

All India Strike of Coal Miners

DAMODAR Pandey, Jt. General Secretary of Indian National Mine Workers Federation (INTUC), M.K. Pandhe, President of All India Coal Workers' Federation (CITU), S. K. Sanyal, Working President of Indian Mine Workers' Federation (AITUC) and Jayanta Poddar, General Secretary of Hind Khadan Mazdoor Federation (HMS) have issued the following joint statement on February 13:

We warmly congratulate 7 lakh coal mine workers for magnificently responding to the united appeal jointly made by the INTUC, AITUC, CITU, HMS and BMS and successfully implementing the programme of agitation on the following most pressing demands of the Coal mine workers:

1. Immediately restore the commitments unilaterally withdrawn by the managements such as providing jobs to dependants of employees died in harness and disabled permanently etc.

2. Implement the non-implemented welfare measures such as housing facilities, provision for drinking water, educational facilities, medical benefits and safety measures as per NCWA-III.

3. Ensure employment to dependants of retiring employees as per NCWA-III;

4. Immediate formulation of pension scheme for coal miners;

5. Finalise the uniform standing orders for the entire Coal industry;

6. Increase ceiling of gratuity payment from Rs. 35,000 to Rs. 50,000 as per Central Government's decision;

7. Remove ceiling on bonus payment to coal workers;

8. Abolish contract system for jobs of permanent and perennial nature;

9. Finalise promotion policy providing for time bound promotion to all workers:

10. Withdraw all penal action against coal workers such as arbitrary deduction of 8 days wages, loss of lien and break in service;

11. Immediate finalisation of incentive scheme for coal miners.

We call upon all the coal mine workers to observe **ONE DAY STRIKE ON 9th APRIL 1986** in the coal mines all over the country to press for these demands.

As a preparatory step we appeal to all the unions to observe All India Demands Day on 3rd March

1986 by holding meetings and demonstration to highlight these demands. On 21st March 1986 all unions should serve Strike Notice by holding demonstrations before all coal mine offices.

We are confident that the coal workers of all affiliations will respond in a fitting manner to our joint appeal and make the programme of united movement and industrial action a grand success.

We hope the managements of coal mining industry will see reason and accept the long standing and legitimate demands of coal workers, failing which they will be forced to resort to bigger actions.

**Long live coal workers unity !
Unitedly Prepare for all India strike of coal workers on 9th April 1986 !!**

Protest Day Observed

As per call of All India Coal Workers Federation all the coal unions observed 5th February as All India Protest Day by holding meetings and processions. Leaflets were issued containing appeal of the AICWF to coal workers calling upon them to launch countrywide movement in protest against non-implementation of the NCWA-III and to prepare for joint movement to achieve a new charter of Demands.

The CITU unions in all the collieries also extensively circulated the joint appeal issued by all the central trade unions calling upon them to prepare for all India one day strike. Due to the pressure built up by the coal workers, the chairman of CIL hurriedly called a meeting of central trade union representatives on 7th February to discuss the issues. The workers' representatives who attended the meeting reiterated the demands raised by the joint appeal and told the chairman that unless all the issues raised by the unions were settled there was no question of withdrawing the strike.

Bihar Colliery Kamgar Union organised a massive rally on 3rd Feb. at Bera Colliery Maidan which was addressed by M.K. Pandhe, S.K. Bakshi, N.N. Singh and others. Another big rally was organised at Govindpur colliery in the evening on the same day in which workers in adjoining collieries came in processions. Women participated in the rally in good number. The meeting was addressed by M.K. Pandhe, A.K. Roy, S.K. Bakshi and others.

The Coal Field Labour Union organised big demonstrations on Feb. 5 at Kedla North and Kedla underground project completely paralysing the work of the colliery for half a day. All the workers wore black badges in protest against non-implementation of the NCWA-III agreement and against heavy mechanisations which jeopardised
(Contd. on page 21)

CITU Rejects Government's Conclusions

AS per the decisions of the Indian Labour Conference, the Government had prepared and sent the draft conclusions of the conference to the participating organisations for finalisation. As the draft conclusions did not project the deliberations correctly, CITU and AITUC had sent their amendments jointly, to the Government (*published in the January issue of the Working Class*). But the Government did not incorporate a single amendment and circulated the Final Conclusions further distorting the facts and bringing in some extraneous matters which were neither discussed in the conference nor were put in the draft even. The Final Conclusions at the same time did not include some other points which were raised and pressed by the trade unions in the conference.

The CITU therefore, with a forwarding letter by Samar Mukherjee to the Labour Minister on February 19 recorded its note of disagreement with the Final Conclusions drawn by the Government and enclosed its comments on each point. Similarly, AITUC also recorded its disagreement. Following are the comments on the Final Conclusions sent by CITU:

Comments on the Final Conclusions

1. *Standing Labour Committee:* The CITU, AITUC and several other trade unions had suggested that the Standing Labour Committee should be constituted in consultation with the Central Trade Unions. This has not been incorporated and its composition has been left to be decided by the Labour Minister, to which we do not agree.

2. *Raising Rs. 35,000 crores from Public Sector:* This point was not discussed at all, nor was it in the agenda. The Finance Minister who happened to address the conference had only suggested it in his speech. But this has been incorporated despite our objection. So we do not agree to its incorporation.

3. *Industrial Relations Situation:* We do not agree to the Government's view that there is a general improvement in the industrial relations situation. Despite our objection it has again been incorporated. We had also recorded our objection to the view that voluntary arbitration should be preferred to adjudication. Therefore we do not agree to this final conclusion.

4. *Sanat Mehta Committee:* The conference never urged, nor any organisation suggested that the government should finalise its views on the recommendations of the Sanat Mehta Committee regarding setting up of Industrial Relations Commissions. This point was not in the draft even and is totally an extraneous matter brought in the final conclusions. We totally reject this point.

5. *Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Bill:* The Conference did not welcome this Bill. The trade unions on the contrary criticised the government for introducing the Bill without prior discussion in the conference. But this point has not been considered at all. We therefore do not agree to this point.

6. *Workers' Participation in Management:* There was a general agreement that the existing scheme should be amended and improved, and workers should participate in management on equal footing upto the Board level and their representatives be elected through secret ballot. This general consensus has not been incorporated in the final conclusion.

7. *Amendment of Factories Act:* The opinions given by the trade unions were that the Government should finalise the amendments in consultation with the trade unions. But this has not been incorporated in the final conclusions. The question of compulsory imprisonment of the officers responsible for violation of the safety provisions has also not found place in the final conclusions. We therefore cannot agree to this conclusion.

8. *Employees Provident Fund:* Here again an extraneous point has been brought in which was not there in the draft, i.e., "However majority of the employer group had reservation in the matter". Actually it was not so. We therefore do not agree to this point.

9. The most important point which has been totally ignored is the repeated demand made by the trade unions for amendment of Article 311 (2) of the Constitution. This is the demand of all sections of the working people which the government is most adamantly refusing to consider.

Under the circumstances, we cannot agree to the final conclusions drawn by the government and record the note of disagreement by the CITU.

Editorial Board

P. Ramamurti (Chairman)

**Manoranjan Roy, Niren Ghosh,
M.M. Lawrence, P.K. Ganguly**

M.K. Pandhe

In Support of DUTA Strike

WORKERS COURT ARREST IN DELHI

FIVE hundred twenty three workers of Delhi belonging to seven central trade unions viz, CITU, HMS, UTUC, ITUC (Dara), BMS, TUCC and AITUC courted arrest at the Ministry for Human Resources Development on January 30. The workers were protesting against non-implementation of the 1983 agreement between DUTA and UGC. The workers demanded immediate implementation of the agreement and end to the policy of threats and intimidation adopted by the Vice-Chancellor of Delhi University. They condemned the Government of India for backing out of the agreement collectively reached with the teachers three years ago.

Hundreds of teachers of the University had also gathered at Shastri Bhawan in a demonstration at the time of court arrest. Leaders of the various trade unions said that it was a memorable day in the trade union movement of the city when the entire organised working class and risen in solidarity with the striking teachers. The speakers condemned the authorities for using a section of the students to threaten the teachers. They also announced the solidarity programme undertaken by scores of white collar organisation in support of the striking teachers. M.M.P. Singh, President of the DUTA, thanked the workers for their solidarity with the teachers.

CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE OF WORKING WOMEN

Ranjana Nirula, Convenor of the Delhi Coordination Committee of Working Women issued the following statement on January 30:

The Co-ordination Committee of Working Women expresses its serious concern at the adamant and unreasonable attitude of the concerned authorities towards the struggle of the Delhi University teachers, which has led to the continuation of the strike. It is an indication of the complete irresponsibility of the authorities that they have refused to implement the agreement reached in 1983, leaving the teachers no alternative but to go on strike. Now the authorities are expressing concern for the future of the students to conceal their own responsibility for the present situation.

We express our solidarity with the striking teachers and also note in particular the determination and prominent role of the women teachers, once

again proving that in a just and democratic struggle women will never lag behind. We demand that the Government of India take the initiative to meet the demands of the teachers and ensure full implementation of the 1983 agreement.

PROTEST BY POLITICAL PARTIES

Joginder Sharma, Secretary, Delhi State CPI(M); Sushil Bhattacharya, Secretary, Delhi State RSP; Tarif Singh, President, Delhi Pradesh Lok Dal; K.K. Handa, General Secretary, Delhi State Congress(S); Vinod Jain, Secretary, Delhi State Forward Block; Prem Sagar Gupta, Secretary, Delhi State CPI and Kanwar Lal Sharma, President, Delhi Janata Party jointly issued the following Statement on January 19:

We, the undersigned political parties, express our serious concern over the indifferent attitude of the Congress government at the centre, the UGC and the Vice-Chancellor of Delhi University towards the just and genuine demands of the striking teachers. It is shocking that the central government and other authorities are not implementing the agreement reached with the teachers in 1983. Unfortunately, the Vice-Chancellor too is equally adamant is not accepting the genuine demands of the teachers which fall within his purview. The central government has further aggravated the situation by denying the payment of bonus to the teachers this year.

This callous attitude undermines the credibility of the central government, the UGC and the Vice-Chancellor and is responsible for the present stalemate in the campus, resulting in difficulty to the students.

It is unfortunate that instead of conceding the just demands of the teaching community, the central government, the UGC and the Vice-Chancellor in particular, are trying to create confusion in the minds of the public and teachers with a view to undermine the organised struggle of the teachers.

We express our solidarity and full support to the striking teachers of Delhi University and urge upon the central government to concede their legitimate demands, so that normalcy can be restored in the campus.

Towards Broad Based Unity

IN the face of deteriorating industrial relations thanks to recalcitrant attitude of railway administration, major trade unions on Eastern Railway found it necessary to come together to meet the challenge unitedly and the Eastern Railway Unity Committee comprising of Eastern Railwaymen Union, All India Railway Employees Confederation and Eastern Railway Workers Union came into being. The Committee has adopted an elaborate programme for holding Divisional Unity conventions in all Divisions of Eastern Railway, for the Workshops and at the Head Quarters, and to form Unity Committees at these levels. The Committee also decided to organise united demonstrations at Division, workshops etc. on 26th February as a mark of solidarity with the state employees who will be on one-day token strike on the day on the demand for deletion of Art. 301(1) & 311(2)(a)(b) and (c) of the Constitution.

At the initiative of the Unity Committee a meeting of representative of all major Unions and Associations of Eastern and South Eastern Railways, of P & T, Defence and other Central Government Departments was held on 12th February 1986. The meeting has decided to observe Solidarity Day on 26th February unitedly in support of state employees strike. Members of all the attending organisations have been called upon to join the mass squatting programme of Central Government employees Co-ordination committee on the day at Calcutta. The meeting decided to hold a convention on job security some time around 10th April.

AIREC

The extended Working Committee meeting of the All India Railway employees Confederation was held in Calcutta on 19th January 1986. Having reviewed the developments since its last meeting held in November 1985, the meeting decided to hold demonstrations, rallies and dharna at Divisions, Workshops and Zonal Headquarters all over Indian Railways on 26th February to demonstrate solidarity with State employees' one day strike on the day. The meeting also called upon the units to launch a programme of weeklong campaign on the issue from 18th to 25th February.

The meeting expressed concern about the squeezing of cadre and reduction in employment opportunity on railways due to impending introduction of high power computers in every Sphere of railway work and demanded withdrawal of ban on recruitment. The meeting also demanded immediate publication of pay commission report. While condemning the anti-labour industrial relations policy of the Government, the meeting called upon all organisations to close their rank and forge "broader Strug-

gling Unity to resist the onslaught and achieve the demands."

DREU Demonstrates

The Dakshin Railway Employees Union had recently staged a massive demonstration and rally before the Office of the General Manager Southern Railway at Madras. Over 2000 workers participated. The demonstrators led by K.A. Nambiar, R. Umamath, P.V. Ramdas and other leaders of the union marched in procession along the city streets before they converged in a rally before the General Manager's office. A memorandum containing major demands of Railwaymen was handed over to the Chief Personnel Officer by a deputation of union leaders. At the request of the union, the Southern Railway authorities instructed the divisional administrations to provide special coaches for the demonstrations but it was ignored by Tiruchy and Madurai Divisions and consequently there was heavy rush at these stations resulting in slight delay in departure of one train from Tiruchy and another from Madurai. The authorities have used this as pretext to suspend 4 office bearers of the union. The union is preparing for protest action.

AIGC — NF Railway

15th conference of the NF Railway unit of All India Guard's Council was held on 28th and 29th January 1986 at Alipurduar Jn. amidst great enthusiasm. 165 delegates from all over the zone attended the conference. The Conference was inaugurated by C.L. Upadhyay, General Secretary. All India Guards Council, Haran Datta, General Secretary Eastern Railway unit was Chief Guest.

The largely attended open session was addressed among others by Hara Mohan Das, General Secretary, AIREC, N.F. Zone. A large procession paraded the streets before the meeting. The poster exhibition and the cultural programme were attractive as well as instructive.

Coal and Ash Handling Workers

The Eastern Railway authorities closed down the coaling point at Azimganj without arranging alternative work for the contractors workers engaged in coal & ash handling work there. The workers launched prolonged agitation. The State Government intervened and ultimately the railway authorities had to agree to provide the workers at other Coaling points.

Maldah unit of Indian Railway Coal Ash and Transshipment Handling Mazdoor Union had earlier submitted a memorandum to the General Managers NF Railway and Eastern Railway demanding alternative employment for Azimganj Coal and Ash Handling workers.

Book Review

"MAY DIWAS KI GOURAB GATHA"

By Kedarnath Bhattacharya

Price: Rs. 10/-, National Book Agency, 12 Bankim Chatterjee Street, Calcutta-700 073.

COM. Kedarnath Bhattacharya, is well known for his long service to the trade union movement, particularly of the office employees in the Dalhousie area of Calcutta. This book is the translated version of his popular Bengali Book "May diwaser Kahini O Aiteejhya", of which three editions have already been published. By publishing the translation of this book in Hindi, albeit at the request and urging of many trade union workers, a great service has been done.

Com. Bhattacharya has amassed almost all available material on May Day. The book does not merely restricts itself only to the struggle in Chicago and thereafter. It describes in detail the struggle against oppressive hours of work. It states when ten hour work was introduced in Europe and then America. It tells in detail how the May Day was considered to be the Day for ushering in Spring for some countries, how Australia first formed the concept of enforcing one common day for the unity of the workers, how this slogan influenced the workers of America and how as a sequel to the struggle for 8 hours work, the workers of Chicago enforced a leave on 1st May 1886.

The book gives the reader a complete understanding of the development of trade union movement in America and Europe during the 19th Century and the conspiracies of the owning class against workers. It describes how the murderous Pinkerton Agency organised itself as a tool in the hands of the owners to do all its dirty jobs including beating of workers which often resulted in deaths i.e. murder.

It describes the indomitable spirit in which the leaders of the American Working Class suffered hanging but refused to bow down. The saga of the heroic struggle would enthuse all who have not gone through the repression yet.

The best point in the narration is the link which was established with the International Working Men's Association and how Engels reacted to the Hay Market incident and the decision of the Second International.

It has traced the Origin of the red flag to show its international character and how it was accepted by the Working Class of one country after the other.

The book is a rare compilation of articles on May Day from Lenin, Engels, Rosa Luxemburg and others. The working class would be observing the centenary of the Hay Market incident this year. This is a book which is a must for all Hindi knowing workers who want to know the details as to why May Day is observed as the International Working Class Day of Solidarity.

Consumer Price Index Numbers

(Base 1960)

State/Centre	Sept. 1985	Oct. 1985	Nov. 1985								
				Bangalore	669	675	684	Coonoor	654	654	672
				Chikamagalur	611	609	631	Madurai	642	641	649
				Kolar G.F.	595	598	624	U.P.			
Andhra Pradesh				Kerala				Kanpur	625	632	627
Gudur	548	548	553	Alleppey	668	673	677	Saharanpur	628	634	628
Guntur	649	658	656	Alwaye	665	666	662	Varanasi	697	696	706
Hyderabad	605	641	634	Mundakayam	606	604	601	West Bengal			
Assam				Madhya Pradesh				Asansol	611	616	632
Digboi	620	618	620	Balaghat	638	644	649	Calcutta	617	626	628
Doom Dooma	499	497	493	Bhopal	686	697	714	Darjeeling	518	528	537
Labac	490	491	483	Gwalior	635	640	646	Howrah	570	583	582
Mariani	526	523	524	Indore	659	663	671	Jalpaiguri	527	531	528
Rangapara	510	512	594	Maharashtra				Raniganj	550	560	584
Bihar				Bombay	639	647	654	Delhi Territory	649	654	658
Jamshedpur	581	589	600	Nagpur	640	641	647	Other Centres			
Jharia	538	541	546	Sholapur	642	657	656	Berhampur ('49)	898	909	916
Kodarma	626	627	628	Orissa				Cuttack ('49)	814	819	858
Monghyr	630	629	640	Barbil	564	569	590	Jabalpur ('49)	799	799	798
Noamundi	547	535	552	Sambalpur	702	693	656	Beawar ('51-52)	728	744	749
Gujarat				Punjab				Tripura ('61)	561	568	564
Ahmedabad	595	604	609	Amritsar	618	620	629	H.P. ('65)	447	451	455
Bhavanagar	656	661	661	Rajasthan				Goa ('66)	468	465	470
Haryana				Ajmer	633	641	639	Bhilai ('66)	421	422	425
Yamunanagar	616	629	639	Jaipur	660	665	665	Bhilwara ('66)	388	407	403
J. & K.				Tamil Nadu				Chhindwara ('66)	328	329	334
Srinagar	666	667	670	Madras	625	630	648	Kothagudem ('66)	408	413	420
Karnataka				Coimbatore	667	669	681	Rourkela ('66)	435	432	439
Ammathi	627	633	641					All India ('60)	619	625	630

(Figures in bracket indicate base year)

Meeting of Steel Advisory Committee

THE first meeting of the Steel Advisory Committee was held on February 22 at Vigyan Bhawan, Delhi. The Union Minister of Steel, K.C. Pant presided over the meeting. The meeting was attended by the representatives of the Steel Ministry, those from the public and private sector steel managements, the mini-steel plants and from Central Trade Unions, the representatives of CITU, INTUC and HMS attended the meeting. Jibon Roy, Secretary of Steel Workers' Federation of India represented CITU.

Initiating the discussions, K.C. Pant sought advice from members as to how the gap between production and demands, which according to him stood at 5 million tonnes, could be filled up during the Seventh Plan period. He also sought discussions on how the existing capacity of the plants could be fully utilised and how the cost of steel could be minimised to make it competitive in the international market. Hammering on the same points, the Chairman of SAIL said that the steel price would not be increased further, since it had become highest in recent years, although it was lowest during the sixties.

Some of the technical representatives advised the need for automation and training of the labour force to that direction. Some members suggested that there should be guarantee of the flow of capital investment for the replacement of the existing machinery. Alongwith Gopeshwar of INTUC, the SAIL managements demanded that SAIL should have more power and authority in respect of industrial relations and this should be a central subject instead of state. Some of the private managements suggested that the entire steel industry should be privatised. The workers' representatives unanimously protested against this suggestion.

Jibon Roy criticised the Government's policy of having set a production target of only 12.64 million tonnes of saleable Steel for the Seventh Plan and only 10 million tonnes at the end of the plan. He also said that it was distressing that the planners had envisaged to produce only 21 million tonnes at the turn of the century. He stated that India possessed immense quantity of high quality raw materials to produce steel apart from a vast market of 750 million people and 2.5 millions of experienced steel workers and engineers. Giving the example of China, he said that even during the recession in the international market it continued to increase its steel capacity. He pointed out that the main constraint for the advancement of the industry was the rapid squeezing of the internal market due to the diminishing purchasing power of the vast population. The per-capita consumption of steel was declining with every plan and now it had come to only 15 kg. This was evident from the fact that no new plant was going to be installed during the Seventh Plan. If this trend was not reversed by radical change in the policy of the Government, there would be no new plant during the Eighth Plan also and would further increase the dependence of the

country. He assailed the policy of import and said that there was no alternative to expanding the integrated steel production in the country. He demanded that Indian steel should be protected from foreign dumping.

The entire labour side, the consumers and the mini-steel plant managements expressed serious concern over the issue. The Alloy Steel representative said that Alloy Steel industry had incurred a loss of Rs. 200 crores during the last two years and it might have to be closed down if the market position did not improve. Jibon Roy expressed surprise that during the Sixth Plan period, when the integrated steel plants were starving for markets and more than a million tonnes of steel products were rotting in the plant, the government went on importing steel from outside. As regards capacity utilisation, he pointed out that the real capacity was not in conformity with the book capacity. He gave the examples of Rourkela and Durgapur where even the industry agreed that plants could not produce 1.8 and 1.6 million tonnes technologically as claimed by the government. He pinpointed to the failure of the Government to invest in time for replenishment, which stood as the main constraint to capacity utilisation. In this respect he cited the example of Durgapur, Rourkela and IISCO. After a decade the government was saying that something has to be done. But by this time the machineries had already become junk. He said that under such conditions it was impossible to boost up production.

While expressing satisfaction at SAIL Chairman's remark that the steel prices would not be increased further, Jibon Roy pointed out that by hiking the prices of the important inputs like cooking coal and petroleum, the government had created a mess and an uncertainty over the price front. Now to compensate the hikes the government was demanding cost reduction. He demanded withdrawal of the price hike orders. He also suggested for minimising the Energy cost by improving the coke rate and reducing the consumption of furnace oil and also by saving the Coke Oven and Blast Furnace Gas. He said that the recent price hike would have devastating effect on the industry and the Durgapur plant would further be driven to the red. He warned against the trend of minimising the labour cost and labour displacement through automation. He said that with the existing manpower the labour cost in India was the lowest. He also warned against any attempt to scuttle the ensuing bipartite negotiations. He also demanded departmentalisation of the contract workers to stop drainage of money over the contractors. Regarding workers' participation in management, he said that the present system had nothing do with it and demanded participation of workers elected by secret ballot at all levels on equal footing.

Winding up the debate, the Minister said that the existing plants would be modernised and that the industry should explore all avenues for advancement.

Increasing Demand to Amend Art. 311(2)

THE retrograde Supreme Court judgement on the basis of Arts. 310 and 311 (2) (a) (b) & (c) of the Constitution upholding the so called "pleasure doctrine" and the right of the Government to dismiss its employees without observing the elementary principle of natural justice has led to mounting unrest among all sections of the Government employees. This is evident from the series of conventions, demonstrations and other action programmes that are being held at different parts of the country. We are giving below some of the reports of such conventions which mobilised the opinion of large sections of the working people from different aspects of life to raise the demand for amendment of these anti-democratic Articles of the Constitution and establish the right of the workers to self defence. The conventions also adopted resolutions against computerisation, price rise ban on recruitment, etc. and supported the strike of the State Government employees on February 26.

Durg: The trade union council of Chhatisgarh region organised a convention of all central and state government employees' unions including the Railway unions at Durg, M.P., on December 18 and 19, 1985. N.C. Ray Chowdhury inaugurated the convention. It was attended by over 300 delegates from Raipur, Jagdalpur, Jabalpur Rajnandgaon, Raigarh, Bilaspur and Ambikapur. Yogeshwar Gope, President of Bihar State CITU and leader of the state govt. employees speaking as the Chief Guest pointed out that the immediate result of the judgement was that 1500 railway employees and 2000 para military and security staff were dismissed. The other speakers included R.K. Singh, Asst. General Secretary of the A.I. Telegraph Engineering Employees Union, Line staff and Class IV and R.K. Agarwal, Circle Secretary of RMS, Class IV, M.P. circle.

Varanasi: The Central Government Employees Coordination Committee, Varanasi organised conventions on December 22, 1985 which was attended by about 600 delegates. The convention was inaugurated by Dr. Chandra Bali Singh. The speakers included Nirmal Shankar Srivastava, S.P. Ghosal, Dr. Mohan Lal Tiwari, C.M. Singh, M.N. Prasad, Parasuram Singh, S.K. Seth, Vishwanath Singh (HMS), Ram Naresh Singh (BMS), Kamala Pati Tripathi (CITU) and Raj Kishore, MLA.

Khurda Road: The A.I. Railway Employees Confederation, Khurda Road Division organised a convention on January 19. The convention was inaugurated by Dushmantha Das, Secretary of the Bhubaneswar City Coordination Committee. The speakers included Nandini Satpathy, Bhagabat Behera, Prasanna Patsani, G.V.K. Murthy, Lambodar Nayak, Ram Chanda Nayak, Jagabandhu Sahoo, K.C. Behera, Ramkrishna Panda and Prahlad Pradhan.

Agartala: In pursuance of the call given by the A.I. State government employees Federation, the Tripura Coordination Committee of State Govt.

Employees held a rally at Agartala on January 21 and marched to the Assembly and submitted a memorandum to the Central Government through the State Government demanding amendment of Art. 310 and 311(2) of the Constitution.

Jamalpur: The AIREC and State Govt. Employees Federation organised a convention at Jamalpur on January 22 which was participated by about 350 delegates. The convention was inaugurated by C.M. Singh, S.K. Dhar addressed the convention as the Chief Guest. The other speakers were Harsh Narain Jha, Ram Bagath Singh; Shyam Sunder Mastana and Hari Nandan Singh.

Bareilly: AIREC organised another convention at Bareilly on January 30, which was addressed among others by Har Sahay Singh, Vice President of CITU, Anil Kumar, Girish Chandra Bharaty (AITUC), A.S. Gupta, Radha Krishna Sharma, A.P. Singh, Ravindra Kumar Rayyadh, Chuni Lal Jail and A.A. Khan. The main resolution was moved by S.R. Khan. About 400 delegates attended the convention.

Adra: The AIREC and BEFI jointly arranged a convention at Adra on Feb. 2, which was inaugurated by Basudev Acharya, M.P. CPI(M). The main resolution was placed by Saumya Mallik and supported by M.N. Prasad. Samir Ghosh, Secretary, RBEA addressed as the Chief Guest. The speakers included S.K. Dhar, C.M. Singh and others.

Sonepur: The AIREC and State Govt. Employees jointly organised a Convention at Sonepur on February 6, which was attended by about 500 delegates. Inaugurated by C.M. Singh, the convention was addressed by S.K. Dhar, M.N. Prasad, Ganesh Prasad Singh, Jamna Prasad, Ram Shanker Das and Ranjit Ojha. After the convention, an open session was held which was attended by 1000 employees.

Garhara: The AIREC organised a big mass meeting at Garhara on February 7, which was attended by about 1500 employees. The convention was presided over by I.D. Singh and addressed by C.M. Singh and S.K. Dhar.

Samastipur: Two largely attended gate meetings were held on February 8 at the Loco gate and Wagon workshop gate attend by about 1000 railwaymen in total. The meetings were addressed by S.K. Dhar.

Shillong: The State Govt. employees of Meghalaya organised a convention at Shillong on February 1. The convention was attended and addressed by the representatives of various associations and unions of Central, State and Public Sector Undertakings.

Jalandhar: The AIREC organised a massive convention at Jalandhar on February 9 which was participated by more than 5000 representatives of the Central, State and Public Sector organisations. The convention was addressed among others by Nagar Singh, Har Kewal Singh, R.P. Manchanda, Joginder Singh, R.L. Moudgill, Amarjit Singh Sodhi, T.S. Rana, etc. A massive procession was

(Contd. on page 11)



Vandalism by NBCC Management

A case of open collusion by the management of National Building Construction Corporation, a Central Public Sector Undertaking, with a group of hoodlums led by a self-styled leader, has come to limelight. The NBCC Worker's Union (CITU) Calcutta was engaged in a struggle against the management with their various demands which included protest against violation of previous agreements and against irregular appointments by the management. The management created one stooge Pranab Kumar Gosh to counter the union. This stooge was earlier thrown out by the union. Backed by the management he declared himself still continuing as leader of the union, with virtually no membership. The management subsequently submitted counter demands to the NBCC Workers' Union. On February 1 this self-styled leader entered the office of the NBCC Workers' Union at Metro Railway Project with some hooligans and threatened the union leaders with dire consequences if they did not desist from trade union activities. The union however, defied the threats and decided to lodge a protest to the Chief Engineer through a procession and demonstration. On February 7 when the workers were approaching the Chief Engineer's Office at Acharya J.C. Bose Road, this self-styled leader with a large number of hooligans with lethal weapons blocked their way. Several comrades were injured being hit by broken fluorescent tubes. The union leaders however remained unprovoked and determined and ultimately could submit the memorandum to the Chief Engineer being escorted by police officials. The hooligans had to beat retreat, but before that they broke several window panes of the building and damaged one private car.

But then the surprising actions by the management headed by the Chief Engineer came exposing their direct collusion with the hoodlums. They filed a FIR with the police and inflicted cooked up criminal cases on 46 workers. They suspended the General Secretary of the union, Amal Krishna Kundu who was not present that day at all. They locked out the establishment and went further to file a writ petition at Calcutta High Court praying to put a stop to all activities of the union and also to direct the West Bengal Government to activate the police to control "law and order" situation for the protection of the managements. The management's stance was clearly not only to foist its own hooligans' union on the workers and set at naught the trade union rights of the workers and forcing them to submit to its dictates, but also to blackmail the leftfront Government of West Bengal by locking out the establishment and sabotage all the ongoing projects of the NBCC in the state. The union however is carrying forward the struggle in a determined way to frustrate the evil designs of the management. It has submitted a memorandum to the Union Minister of Works and Housing. The

CITU Centre likewise, as well as two Members of the Parliament belonging to the CPI(M), viz, Basudev Acharya, leader of the Lok Sabha group and O.J. Joseph of Rajya Sabha, have also made representations to the Union Minister.

CITU Opposes Increase in Tuition Fees

B.T. Ranadive, President, Centre of Indian Trade Unions has issued the following statement on February 11:

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions is shocked to see a Press report indicating that the Govt. intends to increase the tuition fees by 50 per cent or more in higher studies to cover up the gap of Rs. 1500 crore between the Plan allocation and the Govt. resources. This infamous move to cut down the Govt's. expenses on health and education while increasing the burden on the people is the IMF prescription, which the Govt. of India is going to make a part of its "New Education Policy" would shut out the prospects of the talented but the poor while promote the dull but the rich only on economic considerations.

The CITU opposes the proposed hike in the tuition fees as it would affect the lives of the poor students who would be forced to opt out of higher studies.

The CITU calls upon the entire Working Class, their various trade union organisations and the democratic mass organisations of the Country to raise their powerful voice of protest to make the Govt. to desist from such an undesirable step concerning higher education.

[The SFI also issued an identical statement. But the Govt. issued a statement next day denying any move to increase the tuition fees.]

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taken out after the convention which raised slogans for communal harmony also.

Dhanbad: The AIREC organised the convention at Dhanbad on February 16, which was inaugurated by K.C. Ray Chowdhury. The speakers included Sirajul Haque, A.K. Roy, G.K. Bakshi, A.K. Saha, Mathura Prasad, B. Bhattacharya, Ramanuj Prasad and Raghu Prasad. About 500 delegates attended the convention.

Similar conventions were held at Purulia and Rourkela on 16th, at Kharagpur on 17th and at Palasa on 23rd of February.

Sukomal Sen, M.P., CPI(M) and General Secretary of the A.I. State Govt. Employees Federation has also drawn the attention of the Prime Minister in a letter on February 11, demanding amendment of the Articles and also gave him the notice of the strike on February 26.

Secretariat Decisions

Against Price rise: The Secretariat of the CITU which met at New Delhi on February 5 under the presidentship of Com. B.T. Ranadive and was attended by Com. Samar Mukherjee, E. Balananda, M.K. Pandhe and Nrisingha Chakrabarty welcomed the decisions of the Left-Front of West Bengal for a 24 hour industrial general strike and bandh on the 11th February in protest against the unjustified price increase administered just before the budget. The Secretariat appealed to all other trade union centres to support the strike call on 11th February so that the working class could come out in a massive protest action against the price-rise which would affect the common men. It called upon all CITU State Committees and Unions to organise and synchronise the protest action on 11th preferably through strike or otherwise by massive protest demonstration.

On DUTA Strike: The meeting condemned the Govt. of India for its refusal to implement the earlier agreement with Delhi University Teachers Association (DUTA) and creating serious impediments in the studies of the students. The Secretariat denounce the policy of going back on agreements and repression on those who fight for the implementation. The Secretariat demanded that the Govt. of India should release those already arrested and start implementation of the earlier agreement forthwith in the interest of the studies of the students and restoring the education process. The Secretariat expressed its solidarity with the struggling teachers of Delhi University.

On Coal Workers Strike: The meeting also heard the report of the enthusiasm that had been created among the coal-miners on the decision of one day's token strike taken jointly by all constituents of the JBCCI and called upon all unions in the Coal industry affiliated to CITU to intensify the campaign in order to ensure success of the strike.

May Day Centenary Celebration: The Secretariat discussed the preparation for holding of May Day this year celebrating the Centenary of the Chicago struggle in 1886 in a befitting manner. It decided to contact other trade union centres having an outlook of proletarian internationalism. It decided to publish a special number of the Working Class and CITU Mazdoor and planned out the articles.

Samar Mukherjee to Visit Dhaka: The Secretariat nominated Samar Mukherjee to attend the Conference of Jatio Shramik Jote (Bangla Desh) to be held at Dhaka on 11th March.

General Council Meeting: The Secretariat decided to hold the General Council meeting at Calcutta from March 31 to April 2, 1986.

Other Meetings: It also decided to hold the

meeting of the Coordination Committee of Public sector unions at Durgapur on March 28 and 29.

The Working Committee meeting of Electricity Employees Federation of India will be held at Calcutta on March 27, 28 and 29.

The Working Committee meeting of All India Road Transport Worker's Federation will also be held at Calcutta on April 3.

The Secretariat also decided that the Conference of the All India Plantation Worker's Federation will be held at Wynad from April 4 to 6. (*At the request of Kerala the dates were changed to April 18 to 20 in the meeting held on February 17.*)

Meeting of February 17

The Secretariat meeting held on February 17 was presided over by Com. B.T. Ranadive and attended by Coms. Samar Mukherjee, Nrisingha Chakrabarty, and P.K. Ganguly.

Meeting with INTUC: The meeting heard the report from Nrisingha Chakrabarty regarding the meeting convened by INTUC on the question of National Integration, Peace and Disarmament and against Apartheid. This meeting was held on February 15 and 17. While Nrisingha Chakrabarty attended the meeting on 15th, the meeting of 17th was attended by both him and P.K. Ganguly. The other Central Trade Unions that attended the meeting on invitation were AITUC, UTUC, TUCC, HMS, BMS and UTUC (LS). The meetings after discussions unanimously adopted three Declarations, viz, on National Integration, on Peace and Disarmament and against Apartheid. (*The declarations have been printed in this issue.*) The meetings also decided to have another meeting on March 22 to decide suitable programmes in pursuance of the Declarations. The Secretariat decided to finalise the suggestions of CITU before that.

Meeting of NCC: The meeting also heard the report of the meeting of the National Campaign Committee which was held on February 17 on the question of one day's general strike and bandh in protest against the recent price hikes. Except HMS all other Central trade unions of the NCC attended the meeting. While CITU's opinion was to have the bandh before the budget which was to be placed on 28th February, all other organisations preferred to have it after the budget in March. However, after discussions, the NCC decided to suggest to the meeting of the opposition parties, scheduled to be held on 18th, that it preferred to have the Bandh in March, but if the opposition parties wanted to have it before the budget, then it should be on 26th February. The meeting also extended support to the strike of the State Govt. employees on February 26.

General Council Meeting: The Secretariat discussed about the subjects to be discussed in the General Council Meeting. It decided that apart from the new economic policy, the situation in coal, steel, jute, sugar, public sectors, the follow up of the textile convention, etc. should be discussed. Similarly, the General Council should also adopt resolutions on the retrograde labour policy of the Government, on the developing struggles of the teachers, etc. The meeting also decided to invite one comrade each from Andaman Nicobar and Himachal Pradesh in the General Council meeting because of the advancing struggles in these two states.

Appeal of AUCCTU: P.K. Ganguly, raised the point about the letter from AUCCTU and its Appeal on the question of the new peace proposal of the Soviet Union. The meeting supported the peace proposals. Com. B.T.R. will send an appropriate reply to the letter. The meeting also decided to place the Appeal in the General Council meeting.

Special Issue of the Working Class, CITU Mazdoor: The question of the Special May Day Centenary Issues of The Working Class and CITU Mazdoor were discussed in detail. It was decided that the Special Issues should be brought by 1st or 2nd of April, but not later than 7th April in any case so that campaign on the Centenary celebration could be organised. The earlier idea of including the General Council reportings was given up. The Special Issues should come out as against the normal April issue and the articles should be given by 7th March so that these could be translated for CITU Mazdoor in time. The titles of the articles were also finalised and the responsibilities taken up.

Minimum Wage Advisory Board: It was reported that R. Umanath had requested again to be relieved from his post in the Principal Board. The meeting decided to nominate P. K. Ganguly in his place.

Issues for the Parliament: The meeting also decided to prepare notes on specific issues for raising in the Parliament.

Meeting of Water Transport Workers Federation

THE Working Committee meeting of Water Transport Worker's Federation of India was held at Delhi on February 9. The meeting assailed the attitude of the Shipping Companies in ignoring the Forward Seamen's Union of India, which is recognised by the Government of India, for invitation to the National Maritime Board for arriving at a negotiated settlement on the issue of revision of wages and other conditions of service of the Indian Seamen. The meeting condemned the role of the

Government of India which remained a silent spectator to such indulgence in unfair labour practices by the shipping companies. The meeting adopted a resolution urging upon the Government to intervene in the matter and compel the shipping companies to invite the FSUI for negotiations. It also appealed to all Indian Seamen to unitedly fight the recalcitrant attitude of the shipping companies.

In another resolution the meeting greeted the workers of Paradip Port for their heroic 35 days struggle against the move taken by the authorities to dismiss 3900 cargo handling and clearing and forwarding workers by introduction of Pay-Loaders and Bulldozers for handling cargo. The meeting appealed to all Port and Dock workers and the Indian seamen to build up an united struggle against the Government of India's policy of mechanisation, containerisation, computerisation, etc. without paying any heed to the mounting unemployment problem of the country.

It also appealed to the working class in general for waging an unremitting struggle against the serious attack being unleashed against the working class through random modernisation.

The Working Committee also decided to hold the Third Conference of the Federation from March 8-10 at Haldia, West Bengal.

General Council Meeting

The General Council meeting of CITU will be held at 53, Acharya Jagadish Chandra Bose Road, Calcutta from March 31 to April, 2, 1986. The meeting will start at 10 AM on March 31. All comrades must inform the General Secretary, West Bengal State Committee of CITU at the above address the date and train of their arrival at Calcutta, and for their return journey reservations with remittance.

Working Committee Meeting

A meeting of the Working Committee of CITU will be held at the above address on March 31 at 9.30 AM sharp.

AROUND THE STATES

KARNATAKA

State Council Meeting

The Karnataka State Council of CITU met at Kundapura on February 9 and 10 under the Presidency of Suryanarayana Rao. The meeting was attended by 65 members. After a condolence resolution on Com. Ramdas, C. Nanjundappa placed the General Secretary's report. 27 members participated in discussions on the report. The meeting adopted a bye-law under the Constitution which prescribed payment of one rupee per member to the State Committee each year on the basis of membership shown in the Annual returns, the rate being 50 paise per member in respect of unions whose members' monthly earnings were below Rs. 500/- a month. The meeting nominated M.B. Katti as Convenor of the Co-ordination Committee of CITU in Chitradurga, Dharwar, Uttara Kannada and Bijapur. It also nominated Narayan Rao Bhaun as Convenor of Bangalore D.C. of CITU. The meeting dropped three members, viz, Poornima from Mangalore Beedi Worker's Union, Ankanna Reddy from ITC Worker's Union, Bangalore and T.R. Radhakrishna of Coorg District General Workers Union, Virajpet for inactivity. The meeting coopted Aanda Rao, A. Jayaram and L. Range Gowda from Harihar Polyfibres Construction Worker's Union, Bharat Goldmines Employees Union and the Bhadravati Unit of Steel Worker's Federation of India respectively, as members of the State Council.

The meeting adopted resolutions on struggle for peace, price rise, in support of State Govt. Employees Strike on February 26, equal wages for equal work, closures and lockouts, minimum wages and on various local issues. The meeting decided to hold the Dakshin Kannada and Bangalore District Conferences by June 30. The meeting took the following programmes:

- Statewide agitation against the recent price hikes on February 19;
- Vidhan Soudha Chalo on March 3 with the demand for minimum wages;
- to observe May Day Centenary Celebrations all over the State for the whole month of May in addition to the All India programme. For this a Centenary Committee will be formed to organise seminars and symposia and 500 copies of pamphlets will be published. The CITU flag will be hoisted on each member's house and union offices from May 1 to 31.
- Subscribers for CITU Sandesha will be enrolled.
- Contribution of one day's wages from each worker towards drought relief fund.

In the evening of February 10 a huge colourful procession was taken out which marched through the streets, a distance of 10 Km. from Koteshwara and culminated in a rally at Nehru Maidan. The

rally was presided over by P. Ramachandra Rao and addressed among others by Suryanarayana Rao, Nanjundappa and V.J.K. Nair.

MAHARASHTRA

Demonstrations by Peasants, Agricultural Workers

On January 24, the Maharashtra Kishan Sabha and Agricultural Worker's Union organised a joint demonstration throughout the State on the issue of drought which is stalking large parts of the State for three years in a row. 16,000 villages in the State are without even drinking water. A mere 12 per cent of the total cultivable area in the State are under irrigation. From that too the lion's share is cornered by the sugar barons. There is no assistance from the Central Government. The State Government instead of expanding the Employment Guarantee Scheme to provide work to the drought stricken, has actually whittled down the outlay on it for the current year. In this background the call given by the two organisations were responded magnificently. The organisations mobilised thousands of Kishan and agricultural workers in the districts of Nasik, Amravati, Wardha, Parbhani, Dhule, Thane, Jalgaon, Kolhapur and other places. The CITU, SFI and DYFI also helped in mobilisation of workers in the districts. CPI(M) leaders like Narunda Malusore, Jiva Pandu Goit, Ramchandra Ghangare, Vithalrao Naik, Udyan Sharma, Gangadhar Appa Burande, Kumar Shiralkar and others addressed the rallies at different places.

Demonstration at Vidhan Sabha

The CITU organised a big morcha at the Nagpur Vidhan Sabha on January 15 during the State Assembly's current session. The morcha was organised against the Government of India's new economic policy, and the policy on textiles, education, computerisation against price rise, closures, lockouts and retrenchments, etc. The morcha was joined by large number of SFI, DYFI, women cadres and peasants and agricultural workers. It raised demands of the peasants and agricultural workers also. The morcha started from Gandhi Bagh and was culminated in a rally at Kastur Chand Putle where it was blocked by the police. The rally was addressed among others by B.P. Kashyap, Vin Rao Khobragade, V.P. Asai, Amrit Mishram, Madan Bhagat. A delegation led by B.P. Kashyap and Lahanu Kom met the Chief Minister and submitted a memorandum containing the 27 point demands.

TAMILNADU

March to Madras against Closures, Lockouts

Various sections of workers in the State are on struggle against closures and lockouts of factories. In Mettur, a complete bundh was observed on January 10 demanding immediate opening of Mettur

Textile Mills where 2,500 workers are out of employment for the last six months due to lockout. Similarly in Alexandar Threads over 300 workers are affected due to closure of the concern for the last two years. The bandh was the culmination of a series of other action programmes. The Joint Action Committee of Textile workers in the State consisting of the Central Trade Unions and some other trade unions have decided to organise a March to Madras from Coimbatore demanding reopening of all closed and locked out mills. The March to Madras will start on February 26 and start picketing the State Secretariat there.

On January 23, our 3000 workers including large number of women and family members marched to the State Secretariat at Madras protesting against the notice of closure of Binny Engineering which employs more than 1000 workers. The march was led by V.P. Chintan and S. Chandrasekhar. Eight units of the State owned Small Industrial Corporation have been closed down affecting more than 1000 workers.

At Pondicherry, although the Government has taken over the Anglo-French Textiles, yet the 7000 workers are still uncertain about their future, since the take over ordinance is on the same line as in Gujarat. The clauses of the ordinance say that the workers cannot have the right to employment. Only those would be taken whom the management deem fit and their service conditions would be changed. The State CITU has called upon the workers to continue their struggle which has been going on since the last three years.

Textile Workers Serve Strike Notice

Led by the Joint Action Committee, the textile workers of Tamilnadu are again on the path of struggle and have served strike notice from February 19. After a Statewide strike in July 1985 for wage increase, the State Government invoked Section 10 B of the ID Act and referred the matter to the Tribunal and had ordered to pay an interim relief of 75 per cent a month for six months. But while the dispute is still continuing in the tribunal, six months have elapsed. Led by the NTC management, the other mills have discontinued the payment. In this background the JAC served the strike notice demanding continuation of the payment.

Worker's Contribution to Kishan Fund

The State Committee has donated Rs. 40,000/- to the State Kishan Sabha for expansion of its activities among the rural masses. This fund which is being collected each year since 1984 from each member of CITU at the rate of one rupee per member was handed over to N. Shankaryya, Vice-President of the State Kishan Sabha by A.K. Padmanabhan, Assistant General Secretary of the State CITU at Madurai on January 19, the Martyr's Day in Tamilnadu, being observed since the all India strike on January 19, 1982 when three agricultural workers were killed in police firing at Thirumeirgam in Tanjore district. This day was observed all over the State by paying homage to the martyrs.

ANDAMAN & NICOBAR

Successful Struggle of Forest Workers

Organised under the Andaman & Nicobar Govt. Employees and Worker's Federation, the forest workers of Baratang resorted to strike actions and a 12-day continuous hunger-strike in January, and ultimately compelled the government to come down and make a settlement on January 10. In a settlement arrived at between the Federation leaders and the Chief Secretary in presence of the Chief Conservator of Forests, it was agreed that all transfers of those whose children were studying at Baratang would be held in abeyance. Actually only one worker could not get the benefit of the settlement as he had no school going child. The strike however had to continue till 17th, as the Divisional Forest Officer and the Forest Ranger did not implement the agreement till then. The strike got support from all sections of workers and the people. The CPI (M) MPs, namely Basudev Acharya, Hannam Mollah and Saifuddin Chowdhry made several representations to the Government and also addressed the workers at Baratang.

ORISSA

Seminar on Drug Policy

A seminar on 'Drug Policy is an Instrument of Health Care System' was organised by the Orissa Sales Representatives Union at Cuttack on January 10. M.K. Ghosh, Vice-president of the organisation presided over the Seminar. J.S. Majumdar, General Secretary of the Federation of Medical and Sales Representatives Associations of India assailed the proposed new drug policy by the Steering Committee appointed by the National Drugs and Pharmaceutical Development Council, which would help only in reaping enormous profit by the drug cartels at the cost of the suffering Indian population. He explained in his deliberation an alternate drug policy being proposed by FMRAI and called for opposing the new drug policy which the Government is likely to adopt shortly. The seminar adopted a resolution to this effect demanding of the government to accept the Hathi Committee's recommendation to nationalise the multinational drug companies, to reduce the drug prices and take steps to increase the production of essential drugs and weed out the irrational and hazardous drugs. Eminent persons from different walks of life like Dr. B.B. Tripathy; Ranjit Mohanty, Bar-at-Law; Dr. R.N. Rath; A.B. Patnaik, Chemist; Janardan Pati, the CITU leader and others spoke in the Seminar.

UTTAR PRADESH

Struggle of Govt. Employees

Eighty thousand employees of the Govt. of Uttar Pradesh at Kanpur launched an indefinite strike from January 16 demanding "A" class city

allowance, as Kanpur was declared an "A" class city. All sections of the working people, the State Campaign Committee and the opposition parties supported the strike. Massive processions and rallies were held almost every day with large participation of activists from CPI(M), CITU, Democratic Mahila Samity, SFI and various other organisations. The UP Government, instead of acceding to the justified demand, let loose a reign of repression on its employees. Hundreds of them were arrested, including a large number of women, and dismissed from services and thousands were served with notice of break in service. The employees were brutally lathi charged and tortured in jail. Angered by the ruthless repression by the Government, the people, the trade unions and the opposition parties gave a call for Kanpur Bandh on February 11 which met with unprecedented success paralysing the normal life of the city. The CITU issued a statement condemning the brutal repression and demanded of the Government to settle the dispute forthwith. Sukomal Sen, M.P. and General Secretary of the All India Government Employees Federation visited Kanpur on February 10. He addressed the employees in the jail. He also addressed a large gathering of the striking employees who had assembled despite rains. On 11th, the bandh day, as well as on the previous other days huge processions were taken out by the employees defying Section 144 which was imposed by the Government to intimidate the people. On 11th, groups of CITU, SFI and DYFI activists and from various political parties held a number of street corner meetings and gate meetings at various factory gates. In the afternoon, a rally of about one lakh people was held at Naveen market, which was presided over by Arvind Kumar, the CITU leader. Among those who addressed the rally were Daulat Ram, Ravi Sinha (CPI-M), Shyam Mishra (Lok Dal) and Jamuna Prasad Dixit (INTUC). The employees held out resolutely to carry forward the struggle still their demands were met.

DELHI

Struggle against closure

The employees of EPIL, a public sector undertaking in the field of construction, are on the path of struggle. It is understood that the Govt's decision to wind up this undertaking has created resentment among the employees.

On February 14, the employees marched en masse to Nirman Bhawan and presented a memorandum to N. D. Tiwari, Minister of Industry. It was pointed out by the Union that for seven years, no qualified Managing Director was posted. All those who came in the meanwhile had not only mismanaged the contracts but also had opened flood gates of corruption. The talent and expertise could still be harnessed and utilised.

Narsingha Chakrabarty Secretary CITU addressing the workers said that the Govt. has already decided on a policy of closing down all public sector companies incurring losses. They want to hand over these companies to private ownership or to such

other public sector companies who were earning profit by depriving the workers their due wages and by exploiting the contract labour. Besides as the workers of EPIL were drawing the Central Govt D.A. rates and the plan to force Industrial D. A. on them was resisted, the Govt has decided to wind up this company and divert the work, to IRCON, NBCC, NPCC, etc. On behalf of CITU he pledged support to their struggle.

It is understood that Shri Tiwari has proposed absorption of these workers in these undertakings.

Parliament Member Condemns Repression on Kishans

B. N. REDDY CPI(M) Member of Lok Sabha has issued the following statement to the Press on February 24 after visiting Sikar District in Rajasthan:

I visited Sikar, in Rajasthan on 22nd February in connection with big kisan agitation which is going on in the State. For the past few months thousands of kishans have been involved in a mass struggle against the steep rise in the power-rates and for relief measures due to drought and famine. The kishans decided to court arrest from 11 February, 1986. The Govt. has unleashed severe repression against the movement. More than thirty thousand peasants have been arrested so far all over Rajasthan.

I visited Sikar jail and met hundreds of peasants including Shri Trilok Singh, Secretariat member of CPI(M) and former MLA, lodged there. They are being kept in terrible conditions and no proper food is being supplied to them. As the jail is overcrowded, many have been kept in dharamsalas converted into jails, where no food has been served to them. I learnt in Sikar that there has been a lathi-charge on satyagrahis in Ajmer jail and many were injured.

The repression let loose has already resulted in the death of Baluram in police firing in Jhunjhunu and one has died in Sikar jail due to food poisoning.

I condemn this inhuman policy of repression of the Rajasthan State Govt. It is immediately necessary that Govt. accede the genuine demands of the peasantry by rescinding the price hike in electricity rates and ensure proper supply to them. Almost entire State is affected by drought and famine conditions prevailing in many areas. Work has to be provided to all able-bodied men and women and fodder for cattle and water supply be provided on a war footing.

I appeal to all democratic minded forces to protest against this callous policy of the Rajasthan Govt. and force it to change its current retrograde policy.

AIDWA Takes Struggle Programmes

THE Central Executive Committee of the All India Democratic Women's Association (AIDWA) met in Bombay on February 8-9 under the Presidentship of Laxmi Sehgal and gave a clarion call for observing February 20 as a protest day against the price-hike on petroleum products, rice and wheat, that was recently announced by the Central Government, by organising joint and independent meetings, demonstrations, dharnas and picketings all over India. A massive women's demonstration will be held before Parliament on that day.

Apart from this, the CEC took three other major decisions. It gave an All-India call for observing March 8 (International Womens' Day) as a day for Peace, National Integration and Womens' Rights. 1986 being designated by the UN as the International year of Peace, the CEC welcomed Soviet leader Gorbachov's proposals for complete elimination of all nuclear weapons in three stages to be achieved by the turn of the century. On the other hand, the meeting condemned the "Star Wars" programme of the US atomic war maniacs, who have moreover earmarked 1800 billion dollars for military spending over the next five years.

Another important decision was to vigorously intensify the all India agitation, propaganda and signature campaign demanding of the Central Government not to buckle under the demand of Muslim fundamentalists to amend Section 125 of the Cr. P.C. The meeting resolved to unequivocally struggle for common rights for all women irrespective of religion or caste, and condemned the reactionary manoeuvres of both Muslim fundamentalists and Hindu communalists against women's equality.

The CEC decided to hold the next All-India Conference of the AIDWA in Kerala in the month of September 1986, and to begin preparations for the same.

In the General Secretary's report, Susheela Gopalan comprehensively outlined the international and national political situation with special reference to its impact on women. The Work Report from states gave an account of the many-sided activities of the organisation, including the various struggles and campaigns in West Bengal, Kerala, Tirpura, Andhra Pradesh, Tamilnadu, UP, Bihar, Delhi, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Punjab and Assam.

Public Meetings

On February 10, a large public meeting was held at the Vanmali Hall, Bombay to welcome the All India leaders of the AIDWA. The hall was not only packed but was overflowing with women from various parts of the city. Hundreds of women came in processions under the banner of the Saramik Mahila Sangh, several of them coming

with their little children. There were women from all walks of life — working women in factories and offices, zopadpatti dwellers, contract labour grass-cutters, housewives and also women teachers, professors and girl students. They belonged to every caste, religion and language, and included a significant section of Muslim women. Shramik Mahila Sangh activists from Bombay and held several meetings in various parts of the city for two weeks to mobilise for the mass meeting, and among the areas represented were, Wadala, Dharavi, Mahim, Azad Nagar, Sion, Worli, Bhandup, Chembur and many others.

Tara Valanju proposed the vote of thanks. All the speakers, while conveying the decisions of the CEC meeting in the context of the political situation, lashed out at the anti-women policies of the Central Government and dealt with a whole range of issues affecting women, like price-rise, atrocities, dowry and bride-burning, the Shah Bano case and the right to maintenance of Muslim divorced women, education and employment, and also the larger issues of war and peace and national integration. They called for a powerful women's movement to effectively deal with all the above issues, and outlined the sterling work that the 15-lakh strong AIDWA had carried out in various states. At the end of the meeting, a powerful street play in Maratai called "Mulgi Zaali Ho" (A Girl is Born) depicting the discrimination against women at every step, was staged by the Stree Mukti Sanghatana.

Taking advantages of the presence of AIDWA leaders in the city, several other mass meetings were also held in various places on the 10th and 11th February. A large mass meeting at Dharavi was addressed by Susheela Gopalan, Papa Umanath, Laxmi Sehgal and Ahilya Rangnekar on the 10th night. Another meeting on the 11th at Dadar on the Current Political Situation was addressed by Susheela Gopalan, Sarojini Balanandan, T. Devi and Ahilya Rangnekar, while Maharashtra CITU Secretary P.R. Krishnan presided and U.K. Nair made the introductory remarks. Yet another meeting in the Telugu speaking area of Bhoiwada was addressed by the veteran Telangana fighter M. Swarajyam. A Seminar was also held at the Kurla Behrudagar area where Susheela Gopalan was the main speaker.

Late News from Delhi

Led by Janawadi Mahila Samity, over 700 women defied section 144 near Patel Chowk, Delhi on February 20 and courted arrest. The arrested included Kanak Mukherjee, M.P., Ila Bhattacharya, M.P., Vimal Ranadive — all Vice-Presidents of AIDWA and Indu Agnihotri and Brinda Karat, the President and General Secretary of the Janwadi Mahila Samity respectively.

CITU Denounces Shooting Down Drought Stricken People of Rajasthan

B.T. RANADIVE, President, Centre of Indian Trade Unions has issued the following statement on February 13:

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions denounces the shooting down of the drought stricken people of Rajasthan who have been protesting against price rise which has seriously affected their lives. According to reports, the Rajasthan Government and the Police have taken the policy of teaching a lesson to the opposition who had started movement. It is not in Jhunjhunu alone, even in Sikar where about 4000 people courted arrest on Feb. 11, last under the leadership of Shri Trilok Singh an ex-MLA of CPI(M) and a Veteran Kisan leader, the arrested persons were not given any water, food or rugs and kept huddled like flock of sheep. In Sikar, due to intervention some make shift arrangement was made after 1.00 A.M. in the night, while in Jhunjhunu nothing was done and Smt. Sumitra Singh and other ladies who went to protest were abused in filthy language. The protesting people were mercilessly shot down by a retaliatory vindictive police force killing one, seriously injuring about 6 and wounding more than thirty people.

The CITU warmly greets the people of Jhunjhunu who have unitedly observed a bandh on 12th February '86 demanding a judicial enquiry into the entire episode of denial of even water to the prisoners and excessive brutality of Rajasthan Police including shooting down and killing people fighting for their just demands. The people naturally are continuing the movement.

The CITU calls upon the entire Working Class of the country to express their solidarity with the struggling people of Rajasthan.

Demand for Take over of Titagarh Paper Mill

A delegation of four members from the CITU led Bengal Kagajkal Mazdoor Union operating at Titagarh paper Mills No. 1 and No. 2 units. West Bengal met N.D. Tiwari, Union Industry Minister on January 20 and V.P. Singh, Union Finance Minister on January 21 led by Dipen Ghosh, M.P., leader of CPI(M) in Rajya Sabha. The delegation apprised the Ministers about the present affairs of the company through a memorandum signed by Sitaram Gupta, M.L.A. from No. 2 and Achintya Mukherjee from No. 1 unit demanding take over of the management in the national interest and also for

the livelihood of 8000 workmen who are under threat of closure at No. 2 unit and also under lock-out at No. 1 unit. Both the Ministers assured the delegation that they will look into the matter.

The delegation also submitted a joint memorandum signed by Lal Bahadur Singh (INTUC) and Achintya Mukherjee (CITU) regarding the present financial and administrative crisis prevailing in the Weigh Bird (India) Ltd., a wholly owned subsidiary of M/s. Bharat Process & Mechanical Engineers Ltd. a Government of India undertaking. The Minister assured them that corrective steps would be taken in time.

OBSERVE MAY DAY THIS YEAR TO COMMEMORATE THE CENTENARY OF CHICAGO HAY-MARKET MASSACRE OF WORKERS

Office Bearers of the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) and Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU) who met in New Delhi on February 15, 1986 have issued the following Communique:—

May Day this year marks the centenary of the massacre by the capitalist Govt. of US of workers at the Hay Market Square, Chicago and execution of their leaders, for the crime of demanding an 8-hour working day. Later, this day came to be observed all over the world as May Day signifying the international solidarity of the working class in the struggle against imperialism and capitalism, for socialism and peace.

In order to observe this historic occasion in a befitting manner and on a grand scale as called for also by the World Federation of Trade Unions, the leaderships of the AITUC & CITU met and resolved to hold joint celebrations throughout the country. Details of the programmes will be announced shortly.

The meeting was attended by Comrades Chaturanan Mishra, M.P., Indrajit Gupta, M.P., T.N. Siddhanta, Parvati Krishnan (AITUC) and Samar Makherjee, Nrisingha Chakrabarty and P.K. Ganguly (CITU).

Declaration by Central Trade Unions

MEEETING for the first time, of its kind, all the Central Trade Unions, viz. INTUC, CITU, AITUC, HMS, BMS, UTUC, TUCC and UTUC (LS) unanimously adopted three Declarations on some specific problems in the national and international situation, that is, on National Integration and the Working Class, on Peace and Disarmament and against Apartheid. The meeting was held at the INTUC office in two sessions on February 15, and 17. The CITU was represented by Nrisingha Chakrabarty and P.K. Ganguly, both Secretaries. It was also decided that these National Centres of Trade Unions would meet again on March 22 to decide upon a plan of actions in furtherance of the pronouncements in the Declarations. The following are the Declarations adopted.

National Integration and Working Class

WHEREAS progress in any direction and achievements of any scale lose much of their impact in the absence of a sense of oneness in the country and its people;

WHEREAS it is regrettable that divergent and divisive forces such as communalism, casteism and regional chauvinism, aided and abetted by internal reactionaries and external agencies have made damaging inroads into our national unity;

WHEREAS these inroads find expression in such intensity and in such diverse form that in the result organisations and mass movements are paying a heavy toll; and

WHEREAS arising out of a very close knit relationship of common interests and common threats working people constitute a significant section of the population who are ideally placed to combat all pernicious divisive forces;

This meeting of the national centres of trade unions of India having met in Delhi on 15th and 17th February, 1986 declares that:

— Working people and their organisations hold the view that for containing and combating divisive forces of every denomination they submerge all such differences as may persist within their ranks and join hands in building up one solid mass of opinion in creating a favourable climate for the strengthening of the forces of national integration;

— Such actions will aim at isolating all such divisive forces from the mainstream of national consciousness;

— Trade unions will refuse to have any contact with such forces as would directly or indirectly encourage communalism, casteism and regional chauvinism;

— A programme for a sustained movement to that end will be worked out and will be implemented from joint platforms and in joint actions.

Declaration on Peace and Disarmament

WHEREAS like freedom peace is a birthright of every human person;

WHEREAS both freedom and peace can only be meaningful when hunger and poverty do not stalk the lives of millions;

WHEREAS in a world scarce of resources—almost all available means and resources for the elimination of poverty and hunger—are being utilised to feed the war machines of nations arraigned against each other thus perpetuating the denial of dignity of man which is a major concern of the trade unions;

WHEREAS the militarisation of outer space today poses the most ominous threat to mankind and gets accentuated every single day;

WHEREAS peace in the Indian subcontinent is threatened by the arming of Pakistan by U.S.A. and American bases in the Indian ocean;

WHEREAS workers have a definitive role in bringing about an end to the armament race as a first positive step towards enduring peace;

This meeting of the national centres of trade unions in India, having met on 15th and 17th February, 1986 calls upon all governments in the world to unequivocally renounce the path of war and violence and to evolve an effective code of conduct for the peaceful resolution of differences between States and declares that:

— Workers are totally opposed to nuclear weapons;

— Workers the world over should demand the restructuring of the world economic system so that economies would no longer be dependent on the creation and sustenance of a war psychosis;

--Workers everywhere should consider the preservation of world peace as its immediate priority.

This meeting further declares that:

--The commitment of the Indian working class to peace and Disarmament is and will continue to be total;

--From this commitment Indian workers extend their support to governments whose policies have been pronouncedly anti-war and pro-peace and express their rejection of any or every move which could lead to an aggravation of tension in international relations;

--Indian workers support the six nations' Peace appeal to make world free of nuclear weapons by the end of this century;

--Indian workers will support peace movements everywhere and will participate in movements designed and conducted by workers;

--Peace and disarmament Day will be observed by holding rallies and demonstrations, either jointly or separately in support of World Peace and Disarmament, and highlighting the imperative need for the preservation of Peace for the elimination of poverty and hunger.

Declaration on Apartheid

WHEREAS denial and defilement of human rights anywhere is a threat to freedom and independence everywhere;

WHEREAS this despicable phenomenon is now pronounced in its most savage form under the racist regime in South Africa;

WHEREAS professing their faith in freedom and human dignity certain governments, in open defiance of world opinion, continue to extend political, economic and military support to the racist regime thus helping it to survive; and

WHEREAS the organised working class should, as it always has, form the vanguard of the struggle to resist all such abhorrent practices and all attempts to support them.

This meeting of the national centres of trade unions in India having met on 15 and 17 February 1986 declares that:

--Indian working class considers the relentless struggle waged by the South African liberation movement as its own struggle and would, in every possible manner, strengthen the South African

Congress of Trade Unions and the African National Congress in their determination to wipe out apartheid;

--For the release of all those freedom fighters, who together with the legendary Nelson Mandela, are languishing in racist prisons, Indian workers would actively participate in all international actions that the fraternity of world working class would mount;

--The struggle for the independence of Namibia under the leadership of SWAPO would be supported by all means at the disposal of the Indian masses;

--While Indian workers would soon observe a National Anti-apartheid Day, their representative organisations would urge the world working class community to make a day as world anti-apartheid day;

--The observance of National Anti-apartheid Day would be a signal of the total commitment of the Indian working class in supporting, strengthening and participating on a continuous basis the struggle for the earliest elimination of the racist regime.

FORM IV

1. Place of publication : 6-Talkatora Road,
New Delhi-110 001.
2. Periodicity of publication : Monthly
3. Printer's Name : M.K. Pandhe
Whether Citizen of India : Yes
Address : 6-Talkatora Road,
New Delhi 110 001.
4. Publisher's Name : M.K. Pandhe
Whether Citizen of India : Yes
Address : 6-Talkatora Road,
New Delhi-110 001.
5. Editor's Name : M.K. Pandhe
Whether Citizen of India : Yes
6. Name and Addresses of : Centre of Indian Trade
individuals who own the : Unions,
newspaper and partners : 6-Talkatora Road,
or shareholders holding : New Delhi-110 001.
more than one per cent
of the total capital.

I, M.K. Pandhe, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Sd/-
M.K. Pandhe, Publisher.

Dated: February 28, 1986

(Contd. from page 4)

the employment opportunities. Ramnik Gupta and Nand Kishore Sinha addressed the rallies. A memorandum was handed over to the management. Demonstrations were also held and memoranda submitted at Ara, Kuzeu and Tapin collieries and also at Jharkhand collieries on February 6. In the Singrauli area (M.P.) a big demonstration was held on February 5 at Jayant project and on February 7 at Anlauri project. H.L. Dwivedi addressed the rallies and submitted the memoranda to the managements accompanied by Chhotelal Sahu, Srimohan Chouhan, Jagdish Mahto, Laxmi Naryan Singh and Ram Pyare. On February 8 a big rally was arranged at Bina in U.P. to be addressed by Ramnika Gupta and Rajkishore, M.L.A. of U.P. But the Government imposed section 144 and refused to give permission for the rally. The unity achieved through all these movements created a remarkable enthusiasm among the coal workers for the success the struggle ahead.

Meeting of Coal Advisory Council

A meeting of the Coal Advisory Council was held at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi on February 18 under the Chairmanship of Vasant Sathe, the Union Energy Minister.

The meeting was attended by the representatives from CITU, AITUC, INTUC, HMS and BMS, as well as the CMDs of CIL, ECL, BCCL, WCL, etc. and others. At the outset, Vasant Sathe expressed dissatisfaction at the poor performance of the coal industry. He said that after nationalisation despite spending of the Rs 5000/- crores by the Government the production of coal increased from 73 million tons to 147 million tons only, whereas in China where the production was less than that of India before its independence, now it has reached 800 million tons. He attributed the loss in coal industry to the huge surplus labour.

All the representatives of labour criticised the statement of the Minister and assailed the policy of the Government towards labour. Kanti Mehta of INTUC referred to the various problems faced by labour. He pointed to the lack of safety measures and lack of planning and various facilities. Even drinking water was not available. S.K. Sanyal reiterated that there was no surplus labour in coal industry and pointed to the non-implementation of the NCWA-III. Repeating the charge, Jayanta Podder of HMS said that 90 per cent of the welfare measures as agreed upon in NCWA-III had not been implemented. Damodar Pandey of INTUC referred to the question of illegal minings. S.K. Bakshi of CITU pointed out that in four years nearly 9000 piece rated workers were dismissed or retired which had severely affected production. He also assailed the Govt. and the managements for acquiring the lands of the villagers for mining without rehabilitating them or giving them any

employment. He further criticised the policy of mechanisation of the Government which had failed. He pointed to the operation of the mafia gangs by the contractors and the managements which had aggravated tension in the coal belts and demanded an all round reversal of the policies of the Government.

(Contd. from page 3)

All India Bandh on February 26. Since W. Bengal, Tripura and Delhi have already observed bandh on the issue there will be other solidarity actions in these states in support of the bandh. The CPI(M), the CITU and the mass organisations of women, students, youth, Kishan and agricultural workers are at the forefront for the preparation of the bandh which will sound the warning bell to the government.

Request for May Day Posters from Yugoslavia

The Chairman of the Municipal Trade Union Council of Yugoslavia has requested CITU for May Day Posters for an exhibition under the name of "PRVOMAJSKI PLAKATI" that is "1st May Posters."

All State Committees and unions are requested to send such posters which they may print, to the following address:

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E. Balanandan to Rome

Nominated by the CITU Secretariat, Com. E. Balanandan, Treasurer, CITU will leave for Rome on February 27 to attend the Conference of CGIL, Italy to be held from February 28 to March 4.

APPEAL OF AUCCTU

to the Working People and Trade Unions of the World

Com. S.A. Skalayev, the President of the All Union Central Council of Trade Unions, Soviet Union sent an Appeal published by the AUCCTU with a forwarding letter to Com. B.T. Ranadive, President of CITU, on the statement given by M.S. Gorbachev, the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, on January 15, 1986, in which the Soviet Union put forward a new proposal for the complete elimination of nuclear and chemical weapons and any other threat of annihilation facing mankind, in three stages before the year 2000. He appealed for active support to the programme. We are publishing Com. BTR's reply and the Appeal of AUCCTU hereunder:

Com. BTR's Reply

Com. S.A. Shalayev 21st Feb. 1986.
President,
All Union Central Council of Trade Unions,
42-Leninisky Prospect,
Moscow 117 119 USSR.

Dear Comrade,

I thank you for your valuable letter, along with the CPSU General Secretary M.S. Gorbachov's statement and the appeal of the AUCCTU.

The CITU applauds M.S. Gorbachov's statement as an outstanding contribution to world peace and lends its full support to the proposals contained in it.

The CITU warmly welcomes the appeal of the AUCCTU to all Trade Unions and supports the call for elimination of all nuclear weapons by the end of the century. The AUCCTU's appeal will be placed before the next meeting of our General Council which meets at the end of March and appropriate steps will be taken to popularise the peace proposals of the Soviet Union. The appeal will also be published in the CITU journal, "The Working Class". Every effort will be made to unite all Trade Unions to fight the menacing danger of a nuclear war.

With fraternal Greetings,

Yours Comradely,
B.T. Ranadive
President

Appeal of AUCCTU

General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee M.S. Gorbachev made a Statement advancing a programme of the complete and worldwide elimination of nuclear arms before the year 2000 and laying down other major peace actions. The new foreign policy initiatives of the Soviet

Union are of unprecedented scope and importance. They cover the whole complex of problems relating to the cessation of the arms race, given the most effective measures of control over the implementation of all the agreements and accords. Mankind is offered a clear, coherent and thoroughly thought-out programme of concrete actions whose realization would allow the 20th century to be completed by marking it with peace and disarmament.

The Soviet proposals are of flexible, constructive and balanced character. They provide a good opportunity for accelerating the negotiations on nuclear and space weapons so as to enable the realization of the accords reached at the Soviet-US summit in Geneva.

Unanimously supporting and approving of these peace initiatives the working people of this country are intensifying their efforts aimed at fulfilling the projected plans for the acceleration of the country's social and economic development, making ever more significant contribution to the cause of safeguarding and consolidating peace.

The Soviet initiatives meet the vital interests and aspirations of the progressive and democratic forces on the globe, the demands of working people in all the countries. Curbing the arms race and switching over to nuclear disarmament would release huge resources which might be channelled successfully along the lines of raising workers' living standards, doing away with unemployment, improving the conditions of work and labour remuneration, developing social security, medical service and protecting natural and working environment. The new Soviet proposals addressed to the entire world are also necessary prerequisites for resolving such pressing issues as economic backwardness, hunger, diseases, increasing foreign debts strangling more and more relentlessly in their loop dozens of developing countries and entire continents.

It is only through concerted efforts that the edifice of a lasting peace can be erected. Further developments depend to a considerable extent on how much united the battle-front will be in fighting against the danger of war. Extensive opportunities for working people to take joint actions in defence of peace are offered by the campaign "Trade Unions and Working People for Peace and Jobs" launched at the initiative of the World Federation of Trade Unions.

On behalf of 137 million Soviet trade union members the AUCCTU appeals to the working people of all countries, to all trade union organizations to give their all-round support to the Soviet Unions' large scale programme for the complete
(Contd. on page 23)

International Struggles

United States

The Organisation of the San Francisco Longshoremen recently celebrated the anniversary of maintaining a weekly picket line before the offices of the West Coast US Shipowner's organisation in protest against the import of South African Cargo. The refusal of the San Francisco Longshoremen to unload apartheid cargo, which however was later enforced by the US Courts, sparked intensification of the anti-apartheid struggle in U.S.A. The Committee for International Support of Trade Union Rights (CISTUR), whose main base is some fifty North Californian local unions, has announced another advance in the growing fight within the United States against the support for apartheid by the U.S. Government and the U.S. based Transnational Corporations which are keeping up the inhuman system of repression in spite of worldwide condemnation. The unions affiliated to the CISTUR had pressed for adoption of the boycott at the national convention of AFL-CIO last October. In a press conference the CISTUR announced that thirteen major retail sales companies with total annual sales of 122,000 million dollars, headed by the giant Sears Roebuck Corporation were compelled to state

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elimination of nuclear arms throughout the world before the end of this century.

We call on the working people and trade unions of the world to press for the other powers, primarily, the USA joining in prolonged Soviet unilateral moratorium on any nuclear explosions; to fight for banning completely the development and production of new types of weapons of mass annihilation including space strike systems; to demand a complete destruction of chemical weapons; to help in every possible way to ensure that the process started by the Soviet-US summit in Geneva will result in the realization of the principled accords arrived at during that meeting, and in concrete agreements to be adopted on the issue of halting the arms race and promoting mutual trust.

We are sure that the trade unions must put aside all differences and reject all that divides them when it comes to the struggle for safeguarding peace, against the threat of a new war. In this we must be united just as in matters relating to the common vital interests of those whom the trade unions are called upon to protect. The Soviet trade unions adhere exactly to these viewpoints.

Any delay is intolerable! In order to enter the third millennium without the weapons of mass annihilation it is necessary to act today! May 1986 designated by the UNO as an International Year of Peace become a turning point in resolving the most pressing issue of our times that of preventing a nuclear holocaust!

in writing their agreement with the CISTUR that they would not buy or sell apartheid goods. Presiding over the press conference, the Executive Secretary of the powerful California Federation of Labour, organisation of the AFL-CIO, announced that the Federation Executive Council had unanimously decided to sponsor the boycotting and henceforth the campaign would be an integral part of the Federation's action programme.

Canada

Organised under the Union of Bank Employees, the employees of Commerce Bank at its VISA centre and central mail room, Ontario are on strike since the last six months demanding better wages and working conditions. All the employees of the bank throughout Ontario, as well as the Canadian Labour Congress and the United Auto Workers Union of Canada extended full support to the strike. The United Auto Worker's Union contributed a loan of one lakh dollars, free from interest, to the Canadian Labour Congress to boost the strike fund of the striking bank employees.

Great Britain

A new crisis concerning British Leyland has loomed before the Thatcher Government with the Department of Trade and Industry admitting that it had received a second proposal for the division of the British Leyland group. The new proposal came from Sweden's Volvo, who are interested in taking over British Leyland's truck manufacturing division. Volvo have proposed that British Leyland, which is government owned and is in the red, should sell their truck making division to a third U.K. based company owned and managed by Volvo. The crisis ridden economy in Great Britain has hit the motor industry at its root. While already more than 500 job cuts have been announced in British Leyland's bus and lorry subsidiaries due to its "hob-nobbing" with the General Motors, as due to one of the terms for its being acquired by them, further offensives against the workers are in the offing. Due to the pressure of the workers in the plant and the opposition in the parliament, the Tory Government has confirmed for the first time that it was in secret negotiations to sell all the manufacturing divisions of Leyland. The company also manufactures Austin and Rover Saloon cars, apart from bus, lorries, trucks and Land Rovers. Earlier, the mounting protests from the workers and the opposition and the feelings of her own cabinet colleagues had compelled Margaret Thatcher to abandon the controversial plan to sell Austin-Rover to the American Ford. But the mounting crisis is driving her Government to take frantic bids to disown all responsibilities of the Government owned enterprises.

In the quagmire of the crisis, women are the worst hit in Britain. Although the Central Statistical Office claimed through its publication, "Social Trends in 1986", of large number of women employment, this is mainly because of large number of part time employment which the women workforce have been forced to accept due to dearth of full time employment opportunities. The statistics however had to admit the widening disparities in the earnings between men and women workers in Britain. Between April 1983 and April 1984, the gross weekly earnings of men rose on an average by 9 per cent, but that of women rose by only 7 per cent. The earnings of non-mannual women employees were one tenth of that of the men employees in April, 1984.

Bangladesh

The military rule of Ershad and the opposition alliance of the 15 party led by Sheik Hasina Wazed and the 7 party led by Khaleda Zia are heading towards a straight intensified clash on the issue of democratic elections. To counter the opposition struggle, Ershad held a rally organised by the Government backed Jatyo Party at Dhaka on February 13 to "reiterate" his decision to hold the "democratic elections" on May 6, which he was forced to postpone three times before. On the other hand, the 7 party alliances and the 15 party alliance held massive rallies on February 14 and 24 and reiterated their decision not to participate in the so-called elections under the dictates of the military Government unless the martial law is ended and the elections are held under a neutral care-taker Government. A total six hour bandh was observed at Bangladesh on February 4 in response to the call given by the opposition alliances. The opposition alliances are chalking out further plans of action and have given the Government the deadline of February 28 to accede to their demands.

Malaysia

Over thirty thousand workers have been retrenched in Malaysia in the past year. Electronics and textiles are the two industries which have been worst hit. The decline in the world demand for electronics products and the rise of protectionism against textile products have been attributed to the main causes for the retrenchments. In the electronics sector over ten thousand workers have been retrenched since the beginning of 1985 with strong indications that more factories will be closed down in near future. In the textile industry, more than eight thousand workers have been retrenched and thousands more are expected to be retrenched in the coming few months. Other industries like tea,

rubber, motor parts, tractors, toys, hotel and construction industry also have been seriously affected by the retrenchment tide. The major cause for this spate of closures and retrenchments has been the down turn of the capitalist world's economy and Malaysia's over-dependence on the their market. The multinationals are going too fast in turning their backs against the workers. The phenomena hold good in other parts of South East Asia. The workers however are not sitting pretty. Massive struggles, demonstrations, rallies, strike and picketing are sweeping Malaysia, Hongkong Singapore, Philippines, Indonesia, Japan and other parts where women have also joined their male counterparts in trade unions in large numbers.

Declaration on Peace by Balkan Trade Unions

The Electric Energy Trade Unions of Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Yugoslavia and Cyprus participating in the Second Balkan Conference at Belgrade recently expressed deep concern over the exacerbation of the international situation due to the spiralling arms race and threat of mankind by nuclear disaster. The Conference declared to involve the Electric Energy Trade Unions in the struggle for peace alongwith all other trade unions and peace loving and democratic forces for the protection of human lives and for a free and independent development of nations which is a precondition for the improvement of the socio-economic positions of the working people and for the social progress of all countries in the world. The participants demanded an end to the arms race by way of conclusion of agreements on holding up of nuclear arms tests, nuclear weapons ban, prevention of transferring of the arms race in space, reduction of the strategic nuclear arms leading to the liquidation of the arms of mass destruction and total disarmament.

MAY DAY CENTENERARY ISSUE OF THE WORKING CLASS

CHANGE OF SCHEDULE

The Secretariat of CITU has decided to publish the Special Centenary Issue of The Working Class by the First Week of April, 1986.

All agents and individual subscribers are requested to send their orders so as to reach the Central Office of CITU by 15th March, 1986.