

CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS



WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING

Guwahati 13-15 December 1993

REPORT of General Secretary

Dear Comrades,

The last two meetings of the Working Committee and one meeting of the General Council were exclusively devoted to the discussion on organisation. Naturally no time could be devoted to the discussion of the general report by the organisation. We could not review economic and political developments despite important events have taken place in the country having far reaching consequences.

It is not possible to review all developments since the General Council meeting held at Nagpur in March 1992. However, some major aspects of developments need to be reviewed so that an objective assessment of the present situation can be made for evolving common understanding within the organisation.

In Presidential addresses of these meetings some aspects of national and international situations have already been dealt with. It is therefore not necessary to repeat all these assessments in this report.

Regarding the recent international developments also, Com Balanandan in his Presidential address has dealt with the problems at great length. I would therefore confine myself with the national issues and review them so that we can make proper assessment of these developments.

Threat to India's Sovereignty

The experience of the last 2 years has convincingly proved that the new economic policies pursued by the Narasimha Rao Government at the Centre has posed a serious threat to India's economic sovereignty. One after another the Govt of India has accepted all the conditionalities of the World Bank and the IMF causing immense damage to the national sovereignty.

Industrial production during 1991-92 showed a decline while during 1992-93 it increased by 1.4% only. The estimated increase in industrial production during 1993-94 is likely to be of the order of 2.4 per cent. The manufacturing sector is thus showing a stagnant character and in some sector there has been actual decline in production. With growth of population of 2.4 per cent per annum in the country the per capita consumption of several industrial goods has declined, indicating increase in the poverty level of the mass of people of India.

Regarding our exports they actually declined in terms of dollars during 1991-92. They stood at \$18.1 billion in 1990-91, but reduced

to \$ 17.9 in 1991-92, though in terms of rupees we have increased our exports from Rs.32,553 crores to Rs.44,042 crores! Thus we had to export Rs.11,489 crore more to earn less than what we earned in the previous year in terms of dollars. As a result of devaluation of rupee, the loot by the advanced capitalist countries has increased phenomenally. It should also be noted that India had to sell at less price its products in order to boost exports. India's trade balance which was Rs.10,640 crores deficit during 1990-91 came down to Rs.3,809 crores deficit in 1991-92. The deficit however again shot up to Rs.9,572 crores! The Govt of India is now trying to export more commodities at cheaper prices in order to meet the deficit. If we cannot sell more, then the country will have to borrow more money from the IMF. The country has thus entered a vicious circle and it is difficult to come out of it. About 90 per cent of our exports are primary commodities and the IMF wants to keep this character of the economy perpetually.

When there is acute recession in advanced capitalist countries and production in some branches is being curtailed, these countries are frantically in search of markets. India being the second largest populated country in the world and the 10 crores strong middle class income group is looked upon as a potential market for the consumer goods from the advanced capitalist countries. They are pressurising the Govt. of India to reduce the import duties further so that the imports from these countries can flood our market. With superior technology and larger financial base the multi-national companies have a comparative advantage over Indian products and can easily dislodge Indian products from our own market. One cannot ignore the fact that some of the multinational companies have a bigger budget than the Govt. of India itself. Under such circumstances the talk of competition with foreign goods is only a ploy to open our market for the multi-national companies. Despite its harmful effects on our economy the Govt. of India is accepting these humiliating conditions because its capacity to resist imperialist pressure is dwindling very fast.

Since the advanced capitalist countries are in dire need of market they are selling goods in India by resorting to dumping. However, the Govt. of India is unable to use anti-dumping regulations and assert its right to check unfair competition.

Despite the talk of globalisation, the advanced capitalist countries are forming regional groups to compete with each other. European Economic Community and NAFTA are these regional

groupings who are fighting among themselves to capture the world market. India is being used as a major battle ground by these groups in their trade war. Indian companies are left with no alternative but to find a foreign collaborator to survive. The proposed merger of Hindustan Lever and TOMCO, merger of some Godrej Units with Proctor and Gamble, proposal to merge Malhotra Group with Gillette, take over of Parle's interests by Coca Cola group are only some example which indicate how the things are likely to take shape. Many Indian companies are negotiating deals of becoming junior partners of multi-national companies.

The multi-national companies despite offering of several concessions by the Govt. of India are pressing for more concessions to ensure higher profitability. Though the Govt. of India offered 16 per cent guaranteed return to foreign investors in power generation units, they are still reluctant to come and asking for more benefits that would further lead to substantial rates of tariff for the electricity. They are confident to get whatever they want because Dr. Manmohan Singh, India's Finance Minister is willing to give them for merely asking for the concession.

The sickness in the Indian industrial undertakings is growing at a faster rate. According to ASSOCHAM the total number of sick units has reached a record figure of 4 lakh 7 thousands. The bank funds locked up in these units are estimated to be about Rs.30,000 crores! Many of these sick units can be made viable if the Govt. comes forward to work out a proper package in co-operation with the trade unions. Unless Govt. protects some of the units from unfair competition from big business houses no viable package can be created. Logic of market economy always strengthens the growth of monopoly houses at the cost of small scale and traditional industries. Most of the sick industries would face closure rendering lakhs of workers jobless. The demand of the employers to delete section 25(0) of the Industrial Disputes Act is only to facilitate the process of closure. Multi-national companies are already pressing the Govt. of India to give statutory recognition to the Exit policy, which accepts employers unbridled right to close down the unit at his sweet will.

The deregulation of industries has led to large number of industrialists entering in the economic activity where the profits are the maximum. This has led to generate large unutilised capacity in industries since the market is limited. It has led to uneven development of regions increasing regional disparities. According

to the data available with the Ministry of Industry during the last 2 years the pattern of new investment was as follows: Western India-39%, Northern-26% Southern 19% Eastern 15%. It is also observed that even within a particular region industries are mainly developing around ports where export-import problems are easier to tackle. This process will lead unbalanced growth of different regions and backward regions will not get adequate opportunities to develop new industrial units.

Withdrawal of all restrictions on growth of monopoly houses has opened the channels of growth of monopoly houses. MRTP Act remained only on paper and the Govt. has permitted monopoly houses full permission to enter the area reserved for the small scale industries. The small scale industries organisations have already expressed their strong feelings about the adverse impact on this sector after the introduction of the new economic policies.

The recent statement in Bombay where the leading industrialists have also pointed out the competitive advantages given by the Govt. of India to the foreign capitalists and have demanded similar concessions to them.

The Disinvestment scam

The World Bank in its report has stated that direct participation by the private sector in disinvestment proceedings has been "Limited" and needs to be encouraged through more flexible action arrangements and allowing foreign investors participation. "It is to be noted that such observation has been made even after disinvestment of the shares of more than 30 profit making public sector units in the basic and strategic sectors. The Bank has been demanding" more strategic approach to PSE disinvestment, including outright sale of units". Thus the intention behind disinvestment of the profit making public sector units in the coming days is not difficult to imagine.

The commitment in the process of disinvestment compares well with the 'Harshad Mehta episode'. The ground price of the shares has been fixed much below the market price under different notions.

Shares of SAIL, Hindustan Zink, NALCO, IPCL, Cochin Refineries, Andrew Yule, National Fertilizers, FACT, and many others were listed for disinvestment without announcing any formal decision by the Govt. The CAG has noted that 71% of the total bundles were sold on the basis of single bid. The disinvested shares

have been allowed to change hands swiftly without keeping any track of it. It has been reported in the press that the Allahabad Bank bought a bundle on February 10, 1992 at a cost of Rs.13.12 crores which changed hand twice and reached the notorious foreign bank-City Bank and that too on behalf of a "fiduciary" at a cost of Rs. 38.81 crores. As per the CAG report the loss only on account of lowering down of ground price has been Rs.3,442 crores!

Similar is the situation in the matter of gifting out public sector units to the private capital. The IISCO privatisation move is a shocking case. The giant premier public sector steel company's total asset including its land, township, captive mines etc. at current market rate would be somewhere Rs.16,000 crores. Now ignoring this reality shamelessly it has been decided by the Govt. that the present equity of IISCO would be devalued from Rs.392 crores to Rs.134 crores and M/s Mukund Iron has been offered outright purchase of 75% of such devalued shares. The cost of said 75% equity shall be treated as loan to Mukund Iron by SAIL at concessional rate of interest to be paid in installments! It must be noted that IISCO is not the end of the story but rather a model of the Government design to giftaway the so called sick public sector units to monopoly private capital.

BIFR and the Sick Public Sector Units:

A powerful campaign has been launched to-day by the vested interest against the employees of sick public sector undertakings holding them responsible for the sickness of their respective units. Here it would be pertinent to list some important causes of the sickness. Many units have become sick mainly due to technical reasons. At the inception stage itself wrong technology was imposed on them by the Government being influenced by the multinational companies and subsequently no technological upgradation was done. Thus technological obsolescence is the cause of sickness of many of such units. Various modernisation and techno-economic plans for many units of different sectors have remained unimplemented for years together. The amount of loss shown against these units are also not the true picture rather the reflection of accounting jugglery. The administrative problems including corruption are there for everyone to see.

Now widespread concessions are offered to the private sector on one hand and restrictions are being imposed on the public sector on the other. For example the customs duty on imported goods are reduced and excise on the same product manufactured in the

country by PSU is being increased. Again many PSUs are facing serious crisis for want of order\job which are being cornered by the private sector with the help of the Govt. Thus many healthy units have become sick.

The public sector units referred to the BIFR are almost certain to be liquidated or may be privatised unless the trade unions defeat the game. The Govt. as promoter of these units are flatly refusing to invest a single paise for their rehabilitation. Even the schemes submitted by the employees are not accepted by the BIFR for want of financial support. In the hearing of cases, the BIFR is openly advocating in most cases the policy of the Govt. and advancing the cause of closure of the sick units without seriously considering whether the units can be made economically viable by making even modest investment.

The World Bank is quoted by the press to have said "to deal expeditiously with the sick PSEs". It has also directed to increase "The number of benches at BIFR and granting the BIFR powers of liquidation". Thus it is clear that the Goswami Committee appointed by the Govt to suggest amendment of the SICA has echoed the tune set by the World Bank and has recommended that for "setting up 'Fast-track' tribunals for quickening the 'winding-up' process in respect of the sick companies." Some of the dangerous recommendations of the Committee are - drastic anti-worker amendments of ID Act, SICA and other laws relating to the operation of BIFR, the aim being to do away with all the available protection for the workers and clear the path for quick retrenchment of workers and closure of sick units. Even severe restrictions have been recommended for imposition in the process of submission of rehabilitation plans!

The Exit Policy and NRF

A study of the World Bank has noted that out of 244 public sector undertakings, 82 should be closed down. The use of National Renewal Fund has been referred in this regard. Further, while 98 PSUs have been identified as sick, the number of chronically sick is 58. The number of employees employed directly with these sick units are nearly 8 lakh. With the teeth being provided to the BIFR and attitude of the Government as the promoter of the sick public sector units, it is not difficult to imagine the future of these lakhs of employees and also why the exit policy is now openly advocated by the Govt. Further, it must be noted that the danger of retrenchment is not for the employees of sick units only. With the

entry of private sector in the profit making units through different process and the demand of the employers to grant them the authority to hire and fire, the axe of retrenchment is likely to fall on this category of employees also. To assess the whole size of this problem of retrenchment, the number of temporary, casual, contract labour should also be taken into consideration.

Despite opposition of the entire trade union movement, the govt is adamant in the question of National Renewal Fund. It is necessary to thoroughly expose the Government in this connection. It is extremely condemnable that the Government is ready to provide fund for closure of sick units and retrenchment of the employees but refuse necessary capital for rehabilitation of the sick units even in cases where the money involved is much less. Even the Chief Executives of the public sector units have been told by the Govt. that their performance in spending fund for the VRS would be monitored.

Functioning of the Tripartite Committees:

By now it has become quite clear that the Special and Industrial Tripartite Committees received absolutely raw deals from the Government or for that matter they did not take them seriously and made a mockery of tripartism. The Special Tripartite Committee met only thrice ever since its formation despite declaration by the Govt. that the meetings would be held at regular interval. On the other hand the meetings of the Industrial Tripartite Committees were held only once. But the most reprehensible act of the Govt. is that, it did not implement the decisions of these committees, and conspicuously and violated the assurances. This is applicable even in the cases of recorded decisions. The Union Labour Minister has assured to the delegations of trade unions several times but still did not call any meeting of the committees.

Against Unemployment:

The trade union movement will have to encounter the problem of unemployment to a great extent. The struggle to protect the jobs of the workers and against closures and sickness would assume serious importance. The CITU should initiate the struggle for Right to work and employment generation which alone will protect the interest of workers.

Convention on Sick Units:

In the Bhubaneswar Working Committee meeting it was decided to hold a convention of workers in sick units both in public and

private sectors. The Sponsoring Committee and CPSTU have already decided to hold such convention. In this regard the CITU Centre felt the need for collection of information from different state committees so as to assess the extent of problem. However we have yet to receive any response from the State Committees. It is requested that the information should be supplied without any delay so that we can pursue the matter further.

Against Price Rise

The question of price rise has also assumed serious proportions in the recent past. Since the commencement of the new economic policies the prices have increased by about 17 per cent in the last two and a half years which is adversely affecting the standard of living of the masses. The struggle against rising prices should form an important aspect in our activities so that resistance to the Governments policies can be further strengthened.

Nationwide Struggles Against The New Economic Policies

The struggle against economic policies of the Government of India assumed special importance after the constitution of the Sponsoring Committee of Indian Trade Unions. Though BMS walked out of the National Campaign Committee of Trade Unions, it was possible to build a nationwide unity much wider than the National Campaign Committee. The all India strike of 29th November 1991 was a massive action of the working class in which about a crore and twenty five lakh workers participated. The unity was further strengthened when we could give a call for another nationwide strike on 16th June 1992 in which nearly one and a half crore of workers participated. The rising sweep of struggles was due to growing discontent among the workers against the economic policies of the Government of India.

In order to prepare for these strikes scores of state level and regional level conventions were organised through out the country in which larger number of T.U. activists participated. The CITU Centre brought out several booklets on different aspects of the new economic policies which considerably helped in this campaign. The impact of this campaign was seen among the organisations which were not constituents of the Sponsoring Committee. One must take note of the fact that not a single national trade union centre has announced its support to the so called package of reforms.

The massive march to Parliament organised on 25th November 1992 was a growing success in the activities of the Sponsoring

Committee. It is estimated that about a million workers participated in the march which was admitted by the national newspapers as the biggest ever demonstration organised in the Capital city. Even 2500 officers upto the level of deputy general managers in public sector undertaking and banking units participated in the march. It gave a call for broadening of the united movement against these economic policies by bringing together the organisations of peasants, agricultural worker, students, youth, women, writers, artists etc. So that still more powerful movement of the toiling masses could be unleashed all over the country. It further gave a directive to prepare for a powerful Bharat Bandh to register a strong protest against the draconian economic policies. The overwhelming response of the workers in the rally reflected the growing preparedness of the working class for still bigger struggles. The outcome of the rally clearly highlighted the need for a leading role of the working class in mobilising the toiling masses in the common struggle against the policies that hit hard various sections of the population in the country.

The rally further warned the working class of India about the rising danger of communalism arising out of the threat of demolition of Babri Masjid by the BJP-RSS-VHP combine on 6th December 1992. It therefore called upon the working class to oppose the communal and divisive forces in the country who were out to destroy the unity and integrity of the country.

The united movement of the working class received a big jolt when the communal riots spread all over the country after the demolition of Babri Masjid. These riots spread in several industrial centres forcing the minorities to flee away from their localities in search of safe places. Absence of any effective role by the congress led state governments and open connivance in these riots by the BJP led governments had only added fuel to the fire. Under these circumstances resistance to the communal and divisive forces became the top priority of the T.U. movement and naturally the struggle against the economic policies was sidelined for some time.

The Sponsoring Committee organised a demonstration in Delhi to condemn the communal forces in January 1993 and gave a call to hold similar demonstrations all over India. In Delhi the Central Government not only did not give permission to the administration but arrested the workers participating in it. At the same time the Govt. of India criticised Delhi police for banning a rally called by the BJP to instigate Hindus against the muslim minority. The failure of

the central government to check the menace of communalism cannot be ignored. The central government banned the RSS but it continued to function without any hindrance, making a mockery of the ban itself.

As soon as the communal tension subsided and the situation in the country was limping back to normal the Sponsoring Committee took initiative in calling National Convention of Mass Organisations Against Economic Policies of the Govt. of India and Communalism on 15th April 1993 at New Delhi which was attended by over 7000 delegates of trade unions, Kisan organisations, agricultural workers unions, organisations of students, youth, women, writers, artists etc. The convention was unique in the sense that for the first time mass organisation of all affiliations were brought together on a common platform. The Declaration of the convention consisted 20 point programme which posed a national alternative to the economic policies of the Govt. of India. It created a new National Platform of Mass Organisation Against Economic Policies of the Government and communalism while raising major demands affecting all mass organisations in the country. The convention chalked out phased programme of holding local, regional, industrywise, state level conventions, organising of state level Jathas, mass courting arrests on 19th August 1993 culminating in Bharat Bandh on 9th September 1993. The convention generated new enthusiasm among all mass organisations to rally round their following in a nationwide common struggle. The industrial working class played a leading role in making the convention a grand success.

The programme of holding conventions was successfully carried out in most of the states. The representatives from the CITU centre generally participated in these conventions.

However, the programme of organising state level Jathas could not be carried out in most of the states. It required much more co-operation between various mass organisations to make such a programme successful. In absence of proper planning we could not make full use of the potential of Jathas as an instrument of popularisation of the slogans raised by the National Convention and mobilising the masses behind these slogans. We must consider in depth now to overcome this shortcoming so that in future struggle this form of action can be effectively used in our movement.

Over a million of persons courted arrests all over the country on 19th August 1993 as decided by the convention. All participants of

the National Platform joined in the action. Never before, since independence the programme of courting arrest was organised on such a massive scale. The police resorted to lathi charges and shooting tear gas shells at the demonstrators in various parts of the country. In West Bengal and Tripura in view of the full support given by the State Govts. to the demands raised by the platform there was no programme of courting arrests by the organisations. However, big Dharnas were organised in all the districts. By and large, the programmes on 19th August created a favourable background for the organisation of Bharat Bandh on 9th September 1993.

In Steel industry as per decision of the National Convention on 4th August 1993 at Calcutta the workers went on strike on 7th September in protest against proposed privatisation of IISCO, against the policy of disinvestment by the Govt. of India. The demands of the strikers included the scrapping of the DPE guidelines on wage negotiations implementation of the pension scheme and introduction of multi-slab system of DA for the public sector workers. The Steel workers in Durgapur Alloy Steep Plant, IISCO and CMO in West Bengal joined the strike and Bharat Bandh on 9th September also.

The Bharat Bandh and industrial strike on 9th September was success despite propaganda to the contrary by the official media. In West Bengal, Kerala, Tripura and Bihar total Bandh was observed by the people while in Tamilnadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Punjab it was widespread.

According to an estimate over 2 crore workers participated in this action ie 50 lakh more than the 16th June 1992 nationwide strike. As reported by All India State Government Employees Federation over 50 lakh State Govt. employees all over India participated in the strike action. As per call of the All India Defence Employees Federation strike was successful in all the defence factories and units. This time the participation of the central government employees, particularly postal and telecommunications employees, income tax and audit departments, RMS, MMS, etc was an important factor. The Postal services were completely collapsed since the postmasters went on strike and many had to face disciplinary actions.

The employees of Airlines, banks, insurance and fertilizer companies observed complete strike in most of the centres in India. The strike was successful in public sector units including those in

Bangalore and Hyderabad based industrial units. Growing discontent among the workers due to inordinate delay in settling their charter of demands, the policy of disinvestment and privatisation and Govts. decision to close down sick units arbitrarily have contributed greatly to the success of the public sector strike.

Notable was the participation of the unorganised workers in the strike. The participations of women this time was of a higher order than previous strike. According to reports in several industrial units women, students and youth organisations participated in picketing and appealing workers to go on strike.

In contrast to the past, the INTUC and BMS did not issue any statements calling upon the workers to ignore the strike call. In some of the undertakings the unions of these organisations participated in the strike action. In Bombay and Maharashtra despite Shiv Sena Chief's call to oppose the Bharat Bandh Shiv Sena workers in large number joined the strike action. It clearly indicates the growing discontent in the ranks of trade unions outside the framework of the sponsoring committee which makes them ready for direct action against the economic policies of the Govt. of India.

The industrial strike and Bandh had some shortcomings also. The HMKP leadership though supported the Bharat Bandh did not organise the strike in Bombay BEST as well as taximen where they had unions. Instead of admitting this weakness George Fernandes issued a statement to the press at Calcutta holding CITU responsible for not having a complete strike. One should also take note of the fact that some constituents of the sponsoring committee did not join the strike action. The worst example perhaps is of the AITUC union in Singareni Colliery where the AITUC leadership withdrew the strike call on flimsy grounds and decided unilaterally not to sit with CITU in bipartite negotiations due to CITU's criticism about AITUC's role in withdrawal of the strike notice.

HMS leadership in the Port & Docks did not join the strike action which enabled the Govt. of India to advertise through the official media that the port and docks in some ports worked normally.

However, the most significant non-participation in the strike was that of Railway Workers. The leadership of the AIRF stated in the convention that they would be prepared to join Bharat Bandh or strike if it is indefinite. Later the AIRF decided to go on strike in

September on some pending demands of the railwaymen and the Central Govt. employees. The strike ballot conducted by the AIRF received magnificent response from the railwaymen. We requested the AIRF leadership to synchronise their action along with 9th September, but they convened a meeting on 8th September to decide the date of strike. Ultimately their demands were brought down to 5 and the date of strike was fixed on 12th October 1993. In the early stage of negotiations itself the leadership came down and settled for an interim relief of Rs.100, merger of only 20% of DA into basic for gratuity purposes raising the ceiling of bonus upto Rs.4500/- and an appointment of another Pay Commission. Thus the demand of parity with Public SEctor, appointment of bipartite wage negotiations Committee and 51% merger of DA into basic were given up unacceremoniously. Several workers felt that the leadership could have bargained more for setting the demands of the workers.

The role of the AIRF leadership, created frustration among the ranks of trade unions including those of railwaymen and some central government employees. The ceiling for bonus was kept at only Rs.3500 for the P&T employees and Rs.2500 for other Central Govt. employees. However, it must be noted that the Govt. had given concession to the employees due to the remarkable unity achieved by the central Govt. employees movement including the unions belonging to INTUC.

Had the railwaymen joined Bharat Bandh it would have created much better impact on the people of the country. This weakness in our united movement should be removed through discussions in a friendly manner so that an important constituent of the Sponsoring Committee does not remain aloof from the Joint action of the working class.

We also have to note that in some states the CITU State Committees had not taken sufficient initiative in developing united front of the trade unions and other mass organisations. Wherever our CITU State Committees have taken initiative it has yielded results. In future, we have to ensure that all State Committees should show due alertness in implementing the decisions of the national level united front committees.

There is also need to improve the co-ordination with other mass organisations so that following of all mass organisations is brought in the joint movement launched by the National Platform unless the

trade unions understand their leading role in building united front with other mass organisations and take necessary initiatives, the movement cannot register further advance in days to come!

The Sponsoring Committee had taken up the issue of the proposed Industrial Relations Bill and gave a call for observation of All India Protest Day Against the Bill on 7th December. Reports of observation are awaited.

The Platform of Mass Organisations in its meeting took up the question of Dunkel Proposals on a priority basis since the last date fixed for completing the round of talks was 15th December. The national Platform therefore decided to observe National Protest week Against Dunkel Proposals from 3rd to 9th December culminating in countrywide demonstrations on 9th December. Reports of this observation are yet to be received by the CITU Centre.

Meanwhile when the GATT Chief Peter Sutherland came to visit India on 28th October the National Platform decided to organise protest demonstration in co-operation with National Working Group on Patent Rights. A good demonstration was organised before Parliament and a 15 member delegation met Pranab Mukherjee Union Minister of Commerce and expressed the protest at the visit to Peter Sutherland to India.

The National Platform will meet shortly to decide the future programme of action.

The Movement of Public Sector Workers:

The Committee of Public Sector Trade Unions (CPSTU) has been launching various agitational and action programmes from time to time on the question of industrial sickness in PSU, denigration public sector by the Govt and the economic issues of the PSU employees. On 12th September '92 the extended meeting of the CPSTU was held at New Delhi which chalked out phased programmes of agitation including Half-an hour's strike by the public sector employees throughout the country. On 3rd and 4th December '92 the extended meeting of CPSTU was held at Hyderabad which decided a longdrawn programme of action including a 72 hours strike by the public sector workers all over the country on 20-22 April '93. The BMS however later on withdrew from the commitment and walked out of the CPSTU. Moreover the INTUC declared a strike on 19th March '93 on similar issues. The CPSTU

had appealed to the INTUC to fix a common date for the strike but in vain, because INTUC was not at all serious for the strike. There was no preparations for the strike and ultimately it was withdrawn on 16th March '93 on the assurance of the Govt that the rate of DA would be raised to Rs 2 from Rs 1.65 per point as recommended by the Tripartite DA Committee. This move of the INTUC had the sabotaging effect on the CPSTU called strike as well. Some of the constituents of the CPSTU did not give strike notices and ultimately the strike action by the CPSTU had to be deferred after some more demands were conceded by the Union Labour Minister.

On 15th and 16th July '93 a national seminar was organised by the CPSTU at New Delhi on the impact of new economic policy on public sector. It was addressed by the CMD/Director of many leading public sector undertakings like SAIL, Coal India, NTPC, CEL, NDMC etc. Other distinguished speakers in the seminar included Dr Davison Bodhoo, Ex-IMF official and Dr Arun Ghosh a noted Indian economist. Dr. Davison Bodhop, Ex-IMF official and Dr. Arun Ghosh etc. INTUC General Secretary, Shri Gopeshwar also addressed the seminar.

The last extended meeting of the CPSTU was held at Calcutta on 6th November 1993 which called upon the PSU employees to prepare for bigger mass actions against dismantling of public sector. It has been decided to observe phased programmes of action. The notable of which are a national protest day on 7th December against the proposed IR bill and national protest week from 3rd to 9th December '93 culminating in a rally on 9th December '93 against the Dunkel proposals and in defence of national sovereignty.

In this context the organisation and functioning of the CPSTU needs further strengthening so that it can effectively steer the battle of the public sector employees.

It has become our regular practice that the meetings of the CPSTU precedes by meeting of our Co-ordination Committee in order to formulate our stand on the issues before the succeeding CPSTU meeting. Well planned and more frequent meetings of the Co-ordination Committee has to be organised for quickly addressing the issues emerging fast. Many important tasks of the Committee are going at default mainly due to shortage of comrades at the centre. In view of my responsibilities, it has been decided that instead of me Comrade Jibon Roy should function as the Convenor

of the Coordination Committee of Public Sector Unions. The national seminar on self-reliance in oil industry held at New Delhi on 1st and 2nd September '93 underlined how our initiative helps in tackling the problems of public sector. It was for the first in the history public sector oil industry such a joint seminar including INTUC and that too on the basis well prepared papers on different aspects was held. The initiative of the CITU has been duly acknowledged by all the participants and this has definitely opened up immense scope for us to consolidate our organisation in this vital sector of the industry.

Wage negotiations in the PSUS:

The last wage settlements in almost all the major PSEs have expired by the end of 1991. But wage negotiations were banned by the Department of Public Enterprises (DPE) with the approval of the Prime Minister. However, the Government admittedly had to yield to the pressure of agitation including strike notice served by the public sector workers and ultimately the ban had to be withdrawn. But due to the impractical, undefined and arbitrary guidelines of the DPE the wage negotiations could not take off meaningfully. The trade unions voiced strong protest against the guidelines. The Union Labour Minister had to assure the CPSTU delegation that the guidelines would be changed.

The new guidelines under consideration by the Govt. visualise that the maximum percentage of wage increase shall be fixed at 19% and the period of settlement shall be five years. The prerequisite from the management would be not profit and some dividend being declared. The other conditions are no budgetary support for wage increase, no automatic increase in administered price due to wage increase etc.

The unprecedented delay in the wage settlement has caused serious resentment amongst the employees. On the question of Interim Relief (IR) The trade unions are not unanimous. However, some industries have already given IR in the shape of ad hoc lump sum advance. Depending on the progress of the wage negotiations under the new guidelines the trade union movement shall have to take position on the issue in the coming days.

In this connection it is necessary to note that the workers in the sick units are obviously not that much agitated on this issue since they are faced with the problem of their survival. In this situation we have to combine the struggle for higher wages in well run units with

the struggle to overcome the sickness of these industry which alone will help us in unifying the movement.

The question of DA for the employees of central PSEs has partially been settled with the introduction of Rs.2.00 per point of VDA from 1.1.1992. The slab system of VDA has been accepted by the Govt. in principle. The trade unions were told to submit joint proposal for the slabs and corresponding rate. The issue has been delayed because of the slightly different stand taken by the BMS. Ultimately the same has been finalised and a joint unanimous proposal has been submitted to the Govt. on 22nd Nov'93 we have to bring pressure on the Government of India to convene an early meeting of the Tripartite Committee on DA in public sector.

Struggle of Unorganised Workers

Comrades,

Of late we have been making efforts to extend our activities among the unorganised sector of industries in which constitutes about 85-90% of the work force in India. We have been able to organise workers in various unorganised sector of industries such as beedi, construction, handloom, power loom, brick kiln, stone quarry, tanneries, small chemicals, in garment industry, etc. Struggles are being waged in various states and also all India scale in pursuance of a 22 point charter of demands formulated in the Kanpur General Council meeting in 1990 . The first All India Convention organised by our All India Co-ordination Committee of Un-organised workers at Calcutta on 1-3 November 1992 which gave a call for all India strike to press the demands of the workers in this neglected sector. The strike was successfully organised on 14 July, 1993, the first of its type in the country independently by the CITU in West Bengal, Karnataka, Tamilnadu, Andhra Pradesh and Delhi. It was also effective in Punjab, U.P. in some areas of Bihar and Rajasthan while in M.P. and Maharashtra there was strike in some pockets and demonstrations. No report, however has been received from Kerala about the strike so far. In some places the strike was joined by other trade unions also. A mass signature petition of nearly 2 lakh signatures were submitted to the Speaker, Lok Sabha on the demands of unorganised workers, viz minimum wage, application of labour laws, social security measures, etc. The workers of the unorganised sector from various states participated in the 9th September Bharat Bandh in larger number than on the earlier 2 strikes. We have formed a separate All India Coordination Committee of Beedi Workers which organised an all India convention at Cannanore from December 3 to 5.

The conference was attended by about 500 delegates from W.Bengal, Tamilnadu, Karnataka, AP, Bihar, Tripura, Maharashtra and Kerala. The conference was inaugurated by Com. Vimala Ranadive. Earlier a public meeting was held which was attended by over 20,000 beedi workers from Cannannore dist alone. COM P K G placed the report as convenor of the Co-ordination Committee. The conference was addressed by Com. E. Balanandan, our President and COM E K Nayanar. An industrial seminar was also held as part of the seminar. The seminar was addressed by G K Panikar, Chairman, Kerala Dinesh Beedi Workers Central Cooperative Society Ltd., Kannuur Sri Thomas Isac, economist and Com KN Ravindranath. The Conference gave a new structure to the coordination committee and named it All India Committee of Beedi Workers. It elected Com C Kannan as President, COM Vimala Ranadive, as Vice President, Com P K Ganguly as Secretary, Com Md. Nizzamuddin (WB), S Chandrasekaran (TN), and V J K Nair (Karnataka) as Joint Secretaries. IT also constituted a sub-committee which will meet and function regularly at Central CITU office from Delhi. The conference also decided to raise a fund of Rs. 1.50 lakhs and appoint a paid wholtimeer to function at Delhi. The conference gave another good direction for formation of workers' cooperative in Beedi industry in the line of Dinesh Beedi Workers Cooperative Society of Kerala.

Comrades, all state committees should try to mobilise the beedi workers under our union so that we can form the all India Federation shortly. We have to strengthen our efforts of organising this vast work force in the various unorganised sectors of industries by championing their demands, enrolling them as our members and bring them into the common path of struggles. While carrying forward our independent actions it is necessary to make efforts to initiate united struggles in this sector with other trade unions.

Struggle for Consolidation of TU Unity

The remarkable T U unity built in the country during the relentless struggles that we have launched in the recent past needs to be further strengthened. A further consolidation of this movement has become an urgent task to make our resistance struggles more effective.

In today's situation on issue to issue possibility of uniting the entire class is also possible and we have been able to do so as in case of IISCO workers struggle against disinvestment and privatisation.

In the last working committee meeting we have discussed the question of formation of one union in one industry. Since the urge for unity is growing among the rank and file workers of all affiliations the demand for one union in one industry has been brought effective on the agenda. We have correctly emphasized the aspects of democratic functioning of trade unions and the need for trade unions loyalty to the working class interests. We have also explained our readiness to form common industrywise federations if these aspects are properly agreed upon by all the constituent organisations.

In the last conference we had emphasized the popularisation of the concept of confederation of Indian Trade Unions from our own platform so that favourable atmosphere is created all over the country in favour of constitution of such a confederation.

To counterpose our slogan of confederation certain central T U organisations have given the slogan of immediate merger of all the Central TUs to form a single national T U Centre. However, taking into account the ground reality to day their is need to establish unity about the trade union policies on various issues facing the working class. This can be achieved only through the formation of confederation. A successful working of the confederation will pave the way of formation of single national trade union centre in the country.

It must be noted that our unions have not done sufficient work to popularise our concept of Confederation of trade unions. Several industrywise independent federations will welcome this concept because they will be able to join the Confederation of United T U movement. It is necessary to organize a national dialogue with all the Central TUs in the country.

As a modest beginning towards a debate on T U unity in the country the CITU centre has decided to organize a National Symposium on Issues before T U UNity in Delhi on 20th December 1993 on the occasion of 89th Birth Anniversary of Comrade B T Ranadive. I am happy to note that all central trade unions have agreed to our appeal to participate in the symposium. It is hoped that this debate will help in the process of development and consolidation of T U unity in the country.

Similar attempts should be made all over the country by various committees of the CITU wherever possible industry level dialogue can also be initiated by our industrywise federations.

We must utilise the favourable situation developing in the direction of building all in unity of the working class. This unity is highly essential if the working class has to play a leading role in the present situation in our country.

NTC Mills

Comrades, as you know the govt had drawn a turn-around strategy for the National Textile Corporation Mills in the country. According to the scheme 42 mills are to be closed down throwing about 80,000 workers in one go under a forced VRS scheme being funded from NRF. Under the initiative taken by CITU which jointly raised protest the govt constituted a sub-committee under a special committee for the revival of the NTC mills. Com P K Ganguly is the convenor of sub-committee from CITU.

The Govt had asked the textile research association like SITRA, BTRA, NITRA and ATIRA to formulate a revival scheme for the sick textiles units.

These research institutions submitted their reports to the subcommittee according to which instead of the 42 mills 19 mills are to be closed down and the rest to be merged together. But the number of workforce to be reduced has been suggested as 71,000 i.e. only about 8000 less than the govt scheme. All the TUs i.e. CITU, INTUC, AITUC, HMS, BMS and NLO have rejected this revival scheme in the meeting of the sub-committee held on 7 Dec 1993. Several members of the parliament who are members of the subcommittee including our working committee member Com. Tarit Topdar have also opined with the TUs. Another meeting however will be held on 21st Dec to decide the issue. Meanwhile the central TUs leaders in the sub-committee had 2 or 3 meetings and formed a joint action committee to oppose the scheme. They have also tentatively decided to give a joint note of dissent in case the govt refused to withdraw the scheme. They have also decided to hold all India convention of the NTC workers at Indore at the end of January and take action programme which may include a rally before the parliament. However, there is some vacillation in some trade unions excepting INTUC and BMS who are still solidly behind CITU in opposing the reduction of workforce and demanding to start the mills and starting modernization process immediately. They have also suggested to stop the VRS and utilize the fund for modernization. Under such circumstances we have to take a decision on the issue.

Our activities among Working Women

As per decision of the All India Co-ordination Committee of working women we organised a three day T.U. class for the working women activists at Hyderabad. About 40 women attended the class from 23rd to 25th July 1993. Except West Bengal all the states participated in the class. M.K. Pandhe, Srihari, Prasada Rao and Dy. Director ILO Area office Delhi took the class Comrade Umanath could not come due to health. This was the first attempt made by the CITU to educate the women activists. On the whole the class was successful. However follow up action to hold state level class in local languages is necessary to train women activists is essential. If the state committees take interest it is possible to make some progress in the matter.

A meeting of the All India Anganwadi Workers and helpers federation was held at Patna on 28th September which was attended by representatives from 4 states only. Despite improvement in our activities in Maharashtra, Punjab, Tamilnadu, Andhra and Bihar the participation in the meeting was not well. The meeting took up the programmes of agitation against privatisation such as state level Dharna's signature campaign and one day strike action. The working and living conditions of these women continues to be shocking and in absence of activity by other Federation they are more and more veering round us. We should use this opportunity to the fullest extent so that good organisation is developed among them throughout the country.

In Bihar, a meeting of the women activists was held in Patna in July and about 25 women working in coal mines, Beedi, Stone quarries, health and Anganwadi workers attended the meeting. It was decided to form women's sub-committee in these industries so that activities among working women are strengthened. In Kerala state level meeting was held recently in which the state general secretary was present. The meeting chalked out programme of District level activities.

The CITU Report on organisation has highlighted out major weaknesses on this front. These weaknesses still persist and unless State Committees take up the work in right earnest progress in this sector is not likely to be seen in the near future.

Report on Organisation

A nationwide discussion was organised by the CITU on the present state of our organisation. As mentioned earlier two meetings of the working committee and one meeting of the General

Council were exclusively devoted to the discussion on this important aspect of our functioning.

After finalisation of the Report it was discussed in various state committees. However, periodic monitoring of the work regarding implementing the tasks stated in the report is necessary. However, we have not received detailed report of what is being done in the matter in different states. Unless the working committee and General Council of the CITU periodically review the follow up action on the Report on organisation there is a danger that it may not be implemented in full and the existing stagnation in the organizations likely to continue.

We have also to review the functioning to the industrywise federations in the light of the observations made in the report on organisation. Some federations have already taken decisions to prepare a self critical report about their functioning examining the shortcoming in this organisation.

The report on organisation has been translated in Hindi, though it was somewhat late. However it should be fully utilised to educate our ranks about the immediate task to be fulfilled.

The CITU centre had decided for meeting of Hindi speaking states in the first week of November last. However due to elections in these states it had to be deferred. We will now take steps to hold such a meeting and chalkout some programme to strengthen the activities of the CITU in these regions.

Comrades participating in the debate of this moving working committee meeting should highlight the activities in different states so that we can properly assess to what extent the tasks stated in the report are being implemented.

So far as the CITU centre is concerned the members of the sectt. reviewed the job division in the office and shortcoming in the implementation of the previous decision were noted. The secretariat decided to overcome these shortcomings so that proper priorities are fixed and check-up of the work done would be ensured.

Struggle against communalism and divisive forces

The danger of communalism has been increasing of late in various parts of the country. The communal forces led by RSS, BJP, VHP have been systematically spreading hatred against minorities

all over the country. Hindu chauvinism is being roused with a view to capturing power at the centre and several campaigns have spread the poison of communalism in various parts of the country and the industrial centres have also been affected by this virus. The Muslim fundamentalists have also started strengthening their activities during the recent past. It is also the game of these communal forces to divert the public attention from the real issues facing the country and use the public discontent to achieve their ulterior motives.

The Govt of India instead of fighting these forces is surrendering before their pressure. Events leading to demolition of Babri Masjid on 6 December have clearly proved that if the govt would have been serious to protect the Babri Masjid, it would have taken the firm action against the BJP govts to foil their attempt. However, the govt of India intervened only when the Masjid was demolished and the temporary structure of a new temple was constructed at the site, which clearly indicates complicity of the Central Govt.

The communal riots that had flared up all over the country after the demolition of the Babri Masjid have also showed that the Congress Govts miserably failed to take firm steps against the communal elements in the country. The approach of the central govt has only strengthened fundamentalist forces. The manner in which the RSS was banned and the Religion Bill was brought before Parliament has only shown the half hearted manner in which the govt was moving to tackle the communal forces in the country. The ruling party had also given shelter to number of communal forces which highlights its lack of seriousness in dealing with the communal issues.

The four BJP govts had been adopting anti-working class policies and were getting isolated among the people. All the promises given to the working class before the election campaign had not been implemented which was also adding to the discontent amongst the people. The results of the recent elections in 5 states has proved that. The Hindutava philosophy failed to help BJP to fulfill their dream of capturing of power at the centre. However, this defeat of the BJP should not make us complacent and there is need to continue the struggle against the communal elements so that the obscurantist ideas are not allowed to run the unity and integrity of the country. Further, there is an urgent need of continuing the campaign against communalism and uniting the working class and the people of the country for secular forces in the country. The

govt's behaviour during the Hazratbal shrine episode has also not helped in tackling the Kashmir issue properly. Though the situation has been diffused for the time being it is still explosive and grave. Unless the govt tries to find a political solution to the Kashmir problem the question cannot be solved satisfactorily. The present method of tackling the problems with the help of the bureaucracy army and the police is only strengthening the hands of fundamentalist forces in the state.

Under the circumstances, there is urgent need that the trade union movement must rise to the occasion and carry forward the campaign against communalism in a consistent manner. The BJP is trying to pose as a national alternative to Congress and attempting to gain ground by using the anti-congress sentiment amongst the people. We should not allow this situation to continue and for that purpose the left, democratic, patriotic and secular forces must be mobilised on a wider scale so that people see a real alternative to COngress and are not swayed by the BJP propaganda.

Unfortunately the trade union movement in our country has not campaigned enough among the workers and other sections of the people on the communal question. During the signature campaign initiated by the Rashtriya Ekta Abhiyan it was not even possible to collect even the signatures from the members of the trade unions. As a matter of fact it was a great opportunity to approach the other sections of masses on th is question. But we have not utilized it to the fullest extent. It is also necessary to note that during communal riots whatever role we have played is appreciated by many but still our role was symbolic considering the magnitude of the problems posed by the communal forces. It is the working class and democratic movement alone which can create confidence amongst the minorities because they are the real secular force in the country. From that angle the CITU should see that our unions play more and more active role in the struggle against communalism so that we can wipe out the virus of communalism from the Indian soil.

In Punjab the CITU comrades has consistently carried on struggle against the fundamentalists and divisive forces which created good impact among the workers. Though we had to lose many of our valuable comrades in this struggle their blood did not go in vain and the people realized the dangerous character of these communal and divisive forces in the country. Though there has been some improvement in the situation in Punjab there is no need

for complacency and a struggle for finding a political solution to the problem of Punjab is very very essential and our campaign in this regard must continue without any hindrance.

Assam situation:

Although the infamous 'Assam Agitation' and forces behind that has been disintegrated, the problem of terroristic and separatist forces are still active in Assam. The 'Bodoland' agitation is really not over as claimed by the State Government. On the question of demarcating the boundary of the autonomous area the State Government has been acting unilaterally out of political motive resulting further complication of the situation. This notorious problem is not only threatening the unity of the state but also spreading communal hatred between the tribal and non-tribal population. The 6th October 1993 incident at the Bongaigaon area has taken 30 lives and rendered about 35 thousand people homeless and property worth crores of rupees has been destroyed. The Bodo Security Forces was reportedly behind this carnage.

Moreover, the ULFA problem is still alive. As per news paper report it is reorganising again and apprehended that it may strike again. The dangerous link amongst the terrorist groups of the entire NE region is also there. Further, the so-called 'surrender group' of ULFA is, reportedly, having large quantity of arms and ammunition and they are being utilised by the Cong(I) as 'storm-trooper' for furthering their political initiative by the ruling party the terrorist and secessionist ridden situation in Assam is quite volatile.

The Struggle for Pension Scheme

CITU took the lead in exposing the pension scheme prepared by the Provident Fund Organisation. Although doubts have been raised in some quarters about the practicability of a pension scheme as third retirement benefit in addition to contributory PF and Gratuity Schemes, the Govt is morally committed to such a scheme as per provision of the last wage agreement of almost all the major PSEs. In fact the steel and coal industries such scheme has been finalized by the management and trade unions jointly having provision for equal contribution by the workers and employer and is awaiting clearance from the Govt for implementation while the deduction of workers contribution is going on since 1989. The sustained struggle of the CITU against the new Govt scheme has resulted in growing opposition amongst the trade unions. Some central trade unions have also expressed their opposition to the Govt scheme though some of them earlier supported it. Even the INTUC has expressed

its desire for a joint discussion. The question of matching contribution by the management for funding the pension scheme is gaining ground among central trade union organisations.

The UTUC (LS) has adopted resolution opposing the govt scheme. The Philips Employees Union, Bombay has been playing an effective role in the propaganda against the pension scheme.

The meeting convened by the Union Labour Minister with the central trade unions on 4.5.93 to discuss the pension issue concluded with opposition of all the trade unions to various aspects of the scheme and the Labour Minister had to give assurance to amend the proposed scheme.

In the meantime a new development has taken place on the question of pension in the financial sector. The sustained movement launched by the trade unions and officers associations of the Banking and Insurance sectors under the banner of joint Action Committee (JAC) has compelled the govt to enter into an agreement with the JAC in suppression of the memorandum of understanding concluded only with the AIBEA. Proper scrutiny of the agreement would show that the pension scheme agreed by the Govt for financial sector is definitely an additional benefit over and above CPF and gratuity. The achievement is obviously the result of united movement.

It is, therefore, imperative that the on going struggle against the govt's pension scheme shall have to be given the shape of united movement and once the aim is materialized the govt, which is already in dilemma with the pension scheme, shall have to come to terms with the trade unions. Given the prevailing resentment amongst the public sector workers about the pension scheme our unions should take proper initiative, which alone will make it possible to launch united movement on the issue.

On International Relations

Over the period of years international relations of CITU has been on rapid increase. Bonds of friendship and interaction is being established with trade unions of many countries with whom CITU did not have been contacts earlier.

During the period since last working committee meeting, CITU has the opportunity of welcoming a four member trade union delegation of senior level leaders of All China Federation of Trade Unions who visited India in the month of

A four member delegation from COSATU(South Africa) also visited India in the month of May 1993 and they visited different parts of our country and had interaction with our unions there. We could organise a grand reception of COSATU delegations involving other Central Trade Unions including INTUC.

A one member delegation from Cuban Trade Union(CTC) consisting of comrade Joaquin Bernal also visited India during early November and had close interaction with CITU. In Calcutta also reception was organised by CITU for the Cuban leader.

Besides above, we have also welcomed the trade union delegation from Australian Trade Union Congress consisting of Rob Meechum, and Donna White, during November 24th to 3rd December 1993, who besides the CITU centre also visited Bombay, Dhanbad and Calcutta and had interaction with our unions and the leadership there.

Also a three member delegation from General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions(GEFONT) paid visit to our CITU centre and had discussion with us on many issues of common interest.

During the same period, CITU had the occasion of sending delegation to many international meet. At the invitation of Kilusang Mayo Uno(KMU) the Philippines Trade Union organisations delegation consisting of Com.Ramanika Gupta and Com.Sukomal Sen visited Manila to attend the May-Day programme organised by KMU.

In the month of September, Com.Chittabrata Majumdar, secretary CITU attended the coordination meeting of Indian ocean region trade unions at Kualalampur at Malaysia and had detail interaction with Malayesian trade unions.

Com.P K Ganguly, Secretary CITU also attended the Asian seminar on unemployment and development organised by All China Federation of Trade Unions in China held in May 1993 and made useful contribution there.

Presently, a three member delegation of CITU consisting of Com.Kanai Banerjee, Secretary CITU Shakti Prasanna Bhattacharya and Kashmir Singh Thakur is on way to China at the invitation of ACFTU.

A three member delegation of comrades Mihir Ganguly, Sadhan Kanjilal and Kausher Ali visited Bangladesh at the invitation of

Agricultural workers Union at their conferecne during November. They contacted other central trade unions in Daka and paid a visit to Chittagong. Comrade Amalendu Ghatak General Council member along with a representative of INTUC and AITUC visited Uzbekistan and Kazhakstan in the third week of November for one week and held discussions with trade union leadership. It was agreed to develop more mutual relations.

Comrade M K Pandhe attended the Fifth meeting of Palnners in Asia on Employment held at Bangkok on 29th to 30th November 1993 and contributed on all the topics under discussion in the workshop.

We are having regular correspondances with many trade union organisations all over the world and our contacts are also increasing. Notable is that the role of CITU in uniting the struggle of Indian working class against the World Bank/IMF policies have left congnozable impression on many trade unions abroad which has contributed to our increase in contacts with many trade unions all over the world. Such contracts has led to solidarity action in support of the struggle of Indian working class abroad.

The CGT of France and even another TU centre of France have organised demonstration and meetings in support of Bharat Bandh of 9th September. We have received solidarity messages in support of our strike actions also from trade unions of Greece and Denmark. The CGT has also sent \$1000 through us towards the relief of Earth Quake victims of Maharashtra.

Our relations and contacts of many constituents of ICFTU also have been increasing. Despite ideological differences, these contacts enables CITU to find common grounds of cooperation in present day world situation. Consequent upon deepening crisis of world capitalism in the backdrop of deep-rooted recession, the effort of the capitalist class to pass on its burden to working class of the respective countries both in the developed and the third world through IMF/World Bank and different other mechanism have placed the working people all over the world before severe onslaught on their rights and living conditions. The globalisation process of multinational capital is adding fuel to such situation. Such a situation is creating reality for many ICFTU affiliated trade unions both in advanced and the developing countries to become increasingly vocal against onslaught of transnational capital IMF and World Bank machinations of stripping the trade unions of all its

rights and withdrawal and/or reduction of social welfare benefits etc. And this is creating more and more common of grounds for the entire trade union movement to come close on issues of common concern.

The CITU has also developed close relation with commonwealth Trade Union Council (CTUC) which operates from TUC headquarters at London. The CITU has been organising joint workshop in association with CTUC on various aspects and methodology of trade union education since last few years.

During the current year CITU had already held a planning workshop with CTUC at Delhi. In pursuance to the said plan already two regional workshop were held on education methodology in trade union in Bhubaneswar (1-5 Nov) and Cochin (15-19 Nov) and similar workshops would also be held in Chandigarh (7-11 Feb 1994) Noida (6-10 Dec 1993) and Jaipur (17-21 Jan 1994) during Besides a workshop on 'New Technology and its impact on working class' was held during 27th September-1st October at Haldia in association with CTUC, where representatives from the unions of 17 major industries participated and useful interaction took place, on which separate report is being circulated. It was decided to hold a review workshop on the same subject during 8th- 12 April 1994 at Raniganj, to deal on the matter in further details. There is also a programme to hold workshop on industrial hazards in association with CTUC. In all these joint workshop CTUC provides the necessary assistance and the methodology of running the workshop. The subject matters are dealt on the basis of policy approach of CITU in the respective areas.

BTR Memorial Fund

Though the Bangalore General Council meeting had given a call to collect BTR memorial Fund by 19th December 1993 the 89th Birthday of Comrade B T Ranadive, we have not received the detailed reports of the steps taken by the state committees. Since the amount received at the centre is negligible we have to review our fund collection drive.

Meanwhile collection of funds towards Maharashtra earthquake relief fund came to the forefront due to sudden national tragedy. The stupendous task of providing relief to the victims of the unprecedented tragedy had to be complete in a time bound frame which created unavoidable situation in this regard.

However, despite this some state committees have taken certain steps in the matter. It is necessary to make a review of the work done so far so that we can decide the manner in which the collection

drive can be completed as soon as possible. It is hoped the working committee will find some time to discuss this important matter and take suitable steps to fulfill the need for a fitting memorial for our founder President.

Forward to the Eighth Conference Of CITU

Following the discussions in the Working Committee meeting at Bhubaneswar, the Bihar State Committee has agreed to host the Eighth Conference of the CITU at Patna from 3rd to 7th March 1994. The meeting of the Bihar State Committee meeting held at Jamshedpur on November has already constituted a Reception Committee to make the conference a grand success. Despite great difficulties the Bihar State Committee has decided to take this heavy responsibility on their shoulders but preparations are going on well. A budget of Rs. 15 lakhs is being prepared and the State Committee has already commenced the drive for collection of funds. A detailed report of the preparations will be placed by the State Committee in the Working Committee meeting.

To supplement the resources for the conference the Bihar State Committee is proposing to publish a Souvenir on the occasion of the Conference. All State Committees are requested to help by way of collection of advertisements for the souvenir. The Reception Committee is contemplating holding cultural programs alongwith the Conference every day. All the State Committees should arrange to send sending cultural troupes in their states so that effective cultural programmes from all the states are organised in a planned manner.

As we discussed earlier the size of the total participants in the conference cannot be more than 2500. The working committee will decide the modalities of election the delegation to the Conference. In conformity with the CITU's policies of emphasizing the need for participation of more and more women in the T U activities the CITU secretariat would like to propose that a minimum of 10 per cent of the delegation from each state should consist of working women. The women delegates participating in the conference along with some additional delegates from Bihar and adjoining states can attend as delegates to the Convention of Working Women to be held on 2nd March 1994. It is hoped that the Working Committee meeting will endorse the proposal.

The CITU Secretariat has decided to invite about 20 delegates from foreign countries. Due to financial constraints relating to

extension of hospitality it would not be possible to invite more delegates to participate in the Conference.

Comrades,

The present economic and political situation in the country demands more active role by the CITU in developing united movements of the working class and other mass organisations. The forthcoming period is bound to witness much bigger struggles to resist the offensive of the capitalist class while the pressure of IMF and the World Bank to subjugate our economy is bound to evoke more and more mass actions. We have to tone up our organisational frame work to meet the challenging situation.

The Eighth Conference should generate confidence among all the delegates to march forward with greater enthusiasm in building more powerful and militant actions of the toiling masses so that we can squarely defeat the machinations of imperialist powers against our struggle for self-reliance and of the communal and divisive forces to disrupt the unity and integrity of the country.

— **M.K. PANDHE**

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