



THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITU

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A Great And Victorious Strike

By B. T. Ranadive

President, CITU

THE SUCCESSFUL END TO THE STRIKE OF THE loco workers led by the All India Loco Running Staff Association constitutes an outstanding achievement of the railway workers' movement. Perhaps never since Independence did the railway workers achieve such direct and outright success as a result of struggle. The unity of the workers, the organisational skill of the loco leaders, the determination of the workers not to yield before the repressive measures of the Government resulted in an inspiring victory for them.

The workers fought for very just and minimum demands. They demanded eight hours' work a day instead of the 14 hours imposed on them by the bureaucratic reactionary Board.

They demanded recognition for their organisation and also put forward other demands of immediate importance and interest to the workers.

Compelled to resort to direct action for saving themselves from sweated labour, for the right to organise, the workers acted with unprecedented unity and militancy which overtook the administration and the government by surprise. The rail system was more or less paralysed on all railways except the Central and certain sections of some other railways. The railway Moghuls soon woke up to the situation. They and the Railway Minister had to yield before unity and solidarity of the workers. Negotiations were opened. The government agreed to reduce the hours of work from 14 to 10 which meant a big victory for the workers. It agreed to withdraw all victimisation measures, release all those arrested under the DIR. It agreed to open talks with the representatives of the Loco Running Staff Association for settling the remaining demands.

But the Government did not yield before launching repressive measures, uttering threats and ultimatums and circulating lies and slanders against the workers to prejudice their case before the public.

Some busybodies, some reformist and revisionist leaders, while formally supporting the strike created confusion by acting as the messenger boys of the Minister. Instead of calling upon the workers

to remain firm, they certified the sincerity of the minister and suggested that the strike be called off unconditionally leaving all the demands for talks after the strike. A number of Right C.P. MPs with their publicity—? hunting statements and desire to appear as the leaders of the strike played this role which would have undermined the morale of the strikers had the leadership not been firm and united.

The leaders of the AIRF and the NFIR who always act as the agents of the railway board did their best to prevent negotiations and opposed a settlement on the basis of eight hours day. They were fully backed by the bureaucrats of the Railway Board who even during the strike refused to shed the illusion that the AIRF and the NFIR alone represented the workers.

Scandalised

But exactly the opposite happened. The entire nation felt scandalised by the fact that the workers were made to work for fourteen hours. The people supported their cause. All opposition parties joined hands in the Parliament to demand justice for the workers. The CITU and other central trade unions, the organisations of Central employees and all democratic forces attacked the government for its reactionary and repressive policies. Even the press was critical of the dishonest policies pursued by the Rly. Board, especially its policy of dealing only with organisations recognised by it.

The isolation of the Railway

Board and the Railway ministry was complete.

The firmness of the workers and their leaders combined with the widespread popular support gave them a tremendous and deserving victory. The popular support seemed to have its impact on the inner circles of the government; otherwise the Labour Minister and his department would not have played an active role in settling the dispute.

They were able to secure this historic victory because in the first place, they broke away from the treacherous group of the reformist leadership of the AIRF. Time and again, the reformist leaders betrayed the locomen at the bidding of their masters. The exclusive and arbitrary recognition granted to the AIRF was a device of the Board to keep the workers under the reformist grip. But the loco workers saw through it and formed a separate organisation free from the agents of the Railway Board. They nursed it; they built unity at grassroots level. They took collective decisions and pushed them through with one mind. The leaders evaded arrests and continued to build and strengthen unity during the strike. They built an apparatus which could communicate all over India within a few hours. It is this organisation skill combined with popular support that earned them their victory.

The locomen's strike has unmasked the criminal role of the Railway Board which must be branded for involving the country in a strike in the midst of a serious economic situation

and imposing a loss of crores of rupees on the country's finances. Its labour policy, its policy of recognition stands out as a policy of deceit, of nursing yesmen and favourites and not of collective bargaining with the real representatives of the employees. It is this anti-working class policy that has been responsible for the wide discontent among the railway workers and a series of lightning strikes. The country cannot afford to have this reactionary agency at the head of the railway communications system. The sooner these medieval fat—? salaried autocrats are made to retire, the better.

Provocation

The loco workers and the public must also realise that the railway officials are doing their best to sabotage the settlement and give provocations to workers. Every provocation is being offered to push the workers to desperation. Let the people be warned against it.

The Locomen must consolidate the fruits of their victory. The mighty enthusiasm generated by the victorious strike, the solidarity and consciousness created by it and the bond of common suffering must be utilised to build an impregnable organisation embracing thousands and spread over all railways. The weaker sections must be sought out and organised.

Besides they should not regard their victory as their exclusive achievement. It has galvanised all sections of railway workers. It is the duty of locomen to develop solid ties of unity with other sections, help them build unity and struggle for common demands. The victory enjoins on the loco association to act as the leading force of all railwaymen. Let them rise to their new responsibility. ■

Port Workers' Grim Struggle

Led by the Port and Shore Mazdoor Union (CITU) 800 Cargo-handling workers of six categories at the Calcutta Port are on continuous strike since July 23 for their 7-point demands including payment of Equation Allowance and Special Pay, Incentive Allowance, confirmation of canal staff etc.

To express support for the striking workers 7000 Cargo-handling shore workers of the Calcutta port went on a day's token strike on August 24. On the day of the strike, armed anti-socials led by the leaders of the recognised Congress Union launched fierce attacks on the striking workers injuring several leaders and workers of the CITU Union, including women workers. The Police as usual remained passive spectators. The Port and Shore Mazdoor Union, the Forward Seamen's Union and the CITU have condemned this attack and supported the struggle of the port workers.

Lock-out At National Rubber

About 3500 workers of National Rubber Manufacturing Co. in Calcutta have been carrying on a grim struggle since May 21 last against the illegal lock-out declared by the management. The lock-out was imposed after the workers refused to accept the imposition of the recommendations of the National Productivity Council resulting in increase of work-load on workers and reduction of work-force.

In the several tripartite meetings held after the declaration of lock-out, the Indian

National Rubber Manufacturers' Workers' Union (CITU)—the most representative union—was not invited. The workers were represented by two rival Congress Unions and the AITUC Union masquerading as the Workers' Union.

At the tripartite meetings these unions surrendered the interests of the workers and joined the conspiracy of the management. As a result, the Government has now sent the anti-worker proposals of the management to a Tribunal and the management lifted the lock-out on August 25 in response to a Government directive. At a workers' meeting held on August 24, the leaders of the Workers' Union (CITU) condemned the role played by the other unions and rejected the terms for lifting the lock-out as this will only protect the interests of the management.

Workers of Kesoram Rayons Fighting Lock-out

About 3500 workers of Birla's Kesoram Rayons in Hooghly Dist. are fighting for the last 3 months against the illegal lock-out declared by the management on May 13 last. (See report in July 1973 issue of *The Working Class*)

Trade unions and mass organisations of students, youth, women etc. of the district and other parts of the State have come out in support of the locked-out workers.

Since May, several tripartite meetings have been held but these have failed to produce a settlement. The management continues to stick to its adamant attitude encouraged by the inaction of the Government which has merely issued some empty threats. In the meantime, the leaders of the INTUC Union

have been forced by their workers to start dialogue with the CITU and AITUC Unions and support the struggle against lock-out.

TAMILNADU

BHEL Agreement—A Surrender

In the Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd. (BHEL) the Government of India has constituted a Negotiating Committee to negotiate revision of wages and other basic demands of the workers. The Committee includes representatives of the management and of AITUC, INTUC and the recognised Unions in its four plants at Hardwar, Bhopal, Ramchandrapuram and Tiruchirappalli. Despite representations, the CITU has been deliberately excluded.

Recently the Committee announced an interim relief of Rs. 25 to 30 for the workers. Although the leaders of the INTUC, AITUC and the recognised unions are vying with each other to take credit for this, they have not divulged at what price this has been achieved.

It now appears from the minutes of the Committee meetings held on 14th and 15th June last, that the interim relief was part of a 12-point agreement under which the leaders of the Trade Unions gave a secret undertaking to the management agreeing to an increase in the work-load of the workers in return for whatever wage-rise the management may concede. In fact the leaders of the AITUC, INTUC and recognised Unions not only agreed to improvement in productivity of workers and evolution of satisfactory plant level schemes for the same, they also pledged their help for working out such schemes.

The CITU strongly condemns this shameful surrender which amounts to abrogation of the demand for need-based minimum wage and acceptance of the Government's wage-freeze policy through the back door.

ANDHRA PRADESH

Bundh Against Rising Prices

A successful one-day "Andhra Bundh" was observed on August 24 to protest against spiralling prices and rampant black-marketing etc. The call for the bundh was given jointly by the State Units of CITU, AITUC, HMP, Bank Employees' Federation and A. P. All Shops Employees' Federation supported by the CPI(M), CPI and the two Socialist Parties.

Preceding the bundh, a month-long programme of dharanas and demonstrations were organised by the CITU City Councils and the All Parties Price Resistance Committee at Hyderabad, Visakhapatnam, Nellore, Rajahmundry, Vijayawada and many other centres.

Growing Struggles

A lock out was declared at the HMT factory, Hyderabad on August 2 after all its 3000 workers had gone on a spontaneous strike and had gheraoed the General Manager to protest against the dismissal of three leaders of the Staff & Workers' Union. A year earlier, following assault on one of these leaders by two members of a rival union, the management had suspended the victim of the

assault as well as the culprits. But when the rival union lost its hold on workers and the Staff & Workers Union grew stronger, the management vindictively dismissed the three leaders on August 1 last. Following the strike, the workers carried on a stay-in at the factory until, at the intervention of the Collector, a settlement was reached and the lock-out lifted on August 3.

The entire employees of the Coromandel Fertilisers Ltd. are on an indefinite strike from August 20 to protest against stoppage of all promotions from this year by the management and their refusal to pay Bonus even though the Company earned a huge profit. All the units of the factory, except one ammonia unit, are paralysed. Conciliation efforts have failed.

All the workers of Gammon (India) Ltd., contractors of the Naval Dry Dock Construction in Visakhapatnam, are on strike from August 6, along with relay hunger-strike, demanding reinstatement of six discharged drivers and implementation of the 1971 agreement between the Company and the Employees' Union.

The recent strike of the Loco Running Staff was a complete success in the Vijayawada Division of South Central Railway. About 90 per cent of locomen in Vijayawada and 450 out of 500 in Rajahmundry joined the strike and passenger and goods train services were paralysed. Several leaders including the General Secretary of the S. C. Railway Employees' Union were arrested. ■

UCTU Secretariat To Meet

The next meeting of the Secretariat of the United Council of Trade Unions will be held at Coimbatore on 10th and 11th September 1973.

JUTE GROWERS AND WORKERS MAKE JOINT MOVE

Jute growers and jute mill workers of West Bengal have made a joint move towards securing a fair deal for themselves through what will be for the first time a united action. A few important decisions on this issue were taken by a conference held on August 18 and 19 at Baduria, 24 Parganas, under the joint auspices of the Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor Union and the Provincial Kisan Sabha.

A good deal of enthusiasm was evinced at the two-day Conference which was presided over by Hare Krishna Konar, General Secretary of AIKS. It voiced two main demands, the first called upon the government to purchase the entire jute produce at a minimum of Rs. 80 per maund; the second called for the nationalisation of the jute industry without compensation.

Speakers at the Conference and later at the open session, who included Jyoti Basu, Sudhin Kumar and Kamal Sarkar, declared that the price Rs. 80 was the minimum jute growers could accept. They reminded the audience that the jute industry had earned a total foreign exchange of Rs. 265 crores last year.

It may be recalled here that the government has fixed the ridiculous amount of Rs. 58 per maund as the procurement price of jute in a year of bumper harvest. Against this, the INTUC has been demanding a minimum price of Rs. 75.

Reports From Unions

Agreement At IEL

The 125-day old strike at the Indian Explosives Ltd., Kanpur, ended on July 18 with the management signing an agreement with the IEL Employees' Union (CITU).

It may be recalled that the workers refused to accept new manning scales through which the management had been seeking to foist increased workloads on them. The refusal was followed by suspension and chargesheeting on a large scale leading eventually to arrests of a number of workers.

In the face of repression, however, workers' resistance grew. As was seen during the recent jute strike, Kanpur's working class stood solidly by the striking workers, holding demonstrations and organising help. On July 13, a big rally of IEL workers was addressed by Md. Ismail, M.P. and Vice-President of the CITU.

The agreement provides for the withdrawal of suspension orders and chargesheets served on all but 16 workers of the factory. The manning scales would also be referred to arbitration.

IEL workers who went back to work on July 19 are not giving up the fight until their 16 comrades are reinstated.

CITU Demands Takeover of Martin Burn

Due to the callousness and inefficiency of the management, 500 employecs of the Martin Burn Ltd. are facing retrenchment. Services of 13 workers of the Electrical department have

already been terminated. The Company has decided to wind up business although orders worth crores of rupees are lying with it.

The Martin Burn Employees' Union has submitted a memorandum to the Chief Minister of West Beugal demanding takeover of the entire Martin Burn Group of plants and the withdrawal of retrenchment orders on 13 workers. The intervention of the Union Government has also been sought by the CITU.

Solidarity Actions by Goa Workers

Led by the Goa Shipyard Workers of Goa Shipyard have expressed their firm support and solidarity with the 3500 workers of Birla's Kesoram Rayons in Hooghly Dist. (West Bengal) who are facing an illegal lock-out declared by the Company since May last. In a letter addressed to the West Bengal Governor they have demanded immediate lifting of the illegal lock-out. The Goa Trade and Commercial Workers' Union has also written a similar letter to the State Governor.

The Goa State Trade Union Council has protested against the illegal lock-out declared by the managements of National Rubber Company in Calcutta and Birla's Keshoram Rayons in Hooghly (W. Bengal) Several unions affiliated to the Council, including the Murmagoa Water-front Workers Union and Chowgule Employees' Union, have Rs. 175 as help for the locked-out National Rubber Workers and Rs. 200 for workers of Kehoram Rayon.

T. U. International Supports Kesoram Workers

The Trade Union International of Oil and Chemical Allied Workers has expressed their support for the workers of Kesoram Rayons in West Bengal who are fighting against lock-out. From Budapest, the General Secretary of the organisation has sent a message to the CITU-West Bengal Committee expressing solidarity with the fighting Kesoram workers. The TUI has also appealed to other affiliated unions in other countries to support the struggle.

In Brief

The management of J. Stone & Co., Calcutta, has concluded an agreement with the Workmen's Union (CITU) providing for, among other things, a pay-rise of Rs. 47.50 and reinstatement of retrenched workers.

Under the banner of the Dhanbad District Co-ordination Committee of Workers & Employees' Associations, a massive demonstration was staged in front of the offices of the Deputy Commissioner at Dhanbad (Bihar), on July 11. The demonstration was in support of a 9-point Charter of Demands.

Harbour workers at Port Blair (Andamans) offered hunger strike on August 13 and 14 demanding, among other things, reinstatement of several retrenched workers. Later Government employees, led by the Andaman Nicobar Government employees & Workers Fedaration (ANGEWF), boycotted Independence Day function and held black flag demonstrations.

Bombay Textile Workers' Convention

Sponsored jointly by the Mill Mazdoor Union (CITU), Girni Kamgar Union (AITUC) and Kapad Kamgar Sanghatana (Lal Nishan), a Convention of textile workers in Bombay was held on August 15. The Convention was attended by 2000 delegates.

The Convention took place in the background of the Bombay textile workers' continuing struggle against 7-day week (reported in August 1973 issue of *The Working Class*) as well as their long-standing demands for wage rise, higher bonus, etc.

The Convention framed a 13-point Charter of Demands including minimum wage of Rs. 425 (inclusive of D.A.), minimum bonus of 20 percent, holiday on Sunday and one month's paid leave per year with provision for accumulation up to 3 months or cash in lieu thereof.

The textile mill-owners have long been denying these demands on the plea of rising costs of production and falling production and profits. This has however been knocked hollow by the figures of some important mills. These show that in 1972 these mills made profits ranging from 60 to 1500 per cent. This has happened in a year when raw cotton prices remained stable due to a bumper crop. The obvious conclusion is that these fabulous profits were earned by rising price of several types of fabric and by depriving the

workers of their legitimate share in the fruits of their labour. No wonder, workers' wages have remained almost stationary at Rs. 290 for a long time.

After the Convention, a mass rally of workers was held in the evening addressed by S.A. Dange (AITUC), P. Ramamurti (CITU) and Dutta Deshmukh (Lal Nishan), among others.

Addressing the rally, Ramamurti said that since independence the workers have helped in increasing production many times, but the only persons benefited thereby are those in the Government and the employers. The workers have been left high and dry through scarcity, inflation and black money. "They have produced and perished", he said and added that they

would not hesitate to call bundhs and strikes unless they were assured of their minimum needs.

Dange also called upon the workers to prepare for struggle to secure their demands.

CITU To Resist Moratorium On Strikes

The CITU has expressed grave concern at the reiteration of the call for 'moratorium on strike' by President V. V. Giri in his Independence Day-eve message to the nation.

In a statement issued on August 16, Jyoti Basu, Vice-President, CITU, condemned the import of this message and said that the plea of economic difficulties can no longer hoodwink the people who know that "all these difficulties have been the direct result of the anti-people policies pursued by the Government".

The statement added that, "instead of changing the policies to suit the interests of the people and making strikes unnecessary, the Government chooses to doggedly pursue the same discredited policy and hit the people hard who dare to fight these policies."

The CITU has called upon the working class to fight unitedly against all attacks on their living standards and assert their fundamental right to strike. It has also appealed to other Central T. U. Organisations to come together and raise their voice in support of the workers' right to strike.

Textile Mills Earn Fabulous Profits

The profit figures derived from the balance sheets of some important textile mills in Bombay show that in 1972 they earned profits ranging from 60 to 1500 per cent. The percentage of profits of some important mills are : Vikram Mills—1500 per cent ; Bowreah Mills—750 per cent ; Kohinoor Mills—371 per cent ; Elgin Mills—254 per cent ; Bohari Mills—250 per cent ; Navsari Mills—245 per cent ; and New Great Mills—190 per cent.

Supreme Court Creates An Army of Non-Workers

THE Supreme Court has progressively scaled down the scope of section 2(j) of the Industrial Disputes Act which defines industry. Due to the successive judgements of the Court, educational institutions, clubs, hospitals, and Firms of Solicitors and Chartered accountants are excluded.

It looked in the beginning that the Supreme Court would give extended meaning to the words used in the definition of industry. In *The State of Bombay vs. Hospital Mazdoor Sabha* (1), Mr. Justice Gajendragadkar, speaking for the Court, gave a legitimate interpretation to that definition. In the Act, Industry is defined as meaning any business, trade, undertaking, manufacture or calling of employers and including any calling, service, employment, handicraft, industrial occupation or avocation of workmen. According to the Judge, the definition did not necessarily include any economic activity for profit or gain. "...an activity systematically or habitually undertaken for the production or distribution of goods or for the rendering of material services to the community at large or a part of such community with the help of employees is an undertaking. Such an activity generally involves the co-operation of the

employer and the employees; and its object is the satisfaction of material human needs. It must be organised in a manner in which trade or business is generally organised or arranged. It must not be casual nor must it be for oneself nor for pleasure."

In coming to the aforesaid interpretation of the meaning of the word "industry", the learned Judge relied on the forceful observations of Mr. Justice Isaacs, though a dissenting opinion but till then followed in the industrial tribunals of this

Arun Prokas Chatterjee

country and also approved in the Bombay High Court decision against which this case was an appeal, in the case of *Federated State School Teachers' Association of Australia vs. The State of Victoria* (2). In that case, though the majority decision was against holding the educational activities of the State to be industry and also refused to consider the occupation of teachers so employed as an industrial occupation, the dissenting opinion of Isaacs, J., has always struck a responsive chord in India. The judge held —

"Industrial disputes occur when in relation to operations

in which capital and labour are contributed in co-operation for the satisfaction of human wants or desires, those engaged in co-operation dispute as to the basis to be observed by the parties engaged, respecting either a share of the product or any other terms or conditions of their co-operation."

It is true that Mr. Justice Gajendragadkar made reservations about the position of educational institutions and observed, "...we are not expressing any opinion on the question as to whether running an educational institution would be an industry under the Act..." It was surprising however, though more surprises were in the offing, that, in the case of *The University of Delhi vs. Ram Nath and others* (3), the judge refused to extend the benefit of the Act to the employees of the University. In that case, the workmen were the two drivers of the University who had been retrenched without complying with the provisions of Section 25F of the Act. The judge dismissed their case by a circuitous process of reasoning and, first of all, arrived at the finding that the definition of workmen in section 2 (5) of the Act did not include teachers and secondly, held that if the majority of the workmen in a University or an Educational Institution were teachers it could not have been the policy of the legislature that "education should be treated as industry for the benefit of a very minor and insignificant number of persons who may be employed by educational institutions to

carry on the duties of the subordinate staff." Of course, the Judge has padded his judgement with the well-worn sentiments that "teaching and teachers are, no doubt, assigned a high place of honour..." and that, therefore, "it is not surprising that the Act should have excluded education from its scope..." What surprises us most is, however, that the judge turns volte face on the same opinion of Mr. Justice Isaacs on which he had relied in the earlier case of *State of Bombay vs. Hospital Mazdoor Sabha* (1). I cannot help referring to certain observations of Mr. Justice Isaacs in the Australian case which Mr. Gajendragadkar himself quotes in the judgement under consideration. According to Isaacs, J., education provided by the State constitutes in itself an independent industrial operation as a service rendered to the community and further that there is at least as much reason for including the educational establishments as labour services, as there is to include insurance companies as capital services. According to him, "in that compound process, two facts emerge with respect to education. One is that industrial education is less and less left to apprenticeship system and the other is that the efficiency of the worker is generally directly affected by his education." (2) In other words, whatever pertains to the complex social process of production of wealth and satisfaction of the material needs of man in society must be regarded as a part of the industrial activity of the society. It is sad to note that the Supreme

Court could not bring itself to accept the scientifically correct opinion to Isaacs, J., about education and the educational institutions.

Slide Back

Since that judgement, there has been a progressive slide back by the Supreme Court and the present position is that they have even gone back on the decision in the case of *State of Bombay vs. Hospital Mazdoor Sabha* (1). In a descending order, they have put clubs (see *Madras Gymkhana Club Employees Union vs. Management of the Gymkhana Club*) (4) and sports organisations (see *Cricket club of India vs. Bombay Labour Union*) (5) out of the benefit of the Industrial Disputes Act. In the case of the *Management of Safdar Jung Hospital vs. Kuldip Sing Sethi* (6), the Court has held that hospital is not an industry within the meaning of section 2 (j) of the Industrial Disputes Act and the employees therein are not therefore workmen entitled to get the benefit of that Act. The circle is completed by overruling the earlier case of *State of Bombay vs. Hospital Mazdoor Sabha* (1).

In coming to this present position, the Court has adopted the idealistic posture befitting a decadent period of capitalism. The learned Judges have held that services mean only material

services and not such services as depend largely or wholly upon the contribution of professional knowledge, skill or dexterity for the production of a result and, therefore, "services rendered by the employees in aid of professional men do not make them workmen within the Act because such services do not help produce material goods or wealth or material services. *National Union of Commercial Employees vs. M. R. Meher* (7). The learned Judges managed to forget that the services which is rendered by, say, a solicitors' firm produce tangible wealth in the shape of fat fees and other incomes.

The greatest mischief has, however, been committed by the judgement on the clubs where, just because they do not have "an existence apart from the members" and the services rendered are to the members themselves "for their own pleasure and amusement," the workmen will have to slave themselves and be devoid of the benefits of the Industrial Disputes Act.

In West Bengal, during the United Front Government, a comprehensive statute was passed by the West Bengal Legislature inter alia to get rid of these judgements and extend the benefit of the Act to all workmen, but, it is learnt, the President of this "progressive" government has withheld his assent to the statute.

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1. *All India Reporter* (1960) Supreme Court 610
 2. *41 Commonwealth Law Reports* 559
 3. *All India Reporter* (1963) Supreme Court 1873
 4. " " " (1968) " " 554
 5. " " " (1969) " " 276
 6. " " " (1970) " " 1407
 7. " " " (1962) " " 1080

University Employees' Conference Calls For Struggle

THE Fourth Conference of the All India University Employees' Confederation was held at Sambalpur on 6th to 8th July, 1973. Com. George Fernandes, HMP leader and Convener of UCTU presided.

The Confederation, to which Employees' Associations of forty-eight major Universities in India are affiliated, has been agitating for long demanding amendment of the Industrial Disputes Act to cover the hundreds of thousands of employees of the universities and other educational institutions in the country. It also submitted a Charter of Demands, framed by its Gauhati Conference in 1970, demanding better wages and improvement in their working and living conditions.

In a resolution, passed unanimously, the Conference condemned the callous attitude of the Central and state Governments towards the genuine demands of the University employees. In spite of the unanimous recommendation of the National Commission of Labour and assurances given by the President of India and by successive Union Labour Ministers, nothing has been done up till now to amend the I. D. Act to cover employees of educational institutions. As a result, the University employees continue to be victims of the dictatorial and vindictive attitude of the authorities who are taking

advantage of their helpless condition to victimise and harass them.

The demands of the employees for better pay scales and working conditions also continue to be utterly neglected. There are Universities where employees receive only Rs. 129 per month as salary. The D.A. is inadequate and has no link with the rising cost of living, and other fringe benefits like housing and medical facilities are totally absent.

The Conference, in its resolution, called upon the employees in all Universities in India to go on a day's token strike on August 23 and to prepare for a long-

drawn struggle to realise their urgent demands which include amendment of labour laws to cover employees of Universities and other educational institutions, settlement of their Charter of Demand of 1970, payment of bonus to all employees of educational institutions, scrapping of all repressive laws, etc.

The Conference welcomed emergence of the UCTU as a focal point of working class unity and an instrument of mass struggle and expressed the resolve to associate itself with the UCTU to join the mainstream of T. U. movement in the country.

The Conference also elected the National Executive of the Confederation including George Fernandes as the President and Anil Roy Chowdhury as the Secretary General. ■

AUGUST 28 : UNITY DAY

Central & State Govt. Employees Plan United Move

IN accordance with the decisions of the Convention Against Recommendations of the 3rd Pay Commission and For Bonus for All, held in New Delhi on July 25-26 under the sponsorship of UCTU, the leaders of the All India State Government Employees' Federation (AISGFF) and the Confederation of Central Government Employees and Workers (CCGEW) met recently in New Delhi to chalk out a programme for consolidating the unity among rank and file of all Government Employees' Orga-

nisations to fight against the retrograde Pay Commission recommendations, for Bonus for All and other demands.

As a first step, they have decided that August 28 should be observed as 'Unity Day' throughout the country through joint processions rallies and demonstrations. It has also been decided that before August 28, State-level 'Unity Conventions' should be sponsored by the State units of the two Federations as well as Co-ordination Committees and State units of other Central

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More Reports On Observance Of Anti-Unemployment Day

SOME reports on the massive observance of "Anti-unemployment Day" on July 23, at the call of the United Council of Trade Unions (UCTU), was published in the last issue of *The Working Class*. Since then, reports have been pouring in from a large numbers of centres throughout the country giving details of the enthusiastic observance of the Day by all sections of toiling people.

Punjab : Anti-unemployment Day was observed successfully at Ludhiana, Jullundur, Chandigarh, Nangal, Pathankot and other centres.

In Ludhiana, a mass 'dharna' was organised under the joint auspices of CITU, HMP, AIIEA, SFI, Naujawan Sabha and some Trade Unions. In the evening, a demonstration was held which was addressed by Hari Singh Kang (CITU) and P. N. Bhatia (AIIEA). In Jullundur, a big procession of engineering workers and bhatta majdoors marched through the streets and submitted their Charter of Demands to the Dy. Commissioner before holding a demonstration in observance of the Day. It was organised by the Punjab Metal Mazdoor Union (CITU).

In Nangal, at the initiative of the Ekta Mazdoor Union (CITU), a United Trade Union Council had been formed in August 1972 comprising 16 organisations, including some unions dominated by INTUC and BMS. The Council met in early July and decided to observe the Day jointly. It also invited the INTUC and AITUC unions to join the programme but there was no response from them.

Campaigns through gate meetings and leaflets were also conducted extensively to make the Anti-unemployment Day a success. On the day, a big procession of Dam workers, Central and State Government employees, insurance employees and unemployed youth paraded the streets to converge in a mass rally. Resolutions were adopted at the rally demanding compulsory registration and jobs for all unemployed, unemployment relief, etc.

In Pathankot, a public meeting was organised jointly by the Hydrel Workers' Union (CITU) and other unions of the Hydrel unit which adopted resolutions on unemployment and other pressing issues. In Chandigarh, a largely attended public meeting was organised by the Capital Workers' Union (CITU) to observe the Day.

Uttar Pradesh: Anti unemployment Day was observed in Kanpur under the auspices of the J.K. Rayon Workers' Union and J. K. Jute mill Mazdoor Panchayat both affiliated to CITU through separate programmes. A big meeting was held at the gate of the J. K. Rayon addressed, among others, by Suhashini Sehgal, President of the Workers' Union. The meeting adopted resolutions demanding jobs or unemployment relief for the jobless, inclusion of Right to Work as a fundamental right in the Constitution etc.

Similar meetings were held at the gate of J. K. Jute Mill on different shifts to observe the Day.

Orissa : The Day was observed successfully at Cuttack, Bolangir, Rourkella, Berhampore, Rayagada and other centres. In Rayagada, a big procession of workers was organised on the day by the Rayagada Taluk council (CITU) comprising of six local unions including the Motor Employees' Union, Rickshaw Drivers' Unions, Shop Employees Union and Indian Metal & Ferro-Alloys Ltd. Employees' Union. Meetings were held at three places of the town and postering and distribution of pamphlets on unemployment problem was conducted extensively.

Andhra Pradesh: Anti unemployment Day was observed with great enthusiasm at Vijayawada, Visakhapatnam, Nellore, Rajahmundry and many other centres.

In Vijayawada, a procession of railway workers was organised by the S. C. Railway Employees' Union which ended in a demonstration before the office of the Chief Electrical Engineer of the Railway Electrification Project and submitted a memorandum demanding filling up of vacancies and recruitments through proper method. In Visakhapatnam, a procession and demonstration was organised by the CITU City

Council, Unemployed Union, and Hindusthan Ship-yard Labour Union. Later, a largely attended public meeting was held.

In Kothagudam Collieries, a cycle procession and a public meeting were organised by the CITU City Council and SFI. Later a delegation submitted a memorandum to the Tehsildar. In Yellandu collieries, a meeting of unemployed persons was held followed by a procession and submission of a memorandum to the Tehsildar.

In Nellore, a procession went round the streets and ended in a demonstration organised jointly by the CITU, SFI, Youth League and Mahila Sangham. Later, a meeting was held addressed by V. Srihari (CITU) and others. In Hanumakonda (Warangal), a largely attended meeting was held to observe the Day.

In Rajahmundry, a Convention on Unemployment and Price-rise was organised on the Day with G. Balajidas (CITU) in the Chair. The Convention was addressed by College teachers, journalists and representatives of SSP and the Chamber of Commerce. In Machilipatnam a large procession of workers and employees of LIC, P & T, Municipality, Press, Railways, Central and State Governments and Andhra Scientific Co. was taken out in observance of the day. Later, a

public meeting was held to focus attention on the anti-people policies of the Government and demanding distribution of food and other essentials through fair price shops, selling of rice at 75 paise per kg. and use of DIR and MISA against hoarders and profiteers. On July 24, a delegation of T.U. representatives submitted to the Collector a memorandum incorporating these demands.

Rajasthan : The Day was observed successfully at Ajmer, Jodhpur, and other centres. In Jalore, the day was observed through a public meeting organised by the Northern Zone Insurance Employees' Association. At the meeting the unemployment problem was explained and resolutions adopted demanding job or unemployment relief for the jobless.

Kerala : The day was observed at Trivandrum, Calicut, Tirur, Mavoor and other centres. In Calicut, a big demonstration was held followed by a public meeting addressed by leaders of CITU, LIC, NGO Union and others. In Tirur, a similar demonstration was held. Led by the CITU union, workers of the Pulp and Fibre units of Gwalior Rayons in Mavoor held a big demonstration followed by a meeting.

Tamilnadu : The Day was observed at Madras, Coimbatore, Karur, Thanjavur and other

centres. In Thanjavur, a mammoth procession was organised by the Insurance Corporation Employees' Union (AIIEA), SFI, CITU and others. The procession ended in a mass rally and meeting before the Thanjavur Branch office of LIC addressed by leaders of CITU, AIIEA, NFPTE, Dakhina Railway Employees Union, SFI, Congress (0), ADMK and others.

Mysore : The Day was observed successfully at Mysore City, Gulbarga, Hubli, Dharwar and other centres. In Mysore City workers, under the leadership of the CITU unions, took out a demonstration which ended in a meeting at the gate of the Town Hall maidan. Resolutions were adopted at the meeting demanding jobs or relief for the unemployed. In Gulbarga, a meeting was organised by the M. S. K. Mills Workers' Union (CITU) and the M. S. K. Mills Naakar Sabha (HMP) to observe the day. The meeting was also attended by the representative of the MSRTC Employees' Union and P & T Union. A resolution was adopted demanding jobs or unemployment relief for the jobless and inclusion of Right to Work as a fundamental right in the Constitution. In Hubli, about 3000 workers of M. S. R. T. C., Kirloskar Electricals, Banks, P. & T. etc. marched in a big procession to a public meeting which was addressed by leaders of these unions. In Dharwar, a largely attended public meeting was held which was attended by LIC employees, Plywood factory workers and students. The meeting was presided over by Desh-

(On Page Thirteen)

Victory For Locomen

After 12 days of valiant struggle the Loco Running Staff achieved their victory. The decision to launch the struggle was taken by the All India Loco Running Staff Association (AILRSA) in their June meeting. Their demands included—(a) Reduction of duty hours ; (b) Scientific revision of mileage allowance ; (c) Protection of pay and allowance of medically decategorised staff ; (d) 'Equal work-equal pay' for Shunters and Firemen ; and (e) Cancellation of penal measures including withdrawal of DIR cases.

Aug. 1—2 : Led by the Action Committee, locomen all over the country swing into action from the midnight of August 1-2 through mass sick-leave movement.

Aug. 3 : All the railways except Central, Western and Eastern Railways affected. N. F. Railway worst hit. Railway Minister opposes movement stating that no notice of strike was served and that the movement was aimed at securing recognition only. B. T. Ranadive, President, CITU, issues statement condemning Minister's statement as a 'deliberate lie'.

Aug. 4 : Strike extends to more areas. B. T. Ranadive telegraphically protests against forcible use of Gangmen as Assistant Drivers. 150 locomen arrested in different areas.

Aug. 5 : More locomen join

movement. Railway authorities forced to cancel 460 non-suburban passenger trains and 35 per cent goods trains. Another 250 locomen arrested. Railway Minister agrees to discuss demands with leaders of AILRSA after withdrawal of struggle. P. Ramamurti, General Secretary CITU discusses the issue with the Union Labour Minister who agrees to start negotiations immediately. AIRF and NFIR oppose Locomen's struggle.

Aug. 6 : In the Lok Sabha, Railway Minister serves 48 hours' ultimatum for withdrawal of struggle. Samar Mukherjee, M.P. demands immediate talks without pre-condition. Leaders of AILRSA cancel trip to Delhi and reiterate determination to continue struggle till settlement. Other sections of Railwaymen come out in support of Locomen's struggle.

Aug. 7 : Struggle extends to Eastern Railway. More than 700 passenger trains cancelled. Goods trains, particularly coal movement, further affected. Number of arrested locomen rises to 700. In Malda (West Bengal) ladies from railway colony lathi-charged as they come out to protest against repression. Railway Minister faces angry protests from opposition in Rajya Sabha. Leaders of AILRSA threaten intensification of struggle unless arrested locomen released and demands settled within 48 hours.

Aug. 8 : Struggle intensified in all Railways. At Tundla, railway employees with family members lathi-charged. Other sections of railwaymen intensify solidarity actions. Railway Minister agrees to negotiations without pre-condition and release of arrested Action Committee members to facilitate talks. Action Committee leaders start reaching Delhi for talks.

Aug. 9 : Union Labour Minister starts negotiation with seven Action Committee members—M. R. Sabhapathy (President), P. K. Barua (General Secretary), M. Arumoy, A. Subramaniam, S. K. Dhar, R. P. Sharma, and P. K. Dutta Gupta. Three other members—B. D. Kumar, S. R. Jadav and A. S. D'Cruz could not reach Delhi by then. Another member H. S. Chowdhury in jail.

Aug. 10 : Action Committee members confer twice with Railway Minister. Settlement held up due to refusal of Government to agree to 8 hours' duty. More arrests of locomen. Attempts to run train with unskilled men leads to accidents in S. E. Railway and Western Railway. Leaders of different T.U. organisations express support for the struggle.

Aug. 11 : Struggle intensified and extends to newer areas. About 1000 locomen arrested so far. Railway Minister offers to reduce duty hours from 14 to 10 hours.

Aug. 12 : Further discussions with Labour Minister and Railway Minister. Settlement

reached late at night after marathon talks.

Aug. 13 : Struggle withdrawn. Railway Minister submits copy of agreement with leaders of locomen in Lok Sabha. Terms of settlement include : (a) Reduction of duty hours to 10 hours within six weeks ; (b) past victimisation to be cancelled and arrested locomen, excepting those against whom there are specific charges, to be released at once and cases against them withdrawn ; (c) period of struggle to be adjusted against leave ; (d) medically decategorised staff to be given pay and job protection ; (e) a Committee with representatives of AILRSA, Railway Board and Labour Ministry with the Deputy Railway Minister as Chairman, to start functioning immediately to evolve concrete methods of implementing the agreement.

Action Committee issues statement from Delhi congratulating Locomen and their family members for their heroic struggle and thankfully acknowledging support and help from the public, other categories of railwaymen, Trade unions and mass organisations.

CITU's Support To Locomen's Struggle

In a statement issued on August 3 (second day of the Loco-men's 12-day struggle), Com. B. T. Randive, President CITU extended all-out support to the struggle of the Loco Running Staff and their genuine demands.

He said that the widespread dislocation of train services following the mass sick-leave

movement of the Locomen was the "direct result of the refusal of the Railway authorities to consider the genuine grievances of the Loco-running staff".

"The Loco Running Staff Association has been rightly agitating for 8 hours duty, revision of mileage allowance, equal pay for equal work, protection of pay of medically de-categorised staff, treating their work as intensive and other demands, but instead of accepting them, the authorities resorted to vindictive measures against leading

activists." It is surprising that "even the assurances given to the staff by the Railway Minister that the DIR cases and other victimisation measures would be withdrawn are not being implemented."

While condemning the ban on strike in Railways for 6 months and the use of territorial army as black-legs, he appealed to other sections of railway workers to rally behind the locomen and called upon all the trade unions to support their demands. ■

Anti-unemployment Day

(From Centre Page)

pande (AIIEA) and addressed by among others, R. G. Sthalekar of Karnataka CITU.

Assam : The day was observed in Karimganj, Silchar and other places. In Silchar, the day was unitedly observed by various organisations at the call of the Cachar District Employees, Workers and Teachers Co-ordination Committee. A public meeting was held under the leadership of DYF, SFI and Krishak Sabha. Later, the DYF, SFI and Krishak Sabha organised a demonstration before the office of the Deputy Commissioner to submit a memorandum incorporating the demands.

Andaman : Under the auspices of the Andaman & Nicobar Government Employees and Workers Federation a largely attended meeting was held at Port Blair to observe the day. A resolution was adopted condemning the policies of the Government which has led to rising prices, unemployment, etc.

The resolution also demanded, among other things, jobs or unemployment relief for the jobless. ■

CITU Nomination To Committee & Seminars

The CITU Centre has nominated two of its Working Committee members Biren Roy and Gerald Pereira—to All India Trade Unions Committee on Family Planning.

Under the auspices of the I.L.O., the Central Board for Workers' Education has arranged for a National Workshop for Trade Union Officials on Welfare Tasks and Family Planning to be held in Bombay from August 27. Sudhin Kumar Vice-President, CITU and V. Vishwanatha Menon, Working Committee member have been nominated as participants in this Workshop (Seminar).

Dilip Mazumdar, President, Hindusthan Steel Employees' Union has been nominated as CITU representative in the Standing Committee on Safety for Steel Industry.

Rise In The Number Of Educated Unemployed

THE number of registered unemployed in the country, which was 70.48 lakhs at the end of January, 1973 (see June, 1973 issue of *The Working Class*), again took a big leap and reached 72.70 lakhs by the end of April, 1973. By the end of June it is estimated to have exceeded the 74 lakhs mark—a rise of about 5 per cent in as many months.

Out of this the number of educated unemployed, which was more than 26 lakhs and constituted 38 per cent of the total at the end of 1972, has also registered a big rise. More significant, however, is the educational composition of the registered educated job-seekers given in the following table :

Job-Seekers : Educational Composition June 1972

Educational Level/Faculties	Number		Total
	Men	Women	
Matriculates	12,47,292	2,37,812	14,85,104
Undergraduates	5,89,613	73,591	6,63,204
Graduates (total)	3,55,493	65,111	4,20,604
Arts	1,39,633	34,547	1,74,180
Science	1,06,515	13,704	1,20,219
Commerce	60,169	1,142	61,311
Engineering	18,231	206	18,437
Medical	3,020	816	3,836
Veternary	222	5	227
Education	17,124	13,928	31,052
Agriculture	7,441	33	7,474
Law	1,716	52	1,768
Others	1,422	678	2,100
Post-Graduates (total)	31,355	11,560	42,915
Arts	14,709	6,254	20,963
Science	8,476	2,052	10,528
Commerce	2,998	28	3,026
Engineering	377	2	379
Medical	107	33	140
Veternary	28	—	28
Education	2,521	2,548	5,069
Agriculture	620	4	624
Law	189	9	198
Others	1,330	630	1,960
TOTAL	22,23,753	33,88,074	26,11,827

(Source : *Indian Labour Statistics*, 1973/Labour Bureau)

Consumer Price Index Number

(Industrial Workers/Base 1960-100)

State/Centre	1973		
	Apr.	May	June
Andhra Pradesh			
Hyderabad	229	239	245
Assam			
Digboi	209	216	217
Bihar			
Jamshedpur	217	224	229
Jharia	221	229	231
Gujarat			
Ahmedabad	222	224	230
Bhavnagar	253	258	256
Haryana			
Yamunanagar	231	232	238
J & K			
Srinagar	196	196	197
Kerala			
Alwaye	226	239	260
Mundakayam	218	237	252
M. P.			
Bhopal	218	223	224
Gwalior	243	244	249
Indore	241	251	258
Maharashtra			
Bombay	217	225	230
Nagpur	210	217	220
Sholapur	248	259	266
Mysore			
Bangalore	234	243	247
Orissa			
Sambalpur	224	230	230
Punjab			
Amritsar	225	230	233
Rajasthan			
Ajmer	230	235	240
Jaipur	228	235	242
Tamilnadu			
Coimbatore	199	201	204
Madras	213	217	221
Madurai	212	218	221
U.P.			
Kanpur	220	221	227
West Bengal			
Calcutta	204	211	213
Howrah	212	218	219
Delhi	235	241	250

Another Successful Bundh

Within a month Kerala saw two successful Bundhs. Earlier, on July 10, a completely successful bundh was observed at the call of the Kerala CITU to protest against the food crisis and demanding 12 ozs of food daily. On August 2, a complete bundh was again observed at the call of CPI(M) and other opposition parties in Kerala demanding curbs on the price-hike and 12 ozs. of ration per day.

On the day of the bundh, brutal police repression was let loose all over Kerala. Lathi charges were resorted to in many places injuring hundreds. Comrade Sukumaran, Secretary of the Socialist Youth Federation of Chathamala unit (Cannanore) was stabbed to death and two

workers were killed in police firing in Panthalam (Quilon Dist.). Thousands of workers and activists were arrested on the eve of the bundh. Despite repression, the response to the Bundh call was massive in all the districts.

Cannanore Dist. Over one lakh organised workers including plantation, agricultural and Coir workers and toddy tappers, participated. All shops, big and small, and hundreds of beedi and handloom factories were closed. 90 per cent workers of all textile mills, except the Cannanore Spinning Mills, workers of timber, tile and plywood factories and private transport workers joined the bundh. Except some State buses run with police escort, all transport services were paralysed.

Malappuram Dist. Thousands of workers of hotels, N.M.R., Plantations, beedi, tile, match and spinning industries took part in the bundh. Overwhelming majority of shops and other establishments were closed and private buses and lorries did not ply.

Calicut Dist. Complete bundh was observed. Shops remained closed; buses, taxis and auto-rickshaws did not ply; and trains did not run. Government offices, though open, were devoid of staff and courts did not function. Factories did no work, as thousands of workers of tile match and Cashew factories as well as in plantations and saw mills struck work. Municipal

workers and toddy tappers also joined.

Palghat Dist. The bundh was complete. Private transport including buses, taxis, rickshaws and lorries did not ply. All shops were closed. Industrial workers of Parli, Puthusseri and Olavakkote and plantation workers of Nelliampatti, Wadakkencherry and Mannarkkad areas struck work. Work in the fields was paralysed as thousands of agricultural workers struck work and attendance in Government offices was less than 25 per cent.

Trichur Dist. All shops were closed and private transport paralysed. Engineering factories and textile mills were closed. Workers belonging to AITUC unions in Mookkans' Mills in Trichur and J. & P. Coates factory in Koratti also participated in the strike. Workers in plantations, Coir, beedi and cashew industries joined in thousands.

Ernakulam Dist. The bundh was complete. Even a good section of workers belonging to unions controlled by the ruling parties joined the strike. In many establishments all workers of INTUC and AITUC unions joined. All shops, hotels, cinemas and bakeries were closed. Railway workers of Always, Ankamali and Kalamasseri goods shed did not work. Rock quarry workers, toddy shop workers, construction workers, loading workers, tile and timber workers, municipal workers and agricultural workers participated in the bundh in thousands. Work at the Ernakulam Transport Station was

Other Centres

(On different bases)

	1973		
	Apr.	May	June
Cuttack (1949)	278	282	283
Berhampore (1949)	311	327	327
Jabalpur (1949)	281	285	288
Beawar (1951-52)	257	261	272
Himachal Pradesh (1965)	169	172	175
Goa (1966)	147	153	160
Tripura (1961)	226	240	235

All India Consumer Price Index

(Working Class/General Index)

1972	Base	
	1949	1960
December 1973	255	210
January	255	210
February	259	213
March	263	216
April	269	221
May	277	228
June	283	233

completely paralysed. Private boats did not ply. Always, Kalamassery and Elur industrial zones were paralysed as major factories like FACT, IRE, TCC, Binani, Aluminium, Transformers, HMT, Metal Box as well as Flour Mills, Dairies and Bakeries remained idle.

Kottayam Dist. Witnessed the most successful bundh in recent times. Not a single industrial or commercial centre opened on that day. Transport services were also totally paralysed. More than 1000 plantation workers of Mundakayam area struck work. Even workers owing allegiance to ruling parties participated in the bundh.

Alleppey Dist. Shops and markets in important centres did not open. Only 5 out of 105 State buses operated with police escort. Tens of thousands of agricultural workers, coir workers and other Workers struck work.

Idikki Dist. Bundh was complete. Workers of Idikki project, all workers of Munaar area, workers of Cardamom plantations and Indo-Swiss Project, among others, struck work.

Quilon Dist. Bundh was a big success. Entire workers of Cashew factories, 1000 plantation workers and coir workers joined the strike. Shops and private buses did not ply.

Trivandrum Dist. All shops in the district as well as Trivandrum city were closed. Private buses and taxis did not ply and attendance in Government offices was thin. About 2 lakh workers of Coir, Cashew nut, handloom, toddy tapping and

other industries as well as agricultural workers, loading and unloading workers and taxi workers joined the strike.

Other Struggles

Workers of the Pulp Division of Gwalior Rayons of Mavoor (Kozhikod) resorted to stay-in-strike on July 23 in protest against the unjust suspension of 6 workers and their forcible removal by the police,

4,000 handloom workers of Badagara taluk resorted to one-day token strike on July 27, demanding 25% bonus. This strike was conducted under the auspices of the United Action Committee comprising of CITU, HMS, NLO, AITUC and INTUC unions.

Handloom weavers of Cannanore Dist. resorted to one-day token strike on August 14 in protest against the refusal of the management to grant wage increase and other benefits. This strike was conducted under the auspices of CITU, AITUC, INTUC and HMS unions.

At the call of the All Kerala Bank employees' Federation, bank employees of Kerela resorted to a token strike on 17th August in support of the 100-days old struggle of the South Indian Bank employees.

6,000 plantation workers working in the Kodumon, Maladi and Perambra centres of the Kerala Plantation Corp'n. resorted to one-day token strike on 18th August in support of their demands for 50 per cent increase in wages and grant of interim relief.

Entire workers of HMT, Kalamassery (Cochin) resorted to

one-day token strike on 17th August in protest against the wrong bonus policy of the management.

United Move

(From page Nine)

Government employees' Federations and Organisations on dates to be mutually agreed upon.

The objective of this programme is to mobilise and unite broadest cross-sections of workers and employees organisations in support of the impending struggles by the Government employees against the policy of wage freeze. A. Sreeramulu (AISGEF) and S. K. Vyas (CCGEW) have, in a circular, appealed to all affiliates of the two Federations and the Co-ordination Committees of State and Central Govt. employees to ensure participation of all State/City level organisations of Government, semi-Government, local Self-Government and other trade unions and mass organisations, irrespective of their affiliations, in the Unity Convention.

The United Council of Trade Unions (UCTU) has called upon all its affiliated and associated organisations to participate in the Unity Conventions and Unity Day in every possible manner. The CITU has also called upon all its State units and affiliated unions to participate in the Conventions and to give every possible co-operation in observing the Day successfully. They have been asked to issue posters and hold gate meetings and demonstrations to express support and solidarity for the united struggle of 70 lakhs State and Central Government employees.

WEST BENGAL :

CITU STATE COUNCIL MEETS

The third State Council meeting of CITU—West Bengal was held on 11th and 12th August at the ABTA Hall, Calcutta with Md. Ismail, M. P., President of CITU—West Bengal Committee in the chair. 229 State Council members from different districts attended the meeting.

The main report was placed by Monoranjan Roy, M. P. General Secretary of CITU West Bengal Committee. In the report, the significance of the General Strike and Hartal on 27th July was emphasised. The report stated that the Congress Government with the aid of State forces and goonda gangs virtually declared war against the people and the working class of West Bengal on 27th July. The workers were attacked in their bustees and houses and were forced to report to work. Shopkeepers were forced to open their shops under threat of looting and burning of shops. Despite all this and against heavy odds, the strike was successful. The report pointed out that the significance of 27th strike is that it marks the beginning of wider and massive struggles to take place in future against the offensive of the ruling class.

Twentytwo comrades participated in the discussion that followed. From the discussion, it was revealed that the strike in all district towns was successful and the workers and people faced the terror with courage and determination. This was a new feature in the situation.

M. K. Pandhe, Secretary CITU placed a detailed report about the Convention of the Central and State Government employees held in Delhi on 24th and 25th July under the sponsorship of UCTU.

Resolutions on 27th July B a n d h, on 10% minimum Bonus, restoration of T. U.

CITU's Suggestions To Planning Commission

At the instance of the Planning Commission, a meeting with the representatives Central Trade Union organisations was held at New Delhi on July 20. The Union Minister of Planning and the minister of Labour and Rehabilitation were present at the meeting along with members of the Planning Commission. Representatives of the CITU, INTUC, AITUC, HMS and UTUC attended. B. T. Randive, President and P. Ramamurti, General Secretary represented the CITU.

Referring to the objectives in the Fifth Plan approach document the Minister of Planning spoke of the need for promoting healthy industrial relations as well as an integrated policy on wages, prices and incomes and invited suggestions from the T. U. representatives.

Speaking for the CITU, P. Ramamurti explained that the assumptions relating to price structure, world market mechanism, exports & imports etc. underlying the plan were very much in the wrong. Emphasis-

and democratic rights, on modification of terms of reference of the Expert Committee on Consumer Price Index, on locomen's strike, on promulgation of ordinance on Labour Laws by the State Government, on Jay Engineering workers and other workers' struggle etc. were adopted in the meeting.

The State Council decided to fulfil the call of Rs. 1 lakh. It also decided to form District Committees of CITU.

ing that the rural economy could not be improved without agrarian revolution, he strongly advocated the policy of 'land for the tiller'.

He further said that the public sector and monopoly houses could not go together, nor could self-reliance be promoted through collaboration with foreign industrial enterprises which benefitted mainly the private sector. Enthusiasm for Public Sector could grow only if the parasite capitalists were removed.

Referring to productivity, he explained how increase in productivity per worker and use of labour-saving devices do not result in rise in the real wages of workers but merely in displacement of labour. Social tensions, he said, would be inevitable if the main production force in the country, i.e. labour force was ignored.

Referring to the question of trade union unity, he advocated proportional representation based on the actual membership strength of the unions without any element of patronage. He also mentioned the CITU's stand that recognition of Trade Unions should be through secret ballot only.

Seminar On Productivity And T. U. Movement

All the Central trade union representatives were unanimous in criticising the managements and the Government for imposing additional workload in the name of boosting productivity in a Seminar held in New Delhi on 19th and 20th August. The Seminar was convened by the National Productivity Council and representatives of nine trade union centres participated in it.

G. S. Pathak, Vice-President of India in his stereotyped inaugural address appealed to the trade unions to boost the productivity. P. B. Gajendra-gadkar, Chairman, Law Commission delivered his keynote address.

P. Ramamurti, General Secretary, CITU, sharply attacked the policies of the Government and the employers who were responsible for the prevalent economic crisis in the country. Quoting from the Approach to Fifth Five Year Plan document he pointed out how the wage freeze policy was being implemented on the plea of improving the standard of living of the lowest 30% strata of the society. "The standard of living of lowest strata will not be improved in any manner by the policies of the Government. If, however, Government is serious it can do so by attacking the interests of the richer classes," Ramamurti said.

He quoted facts to show how despite rise in productivity the real wages had gone down and observed how the productivity

movement is meant to increase the exploitation of the workers.

Ramamurti attacked the bureaucrats in public sector undertakings for sabotaging production and pointed out how workers were being attacked in the name of national economy. He further referred to growing unemployment and diminishing job opportunities which invariably followed the productivity drive.

Referring to the Loco-running staff strike, Ramamurti held the Government responsible for the strike and the disruption of transport facilities. He demanded recognition of trade unions through secret ballot which alone would ensure a genuine bargaining agent.

Among those who addressed the Seminar were George Fernandes (HMP), M. S. Ramachandran (INTUC), A. N. Buch (NLO), Jatin Chakravarty (UTUC) N. C. Roychowdhury (AITUC), G. S. Gokhale (BMS), V. G. Gopal (INTUC), and M. K. Pandhe (CITU). ■

Maharashtra State Committee Of UCTU Formed

The foundation Convention of the Maharashtra State Committee of the United Council of Trade Unions was held on 12th and 13th August last in Bombay. About 800 delegates representing the CITU, HMP, UTUC and LIC attended. A Presidium consisting of S. Y. Kolhatkar (CITU) Sadashiv Bagaitkar (HMP), Pushpa Mehta (UTUC) and M. C. Thomas (LIC) was elected to conduct the proceedings. P. K. Kurane, one of the Joint Conveners and General Secretary, Maharashtra State CITU delivered the introductory address.

George Fernandes, Convener of UCTU and P. Ramamurti, General Secretary CITU attended and addressed the Convention.

The main resolution of the Convention, embodying the Policy Statement, was moved by S. Y. Kolhatkar (CITU) and seconded by Prabhakar Mankar (HMP), Pushpa Mehta (UTUC)

and N. K. Bhat (LIC). It was adopted unanimously.

The Convention also unanimously adopted, after discussions by 20 delegates, resolutions on high prices and shortage of necessities, on famine, on need-based minimum wage, on Third Pay Commission, on 7-day work in Textile mills, on Loco Strike etc.

The Convention also elected a 54-member State Council and a 14-member Executive Committee including Jagannath Jadhav and P. K. Kurane as Conveners.

After the concluding session of the Convention on August 13 a massive rally was held at Kamgar Maidan, presided over by S. Y. Kolhatkar. P. Ramamurti appealed to the AITUC to leave the National Council of Trade Unions sponsored by the Government and join the UCTU which is the real platform of workers' unity for class struggle. The rally was also addressed by Pushpa Mehta, Prabhakar More and P. K. Kurane. ■

T. U.s Demand

Need-Based Minimum Wage For Powermen

In the wake of the agitation of Electricity workers all over India, a Tripartite meeting on the demands of Electricity workers was held at New Delhi on August 17th and 18th. The meeting was attended by representatives of CITU, AITUC, INTUC and HMS. On behalf of the CITU, D. Janakiraman (Tamilnadu), Sukhamoy Pal (West Bengal) and Habeeb (Kerala) attended.

At the meeting, representatives of all the trade unions pressed for the demand for fixation of need-based minimum wage for the Electricity workers all over India.

The demand for fixing a need-based minimum wage for more than five lakh Electricity workers has been neglected long enough. With their already low rate of wages getting further eroded due to rise in prices, discontent of the Powermen is running high breaking out into strike actions all over the country. But instead of taking steps for meeting this demand, the Central and State Governments have merely sought to suppress their struggles.

The Wage Board appointed in 1966 laboured for three long years to recommend a paltry Rs. 140/- as minimum wage for Electricity workers. By the time it was accepted by the Government, wages in many places

were equal to or even higher than that. Moreover, it ignored the case of thousands of muster-roll and work-charged employees who continue to face medieval exploitation. The managements in many places have also refused to implement even this meagre award.

In recent times, Electricity workers in West Bengal, U. P., Haryana, Bihar and Orissa had to resort to strike actions against this niggardly award of the Wage Board and for a need-based minimum wage. The recent strike of powermen in Kerala forced the SEB authorities to concede a minimum wage of Rs. 260 and abolition of M/R and W/C appointments.

Tripartite Meeting

In the tripartite meeting, the representatives of CITU and AITUC proposed the formation of a bipartite negotiating machinery for fixing need-based minimum wage at the national level which was also supported by the INTUC. The SEB representatives from various States however bitterly opposed the proposal for a need-based minimum wage for powermen.

The T.U. representatives also exposed the deplorable condition of the muster-roll and work-charged employees, constituting 25 to 30 per cent of the power workers, who are being refused

CITU SUPPORTS DEMANDS OF POWER ENGINEERS

In a statement, B. T. Ranadive, President of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions, says :

The CITU endorses the demand of the power engineers from various States who have been compelled to resort to strike action to secure them. Their protest against the suspension of their President is thoroughly justified since the Punjab Government's action seems to be directed more towards crushing their organisation than a genuine

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to be made regular even after serving continuously for 15 to 20 years. They continue to rot at meagre wages which are Rs. 40 to Rs. 300 a month less than what are paid to their regular counterparts.

The Government, even after admitting the desirability of fixing a need-based minimum wage and of discontinuing the M/R and W/C systems, expressed its inability to agree immediately to the demand for a bipartite negotiating machinery. Instead the Labour Minister, who was in the Chair, proposed that as a first step a Committee be constituted with equal representation from both the labour and management side to go into details about setting up a bipartite negotiating machinery to settle the issue of need-based minimum wage. This was accepted by the meeting.

The CITU has nominated Com. Janakiraman of Tamilnadu on the Tripartite Committee. ■

Resident Doctors On Strike In Bombay

The situation following the strike by more than 1500 resident doctors and interns in Bombay's municipal and Government hospitals since August 17 has taken an unseemly turn palpably due to the attitude of the Government of Maharashtra. The demands of the doctors

include upward revision of pay-scales, fixation of duty hours and improved living conditions.

The Government, to begin with, ran the whole gamut of legal provisions. Contending that the interns were no part of the hospital staff, it invoked the Essential Services Maintenance Act and prohibited the strike outright. When even this failed to forestall action by the doctors, the Government proceeded to dismiss and evict them from their hospitals.

This brought the entire medical community of Maharashtra rallying to the support of the striking doctors. The Indian Medical Association of Greater Bombay held a meeting on August 24 and decided to

go on an indefinite strike from August 29 in protest against the "autocratic and humiliating" attitude of the Government. It was also decided that doctors in Maharashtra would strike work on the day while in the rest of the country members of the IMA would hold demonstrations.

The issue of eviction of the doctors which has now become the subject of a legal wrangle has come as a shock to the democratic masses of Maharashtra. It is generally believed that the demands of the resident doctors who work on a meagre pay of Rs. 150 per month were fair enough and the recourse to a set of draconic laws was uncalled for.

Meanwhile, students of two dental colleges in Bombay have gone on strike in solidarity with the movement of the doctors. ■

POWER ENGINEERS

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attempt to fight corruption. Mr. Harbans besides has suggested a way out and there should be no difficulty on the part of the authorities to accept his proposal.

The engineers besides are fighting for an all-important demand which is of great importance to the people and the democratic movement. They demand parity in pay scales and status at all levels among technical and administrative services and restructuring of the secretaries of all technical departments. These posts requiring expert technical knowledge are today the close preserve of the bureaucrats of the IAS.

The inferior status accorded to the technical and medical men and preference for the IAS bureaucrats is not accidental. The ruling powers cherish more the services of those connected with the apparatus of repression than of those connected with the apparatus of production and health. They consider the bureaucrats to be the main prop of their rule. This distorted arrangement must go and those who are contributing to the nation's production efforts must get their due. ■

The Working Class Completes Two Years

WITH this issue, *The Working Class* is entering the third year of its existence. During the last two years, it has consistently played the role assigned to it. It has given a co-ordinated picture of the trade union activities and movement conducted by the CITU and helped to centralise them. It has given guidance on current problems of policy facing the trade union movement. It has carried on consistent struggle for unity of the trade union movement, exposed the reformists who opposed it and extended its support to all struggles of the workers and employees irrespective of the affiliations of the unions conducting them. It has raised its voice against all attacks on workers' rights and civil liberties. It has consistently championed the cause of international unity of the working class.

The State Committees of the CITU and a number of trade unions by their valuable contributions have helped the Working Class to discharge its responsibility.

High praise is due to the staff of *The Working Class* for its devoted and inestimable service without which its regular production would have been difficult.

I appeal to all our trade unions and leaders to increase the circulation of *The Working Class* and help in the task of co-ordinating and centralising our movement.

B. T. Ranadive