



# THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITU

## Unitedly Fight the Developing Fascism

E. Balanandan

The neo-fascists have shown their real face in Bombay, the industrial capital of India. The working class of Bombay fought many battles, economic and political which were then the pace-setters of Indian working class movement. But today we witness a different scenario; the Shiv Sena, BJP, RSS gangs are holding sway over the city and they decide who should live there or who should quit. The Cong. (I) Govt. in the state is practically paralysed and it was only a mute witness to the gory attacks and killings carried on by these goons against the muslim population and non-Marathi Hindus.

During the aftermath of December 6—the demolition of Babri Masjid at Ayodhya—Bombay witnessed a big communal conflagration in which thousands of people were killed. Large majority of them were Muslims and 90% of them were shot down by the police. It is now in public knowledge that the Bombay police were engaged not in quelling the riots but they used this opportunity for killing the Muslims. Thus the law enforcing machinery has become blood thirsty law breakers, joining hands with the communal fascist goons.

Again during the first week of January another communal flare up was engineered and organised by the Shiv Sena, RSS, BJP goons. In the name of protesting against 'Namaz' being held outside the mosque on the public road on Fridays, the Shiv Sena organised 'Maha Arathis' (poojas) on the road obstructing traffic, organising thousands of Hindus where inflammatory speeches were made against the Muslims, creating an anti-muslim frenzy. From there the special gangs proceeded to attack the pre-planned targets. The Muslim bastis, houses and shops were set on fire after looting and killing many indiscriminately, young and old, women and children. This went on for full 10 days. In the main bazars of Bombay, Muslim shops and business establishments were selectively looted and set on fire.

The slum areas where Muslim population are living was chosen for their attacks. Non-Marathi sections of Hindu population were also not spared.

Trained killer gangs were on the roads day and night. They were attacking and killing people of the minority communities with immunity and it

went for several days. The police and military personnel were taking rounds in their vehicles and some were standing watch in many areas. But they did not do anything to stop this and save those who were crying for help. Section 144 and curfew were imposed in many areas. These were also used against Muslims in many areas and put them to indescribable inconveniences. The preventive arrests were also used as a weapon mainly against the Muslims. They were not allowed to go out for getting even drinking water or milk.

When I visited Bombay on 16th and 17th January many horrible stories were told to me by the survivors who lost their families, shops and business establishments and all that they have owned. The refugees in the camps also narrated to me the horrible frightening experiences during the orgy of organised violence perpetrated by these fascist gangs. The official estimates of death is around 600 but I am told that many bodies were thrown in the sea which is not accounted by anyone. At the Victoria Terminus Railway station I saw thousands were waiting to catch trains to their places, Malayalees, Tamils and people from all parts of the country were there, waiting to escape from Bombay. The railway authorities told me that more than 60,000 people have already left Bombay in panic. On 16 and 17 in many areas where the curfew was relaxed people were not confident enough to come out on the streets. Normally busy streets of Bombay were empty during these days.

The whole of Bombay was reeling under the brutes of Shiv Sena and their allied gangs. The administration of Mr. Sudhakar Rao Naik was doing nothing. The reason for this state of affairs are put differently by many. The national press were mercilessly criticising this inaction. The Times of India on 15th January wrote an editorial with the caption "Tell More Mr. Naik" saying that Mr. Naik hinted that the trouble is being encouraged by Mr. Pawar, the Minister of Defence. They demanded that the Chief Minister and the Defence Minister should tell the whole truth to the people and said, "The citizens of Bombay and indeed the people of India have every right to know who is behind the terrible happenings in the metropolis and the reasons that impelled them to act in the way

they did. This in turn will facilitate the task of bringing to book the culprits responsible for over 500 deaths, for the devastation suffered by the families of the victims and for mass migrations from the city, not to speak of the climate of intimidation and fear which has shattered the spirit of cosmopolitanism in Bombay." Proceeding further it stated, "Regardless of the veracity of either version, the fact remains that successive chief ministers of Maharashtra have played footsie with various lobbies and mafias as well as with the Shiv Sena."

The next day on 16th again TOI editorially commented with the headlines 'Whose Law, Whose Order'. Commenting on the inefficient and partisan attitude of the police it said, "While Bombay has been ablaze with communal violence, the police force is being accused of acts of omission in not coming to the rescue of people who were being besieged or physically attacked. What is even worse are the acts of commission: the repeated allegation that it has actually aided and abetted communal forces in dragging out youths from shanties and arresting them under the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act, leaving their families at the mercy of anti-social elements." Another Daily, "The Pioneer" stated the following in their editorial dated 16th January with the heading 'Bal Thackeray's Wave of Terror'. The editorial squarely condemned Mr. Bal Thackeray for engineering the collapse of law and order in Bombay and said that 'After all, the Shiv Sena's political platform rests on its anti-Muslim agenda, apart from its support for the 'Sons of the Soil' policy that by definition denies space to non-Marathis in Bombay's social, political and most important, economic life." Continuing further it said that for years Mr. Thackeray has been allowed to go scot free despite his activities being clearly in violation of the law of the land.

These 10 days of dance of death and destruction organised by these fascist brutes had its devastating consequences not only for the city of Bombay and the State of Maharashtra but the country as a whole. The hatred and venom being spread by them against the Muslim minorities besides the inhuman attacks made the communal polarisation complete. The minorities are left to believe that they are treated as aliens. Not only by the Shiv Sena-BJP gangs but also by the police who failed to protect their life and property and who practically joined in these attacks. The Govt in the state and at the Centre too did precious little during this period to save them. Therefore their confidence in our secular Constitution and the legal guarantees have been torn to pieces. The "sons of the soil" theory of Shiv Sena has been encouraged by the successive Congress Ministries in Maharashtra and many industrialists—the Congress leaders sometimes to cash in on their chauvinistic appeal and some time to settle scores with their rival groups in their own party and the employers to break the militant trade unions in their industry. All of them now see its ugly face. All those people from other states who were in the city of Bombay engaged in

as workers doing menial and skilled jobs, petty traders and shop keepers, industrialists and businessmen, none was spared and none is safe. In the industrial and commercial capital of Bombay lakhs of families have already left and those who are there, have to buy peace by paying booty to the Shiv Sena gangsters. Here again the constitutional guarantees are thrown to the winds and unity of the country has come under a big question mark. Many areas where small scale industries were concentrated has been set on fire and those areas have now become simple barren lands with the remnants of burnt articles. In this alone, the economists have calculated that thousands of crores of Rupees have been lost. The production loss due to shutting down of factories and running the factory without full complement of workers have added to the losses. 60 per cent of the total exports in the country is being done through Bombay ports. The work in the port was also paralysed in all these days. Besides, all the small and big shops and business houses were closed and therefore the loss can easily be several thousands of crores of Rupees which cannot be made up.

It is to be noted that during this organised and pre-planned communal conflagration many industrialists of Bombay have woken up to the danger and have severely condemned it and the Govt for its inaction. Mr JRD Tata, the captain of Indian industry has demanded that emergency should be declared and the city should be handed over to the military. Many other industrialists too were demanding stern action against these dark forces and demanded immediate steps from the Govt of India to protect the life and property of the people.

Some of the industrialists are forced to think that the climate in the city of Bombay has changed and it has become extremely unsafe. It will become necessary that each of the industrialists could be moving with a bunch of body guards like those in Germany during the days of fascism. These sentiments are really welcome, though many of them have encouraged the growth of Shiv Sena and the communal forces in Bombay.

Shiv Sena is continuing their offensive through their trade union "Bharatiya Kamgar Sena". They are not allowing the Muslim workers to join duty in their work places. In Mazgaon Dock, Larsen & Toubro plants, Mahindra and Mahindra and many other industries, the non-Maratha workers are also not dared enough to join duty even after the end of the turmoil. Those who tried to join duty are also being threatened by them. The 'Bharatiya Kamgar Sena' is using strong arm methods to weaken the left trade union influence among the workers and for monopolising trade unions in many areas. Though many employers do not want it now, they are not in a position to stop it, since the law enforcing machinery is nowhere effective. The other trade unions in the industrial city are also not coming forward to oppose this phenomenon strongly.

Many of them are sitting at the fence which is all the more dangerous. Many employers have begun to realise the fascist nature of this development. Many trade union leaders in Bombay are yet to realise this danger which is the tragedy of the situation.

Since the communalisation of politics has been encouraged, these forces have come to power in many states and they are now seeking to come to power at the centre too using the same communal and religious sentiments of the people. This paved the way for large scale communalisation of the administrative machinery which has been exposed during the demolition of Babri Masjid at Ayodhya and the consequent communal conflagration in large parts of the country.

As per newspaper reports in Ayodhya the police joined the Kar Sevaks in a big way. In Bombay they took initiative to shoot and kill the Muslims. In Surat and Ahmedabad many policemen joined with BJP gangs. In Kanpur, Seelampur in Delhi etc, the story was the same. The danger of the developing fascism is not properly being understood by the working class and the people at large. The rise of BJP, RSS, Bajrang Dal, VHP gangs joining with Sena and various types of religious fundamentalism threatens the very foundation of Indian democracy. They have started imposing their dictates ignoring the govt, legal impediments, court directives and the Constitution itself. They use their religious garb for their nefarious deeds.

The ruling party and the ruling classes many a time succumb to their pressures. At times they are also resorting to communalisation of politics to gain political power and to continue in power.

Trade unions and the working class together with all the sections of democratic forces should come forward unitedly to resist and arrest this development of fascist forces, to safeguard the secular foundations of the Constitution, the bed-rock of the unity of the country and to safeguard democracy in the country. The working class should take the lead in this fight.

### **New Address and Telephone No. of CITU Central Office**

The CITU Central Office has started functioning from the new office. The postal address and Telephones Numbers are as follows :—

Centre of Indian Trade Unions,  
15, Talkatora Road,  
New Delhi—110 001

Phones : 3714071 and 3723825

## **Andhra Pradesh Launches Campaign for Communal Harmony**

A meeting of the CITU Andhra Pradesh Committee was held on the 28th & 29th December in Vijayawada. One of the main issues discussed was about communal harmony. A comprehensive resolution was adopted. The resolution detailed the programme to be taken up in the month of January on this issue. The programme included :

1. By the 10th January general body meetings of all union members should be held, the issues explained and the workers geared up to carry out the campaign.

2. On 12th, badges should be worn by all workers. The badge should contain the following pledge :

We pledge

to maintain communal harmony;

to protect national independence and integrity;

to strengthen working class unity.

3. On 21st, common lunch to be organised for all communities.

4. On 26th human chains should be built in as many places as possible. Women and children should be mobilised in large numbers.

5. On 30th, in all factories, shops and establishments and all other work places pledge to maintain and protect communal harmony should be taken collectively.

6. Signatures on pledges should be collected throughout the month.

7. Karmika Lokam should be brought out this month as a special issue.

Apart from this a state level convention was held in Hyderabad, on 17th January, convened by the CPI (M), CPI, TDP, and JD. About 800 people attended it. The convention endorsed the call given by the December 19th Delhi convention and worked out a programme for campaign. The programme included flag hoisting on the Republic Day and pledge taking on the 30th. CITU leaders also participated in this convention and addressed the members.

A circular by the CITU State Committee was sent to all unions to make the programme worked out. Reports are reaching that in many districts general bodies have been held. Conventions also are being held which are being attended by the state leaders from the centre. In Hyderabad city alone 30,000 badges were worn by the workers and others. Exhibitions are being organised in some places and the Praja Natya Mandali is giving shows specially written for this campaign.

# CITU Opposes Government's Economic Policies During Pre-Budget Discussions

The trade union representatives attending the meeting convened by the Minister of Finance for pre-budget discussions demanded reversal of the economic and industrial policies and taking positive measures to generate employment and income of the common people in the country. The Minister of Finance at the outset explained the measures taken by the Govt of India to tackle the economic problems facing the country. He pointed out that he has consulted the trade unions first in his exercise because he gave importance to consultations with trade unions.

M.K. Pandhe, General Secretary of CITU, while intervening in the discussions criticised the Ministry of Finance for making these meetings a ritual. He said that whatever suggestions trade unions gave in the last pre-budget discussions, none of them have been implemented while most of the suggestions given by the employers in their discussions were accepted by the Government. He criticised the Government's policy towards public sector and even hurting the well run public sector units by favouring multinational companies. He gave the example of BHEL which received no orders while the multinational companies were given bulk of the order for thermal and hydro-power generation equipments. The favouritism shown to Asia Brown Boveri for supply of Railway engines also clearly pointed out to the govt of India's views in favour of multinational companies. Regarding the steel industry he pointed out that while the Indian producers have got sufficient stock to meet demands of the domestic market, the government has reduced import duty adversely affecting the Indian steel producers. He pointed out the failure of the Govt of India to implement the promises given in the special Tripartite Committee meetings. He said this has adversely affected the revival of these units and many are facing virtual closure. Cotton textile and jute mills have not even got the money to purchase raw-materials.

The Finance Minister objected to—Pandhe's remarks about censoring of the bank statements to the JPC investigating into the scams. The CITU demanded the imposition of the agricultural income tax in order to mop up the resources for the economic development of the country. Regarding the phenomenon of black money, the CITU representative criticised the Govt of India for its failure to mop up the black money despite several threats shows that huge surplus funds are lying with private parties which the government is refusing to mop up for obvious reasons. As a result of the import liberalisation the balance of payments crisis is becoming more serious and the country's economy is facing further more and more serious situation. Criticising the National Renewal Fund the CITU demanded that there should be a fund for revival of the sick

units instead of paying compensation to the workers becoming victims of Exit Policy.

CITU demanded the implementation of the Tripartite Committees recommendations on DA for public sector workers, withdrawal of ban on negotiations and demanded implementation of the pension scheme agreed by the managements in public sector. The CITU also wanted to remove the ceiling on bonus and enhancing the exemption limit for income tax payment. Criticising huge borrowings from the World Bank, the CITU demanded a stop to it otherwise the country will virtually enter a debt trap.

Com. E. Balanandan, President, CITU intervening during the discussions analysed the international environment in which our country is working and pointed out that when the advanced capitalist countries are facing recession the economic policies of the Govt of India will bring more and more stagnation and economic decline. Criticising the cut in fertilizer subsidy, he pointed out that the prices of agricultural products will be further pushed up and standard of living of the people will decline. The programme of poverty alleviation will thus be put in reverse gear. He said that the country must take steps to produce cheaper electricity, coal and petrol so that economic advancement will be faster. However, in the name of globalisation the Govt of India is guaranteeing higher profits for the multinationals in electricity generation which will lead to electricity becoming costlier for the people and adversely affecting economic development of the country. Com. Balanandan pointed out that the multinational companies who own modern technology are trying to compete with us with their superior technology and the country's economy will be in a most disadvantageous position because of this. The Govt of India must protect indigenous industries and then only the country can advance. Our planning should be guided by development of the national resources available in the country but the govt is making it available to multinational companies for exploiting our economy further. Pointing out that the rise in population in the country is more than the productive resources which will lead to further deterioration and joblessness in the country. He suggested that unless the budget what will be framed shortly provides relief to the poor the conditions in the country are bound to deteriorate further.

Others who spoke in the meeting were Gopeshwar, General Secretary, INTUC; M.S. Krishnan, President, AITUC; R.K. Bhakht, General Secretary, BMS; D.D. Shastri, Vice President, TUCC; Pritish Chanda, President, UTUC (LS) and Sunil Sengupta (UTUC).

The Ministers of State for Finance were also present during the meeting.

## Sponsoring Committee calls for Campaign against Communalism and intensify fight against the New Economic Policy

The Sponsoring Committee of Indian Trade Unions in its meeting held at Delhi on 4th January, 1993 welcomed the formation of the Rashtriya Ekta Abhiyan and its decisions and called upon the working class to launch vigorous massive campaign against the communal forces for restoring and preserving communal amity and peace in the country. The Committee also decided to further carry forward the fight against the Fund-Bank dictated anti-national Economic and Industrial Policies of the Narasimha Rao Government on the basis of the declaration adopted at the historic rally at the Boat Club, New Delhi on 25th November '92.

The meeting was presided over by Com. E. Balanandan, President, CITU and was attended by the senior leaders of the constituent central trade unions and federations of industrial workers and Govt employees.

The meeting unanimously condemned the treacherous and anti-national act perpetrated by the BJP-RSS-VHP combine by demolishing the Babri Masjid at Ayodhya on 6th December, 1992. The Committee expressed shock and grave concern at the communal riots that engulfed the entire country after the Ayodhya incident, killing more than a thousand innocent people and loot and destruction of properties worth crores of rupees. The meeting noted that the country faced a serious challenge from the communal forces which are out to destroy the secular, democratic foundation of the country, the Constitution and the rule of law.

Many industrial centres have been severely affected by the communal virus consequent upon the demolition of the Babri Masjid. The meeting also condemned the vandalism of destruction of the places of worship and communal killings that took place at Pakistan, Bangladesh etc in the wake of the demolition of the Babri Masjid.

The Sponsoring Committee pointed out that the objective of the BJP-RSS-VHP combine was to grab the political power at the centre and to impose a theocratic state, a "Hindu Rashtra" on the people. The Committee warned the working class that in the name of "Hindu Rashtra" what would be imposed on the people would be a fascist rule. Once fascist forces are in the seat of power the democratic rights of the people and particularly the democratic trade union rights would be totally denied and in the face of all round attack, the working class would be made fully defenceless. This is already evidenced by the brutal and heinous manner in which they attacked the journalists on December 6th, the attempted assault on Union Minister

Madhav Rao Scindia and heaping filthy abuses on his family members. The Sponsoring Committee condemns these acts of vandalism in the strongest possible terms.

The Committee further assailed the Cong(I) Govt at the Centre for its policy of appeasing and compromise with the communal forces. It did not take any steps to protect the Babri Masjid and establish the rule of law despite the support given to it by the secular and democratic forces in the National Integration Council. Even now it has not taken any concrete steps to mobilise the support of the secular and democratic forces in the campaign against communalism.

In order to fight the foregoing dangers, the Sponsoring Committee unanimously adopted the pledge and the proposals formulated by the Rashtriya Ekta Abhiyan. The Committee appealed to the entire trade union movement to implement the same with its full might:

- 1) Launch massive signature campaign on the pledge (attached herewith) and collect signatures in crores.
- 2) Organise gate meetings on 30th January 1992, the anniversary of Gandhiji's martyrdom and orally adopt the pledge and also take signatures.
- 3) Launch massive campaign against communalism and for communal amity by organising conventions, gate meetings, rallies, human chain etc. 26th January, the Republic Day and 13th January, the day of Gandhiji's fast in 1948 against the Noakhali riots should also be utilised for the campaign as per the proposals of the Rashtriya Ekta Abhiyan.
- 4) Participation in the Central rallies in the 18 centres to be organised by the Rashtriya Ekta Abhiyan.

The Sponsoring Committee expressed its deep indignation at the Narasimha Rao Govt.'s adamant pursuit of the Fund-Bank dictated new economic and industrial policies completely ignoring the nationwide opposition of the working class and other sections of the democratic and patriotic forces.

The Committee has, therefore, decided to carry forward the fight against these policies in pursuance of the declaration adopted at the historic rally of 25th November 1992. It has been decided that a meeting of the Sponsoring Committee will be conve-

ned in the first week of February 1993 wherein the leaders of various mass organisations of peasants, agricultural workers, students, youth, women, teachers, intellectuals, scientists and artists would be invited to launch a broadbased platform to unleash a phased programme of mass action all over the country culminating in Bharat Bandh. It has also been decided that a massive national convention will be held at Delhi, the date of which will be decided in the February meeting.

The Sponsoring Committee has appealed to the working class to continue the preparation for forthcoming battle against the Economic policies along with the campaign against the communal forces.

## APPEAL AND PLEDGE BY RASHTRIYA EKTA ABHIYAN

Fellow Citizens:

“Campaign for National Unity” (“Rashtriya Ekta Abhiyan”) appeals to you to respond to the Appeal to sign the Pledge, to endorse your commitment to National Unity and Secularism.

### Appeal

December 6, 1992 plunged the country into darkness. The destruction of the Babri Masjid and consequent events are a determined attack on the nation's unity.

The very existence of the independent Indian state, resting on the foundation of democracy and secularism, has been threatened. Our country must be protected from the evil designs of those inciting religious hatred to capture political power.

As Gandhiji said: “The ideal of communal amity is not a new one. It has always been before the country as one of the pillars of national independence. Without it independence cannot last.”

On January 23, 1948, just a week before his assassination Gandhiji said: “It would spell the ruin of both the Hindu religion and the majority community if the latter, in the intoxication of power, entertains the belief that it can crush the minority community and establish a purely Hindu Raj.”

### Pledge

With the nation's unity in mind, I pledge :

I, as a citizen of India, believe in a peaceful, united, humane, egalitarian and prosperous India.

I pledge to root out communalism from our land and reject all moves to arouse religious passions for political ends.

I dedicate myself to defend the secular and democratic foundations of the Indian Constitution.

I solemnly commit myself to preserve and strengthen India's unity and communal harmony.

## Trade Union Demands Resignation of Maharashtra and Gujarat Chief Minister for unabated Communal orgy

The Sponsoring Committee of Indian Trade Unions has strongly condemned the communal riot flared up at Bombay and Gujarat afresh and continuing unchecked for last five days. It has expressed deep shock at the killing of hundreds of innocent people, eviction of thousands and loot and destruction of properties.

The Chief Ministers of Maharashtra and Gujarat have totally failed to give protection to the people of their respective state. These Governments have failed to proveits political will and administrative capabilities to handle the communal forces responsible for the riots. Therefore they have completely forfeited their rights to continue as Chief Ministers and must resign.

The Committee had noted that the deployment of army at Bombay could not deal with the situation firmly and evidences showed that the communal forces like BJP-RSS-Shive Sena and a section of Congress (I) hoodlums are carrying out their provocative and criminal activities even in the presence of army personal. It is reported that administrative hurdles have prevented the army to act effectively. To this count also the State Govts. cannot disown their responsibilities.

The Committee expressed serious concern particularly for the vast working class areas of Bombay affected by the communal violence which is not only harmful for the united trade union movement but also detrimental to the fight for safeguarding the secular foundation of the country. The united campaign launched for communal harmony by the trade unions in Bombay including INTUC is welcome but deserve more serious efforts considering the gravity of the situation.

The Sponsoring Committee urged upon the Central Govt. to take all necessary steps to deal with the situation without compromising the unity, integrity and Secular character of the country for the ruling party's narrow political interest. It also appealed to the entire working class of the country to raise to the occasion, voice of its strongest protest against communal violence and do everything possible to restore and preserve the communal amity in the country. Further, the Committee called upon the trade unions to carry forward the programmes of campaign against communalism circulated earlier.

# State Conference of Kerala Plantation Labour Federation

The 7th State Conference of Kerala Plantation Labour Federation was held on 7-8th January at Kattappana in Idukki District. Vimala Ranadive hoisted the flag. M Jindevan, State President of the Federation presided over the conference.

K.N. Ravindranath, General Secretary, CITU Kerala State Committee inaugurated the conference. He outlined each and every step taken by the RSS, VHP, Bajrang Dal and BJP how the Hindu communalists converted themselves into fascist outfits. He narrated the real aim of the Government of India and to where the nation is going to plunge as a result of the series of actions being adopted by the Government to tide over the deteriorating economic conditions of India. He further explained that the changes and reforms being implemented in the spheres of agriculture education and developmental activities etc. are against the interest of India.

The Report and Accounts of the Federation were presented by the General Secretary after the introductory speech of the President. Raveendran Nair, M.S. Vasudevan, Ayyappan Nair, Syedali, K.S. Mohanan, K. Padmanabhan Nair, K.J. Joy, T.V. Mohammedkutty Yesodharan, V.P. Ebrahim, Francis, G. Vaikantam Syed Ali, K. Chidambaram, Prabhakaran, Rajamma, D. Sadasivan, N.B. Raja, V.A. Subramonian, Mathunni, C. Appunni, Rajendran Nair, Razak, Radhamony, George, M. Chellamma, Ramachandran, Chithran Pillai, K.V. Mathai, V.P. Rajan and Prabhakaran participated in the discussions held thereafter. Both the report and accounts passed unanimously.

Vimala Ranadive, All India President of the Federation and Hemachandran, Secretary gave facilitatory speeches on 7th and 8th respectively. The conference was attended to by 205 delegates and 12 observers. Of which 30 were women.

Resolutions demanding wage revision of plantation labourers on negotiated terms failing which to prepare for an agitation including indefinite strike, and to enhance the rate of gratuity equal to 30 days wages per year instead of the existing rate of 15 days per year of service were adopted by the conference. The resolution demanding recognition of Trade Unions in Private Sector only to those unions having a minimum of 15 per cent of the total workers was also passed. Another resolution against the move to transfer an extent of 4000 acres of land out of the plantations now in possession of the Plantation, Corporation, Kalady to private sector under the guise of Oil Palm cultivation by which act to implement the Government of India policy to give away the Public Sector to private sector was also adopted by the conference.

The General Secretary hailed the Comrades of Idukki District in having taken the responsibility to host the conference and having performed the said duty in a befitting manner. He hailed the activities of the Reception Committee also.

After the delegate conference a colourful procession was held in which more than 7 thousand plantation workers took part. The Public Meeting was inaugurated by Com. V.S. Achuthanandan, the Opposition Leader of Kerala, Com. Vimala Ranadive, K. Padmanabdan, M. Lazer, N. Hemachandran, M.M. Mani also spoke. Com. N. Jinadevan, the newly elected President of the Federation was on the chair.

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## CITU Seeks Prime Minister's Intervention in IA Pilots Strike

The Secretariat of the CITU has issued the following statement to the press on 6.1.93:

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions expresses its grave concern at the inordinate delay in the settlement of strike by the Indian Airlines Pilots which commenced on 10th December 1992.

The strike is causing a colossal loss of revenue of Rs. 10 crores per day resulting in a total loss of over Rs. 250 crores so far. The travelling passengers are facing acute difficulties while the private airlines are minting money in a tourist season which have developed vested interest in prolonging the strike.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation which is determined to privatise the Indian Airlines is behaving like a silent spectator and making no efforts whatever to settle this prolonged strike. The financial crippling of the Indian Airlines is the best service to the private sector air taxi operators in India.

The issues involved in the strike are such that they can be settled across the table. We, therefore, appeal to the Indian Airlines and the Indian Commercial Pilots Association to immediately resume negotiations without any pre-conditions so that the dispute is resolved without any further delay.

The CITU urges upon the Prime Minister to immediately intervene in the dispute so that machinery to settle all the outstanding issues is created at an early date and the operations of the Indian Airlines flights in full strength is resumed forthwith.

## CITU Condemns Callous Attitude of Government

The Secretariat of CITU has issued the following statement on 9.1.93 :

The CITU is deeply shocked and also alarmed at the disastrous plane accident at Palam air port in the early hours of 9.1.93 resulting in destruction of the air craft and serious injuries to many. Though up to the time of this statement going to the press, no death of passengers have been reported possibility of death casualty is also ruled out.

Notable, in this connection, is that the fateful Russian air craft was a hired one and being piloted for carrying passengers as a crisis management device adopted by the air lines authority to tackle the ongoing strike of the pilots. It has been clear that while adopting such 'crisis management' strategy the authorities paid least attention to the aspect of flight worthiness of aircrafts and other aspects of safety of passenger and the crew.

The CITU cannot but condemn such callous approach of the Govt. and the air lines authority towards safety of the passengers and the crew members. The CITU has long been urging the Govt. of India and in particular for the effective intervention of the prime minister for immediate settlement of the disputed and end of the strike. But unfortunately, there was little positive response from the Govt. in the required direction.

The CITU cannot but denounce the attitude of indifference to the situation arisen out of airlines pilot strike since 10th December '92 on the part of Govt. of India the Civil Aviation Ministry in particular, who preferred to allow the disputes to continue and tried to tackle the situation by hiring aircrafts keeping its own fleets idle on the ground. Hence govt cannot absolve its responsibility for prolonging the strike. Rather the attitude of the Govt. thus revealed appeared more consistent with their own contemplation of privatisation of Indian Airlines. Hence the strategy of the Govt. to allow the pilot strike to continue and leave the dispute alive, though their so called crisis management by hired plane may well be termed as one for creating ground for privatisation.

But whatever may be the strategic of the Govt. and the concerned ministry same is fraught with the danger of life of the travelling public and the crew members as has become clear from the incident of today's crash, which only deserves condemnation.

The reported resignation of the Union Civil Aviation Minister Shri Madhav Rao Scindia after the incident of crash can serve no fruitful purpose unless the policy approach being followed and pursued by the Government of India in the related

matter as revealed in the entirety is reversed and sent to relegation.

The CITU demands upon the Government of India to have a lesson from the incident and reverse its policy of expediency and convenience and calls upon the working class to raise voice of protest against the same.

## CITU Demands Effective Intervention Against Communal Forces

The Secretariat of the CITU has issued the following statement to the press on January 20 :

The CITU is immensely perturbed over the report that the Shiv Sena and other communal forces in Maharashtra are blatantly forcing the employers to throw out minority workers from the undertakings and some units have already succumbed to their black mail. The management of Larsen & Toubro and Mahindra and Mahindra who did not agree to this black mail had been subjects to gangster attacks by the communal hoodlums while the Govt of Maharashtra is failing to give any protection whatsoever to the workers of minority communities. The CITU demands that the Central Govt should immediately intervene in the situation and ensure that the minority workers are given protection in all the aspects so that normalcy is restored without any further delay. Several thousands of workers have already left Bombay City. They should be brought back and efforts be made to rehabilitate them which alone will result in creating confidence among the minority community workers.

The CITU also denounces the BJP and other communal forces who are trying to raise the bogey of Bangladeshi refugees in India. A, deliberate attempt to create further communal clashes in and around Delhi are being attempted to by them. The CITU demands that the Central Govt should take immediate action so that the minorities are protected.

The ambivalent stand taken by the Government is only encouraging the communal forces which is immensely harming the unity and integrity of the country. The CITU demands that Narasimha Rao Govt should take strong action against these communal forces failing which the communal forces are likely to create further communal riots all over the country.

## Massive Protest Against Economic Policy

In solidarity with the all India protest programme of march to Parliament against the IMF-World Bank dictated disastrous anti-people Economic & Industrial Policies of the Cong(I) Government at the centre, the Left & Democratic Front, CPI(M), Cong-S & DMK, CITU, ANCEF and other trade unions/associations jointly organised mass processions and rallies all over the islands from Campbell Bay to Diglipur on 25th November.

The programme organised at Port Blair was a tremendous protest demonstration in which hundreds of working people and toiling masses, young and old, women and children both from the municipal area as well as from distant rural areas participated. The main procession started from Pongyehang which was joined by various processions of general public, trade unions, NGOs, P&T employees, etc coming from different locations and paraded the Port Blair township shouting thunderous slogans such as *Jan Virodhi Arthik Neeti Vapas Lo*, *Shramik Virodhi Udyog Neeti Nahin Chalegi*, *Desh Ki Neeti, Videshi Banatha Sharan Sharam*, *Congress Sarkar Dub Maro: Kiya Hua Vayada Poora Karo, Nahin To Kursi Chod Do*, *Boloji Raoji, Chisom Ka Dasm Ko Kya Hua?* *Boloji Raoji Saal Main Ek Karod Naukari Ko Kya Hua?* *Exit Policy Bandh Karo*, *Retrenchment Bandh Karo*; *Privatisation Bandh Karo*, etc., Local demands such as assembly for A&N Islands, Abolition of Contract system, generation of more employment, checking of price rise, stoppage of hiking bus, boat ship and electricity charges, etc were also highlighted. LDF leaders N Vasudevan, K Kandaswamy, N Sulaiman, P R Ganeshan, B Chandrachoodan, H N Parial, K Krishnan and other trade union functionaries and Kovai Manian (DMK leader from Tamilnadu) led the procession which culminated in a mass rally at Municipal Park.

Presiding over the rally, CPI(M) Secretary and CITU president N Vasudevan explained in detail how and why the policies being pursued by the Rao Government at the Centre were anti-people and made a comparison with those pro-people policies sought to be implemented by the left parties supported National Front Government which was toppled within eleven months by the imperialist reactionary vested interests combine. He asserted that unless the Rao Government was forced to change its policies, the unity, integrity and sovereignty of the country would be in peril, and furthering the sufferings of the working class and toiling masses. If the Government did not change its policies, then the people would change the government itself, he added.

Speaking on the occasion, Cong(S) leader K Kandaswamy explained how the Pradesh Council

and Counsellors were being blamed for the consequential sufferings imposed on the common people because of the anti-people policies of the Government while the Cong(I) leaders shirking their responsibilities.

Trade Union leader K G Das spoke in detail how the future of the Govt employees and workers was becoming bleak because of the wrong policies.

DMK leader Kovai Manian who spoke next dwelt at length with his usual humourous style, the political situation in the country drifting from bad to worse adding to the sufferings of the people. He exhorted the people to prepare themselves right from now to elect an alternative government as the present Government would fall not on a too distant future.

Other leaders could not, however, address the rally owing to the disruption in electricity supply. Similar protest programmes were organised in various parts of the Islands such as Diglipur, Rangat, Campbell Bay Katchal, Hug Bay, etc.

## CITU Condemns Hike in Price of Food Grains

The Secretariat of the CITU has issued the following statement on 9.1.93:

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions strongly denounces the Central Government decision to increase issue prices of food grains distributed through the public distribution system and demands its immediate reversal. Not only the public will have to pay as a result of this decision 18 percent more for wheat and 14 per cent for rice drawn from PDS but the impact of this price hike will also lead to increase in prices of food grains in the open market as well as the prices of other commodities of daily use imposing enormous burden on the common people.

This decision has obviously been taken in terms of the so called new economic policy which is being pursued by our Govt under IMF-World Bank prescription and is aimed at reducing subsidy bill at the expense of the common people.

The CITU calls upon the working class to oppose this attempt of the central Government to further increase the misery of the people.

# Karnataka State Council Meeting of CITU

Karnataka State Council of CITU met on 25-12-1992 at Bangalore. It considered the serious developments arising out of Demolition of Babri Masjid on Dec. 6th, 1992. The Council came to the conclusion that the wanton destruction of the Masjid with the connivance of the State Government and negligence of Central Govt was subversion of rule of law, secularism and National Integration. The Communal backlash and destruction of places of worship in several places in our country as well as outside could have been expected by the perpetrators and abettors in this heinous crime. The trade union movement is immediately concerned of unity of its own members which is endangered by this action which has fuelled further majority and minority communalism. It is further concerned of the fact that the movement against New Economic Policies has receded to the background in the turmoil created by Dec. 6th incident. Both the party which created the turmoil and the party which appeased them are united in carrying forward the anti-national New Economic Policy dictated by IMF. The Movement against IMF Dictated policies was gathering momentum by the Massive Rally on Nov. 25th, 1992 at New Delhi and its decision to broaden the struggle by including peasants, agricultural labourers, students, youth, women, artists, writers, lawyers etc. It is immediately after this the act perpetuating division among the people is done by the forces of 'Hindutva'.

The CITU State Council heard reports from different parts of the state regarding the developments in the state consequent to the destruction of the Mosque. It has noted that primarily the reactions of minority community was further fanned by certain political elements to take advantage of the situation; that response of state administration, both of executive magistrates and the police was in several places lathargic, improper and in certain places it was even weighed by communal interests largely of majority community and to some extent of minority community as well. The Council demanded in a resolution that the police officers who were swayed by communalism and those who acted in partisan manner be identified by judicial enquiry and be punished without any reservation.

The CITU State Council appreciated the role of the trade union movement, the left and other secular forces in taking out peace marches and making all possible attempts to restore communal harmony. The Council at the same time noted that in several parts of the state police came against the peace marches and dharnas, and it was specially noticeable that those police officers who helped communal elements were against peace marches/dharnas etc. The Council also heard of reports of police targeting some trade union leaders for being falsely implicated in cases and enquiries being conducted against them as opposed to the need to proceed

against members of banned communal organisations. The Council demanded that the state govt take steps to put an end to harassing trade union leaders who are genuinely active to promote communal harmony.

The Council resolved to carryout the action programme decided by Secular Front formed at New Delhi Convention of 11 political parties and 35 mass organisations on 19-12-92. CITU State Council decided that in association with members of left and secular parties and mass organisations, it will carry out house to house campaign from 1st to 15th Jan. 93. It will organise rallies and public meetings from 16th to 31st Jan. 1993. Special Days to be observed as per call of SECULAR FRONT will be Jan 4th-60th Anniversary of Civil Disobedience Movement; 13 January Anniversary of Gandhiji's fast at Noakhali for Communal Harmony, 26th Jan., 1993 Republic Day as also 30 January, 1993—Gandhiji's martyrdom.

CITU State Council also appealed to all member organisations of Sponsoring Committee of Karnataka Trade Unions to join the fight for Secularism.

The State Council decided further that without carrying forward the fight against NEP and the struggle of Public Sector Workers against Central Govt the communal elements cannot be isolated. It also decided to carry forward the struggle of unorganised workers, as per the action programme drawn at the All India Convention of Unorganised Workers held at Calcutta on 1-3 Nov., 1992. The Council decided to hold one day Convention of Contract Workers in the State at Bangalore on 22nd Feb., 1993 as also to hold the state conference of Beedi Workers at Mangalor on 7-8 March, 1993. The council also decided to organise one day's token strike on 15-3-1993 in support of the demand for Proper Minimum Wages for Unorganised workers and to picket govt offices that day.

**B. T. Ranadive**

on

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## BTR's Birth Anniversary : Seminar on Communal Organisation & Political Parties

On 19th December 1992, Com. BTR's birth anniversary was observed in a befitting manner by Karnataka State Committee of CITU by organising a seminar on communal organisations and political parties in A.D.A. Rangamandira, Bangalore.

Speakers were Dr. G. Ramakrishna, Professor of National college, M.C. Narasimhan, President, AITUC, K.P. Menon, ex-professor, Sarvodaya leader who had visited Viet Nam and Cuba a few years back and had written books of his visits and V.G.K. Nair, General Secretary, State CITU, Com. Samar Mukherjee, MP and CPI (M) P.B. member could not attend because of other engagements.

All the speakers paid high tribute to Com. BTR for his role in the freedom struggle, in organising and strengthening working class organisation, for proper guidance on all issues facing the working class and people, for a bold and determined stand on political twists and turns etc.

M.C. Narasimhan after recollecting his close association with BTR in the early days said that the Constitution which was adopted in 1950 has accepted secularism as one of the basic principles but the Government has failed to uphold the same and to implement it. He called the policies of National Congress led by bourgeoisie during freedom struggle and the differences of Nehru & Patel on secularism. He said Congress had the tradition of upholding secularism during freedom struggle but now secularism is not seriously taken by Congress. It is being used for vote catching purpose and not to maintain communal harmony. He said imperialism is mainly responsible for these communal troubles. Leaders have no determination to fight against it. He said Indira Gandhi used to visit temples & Rajiv Gandhi amended the constitution to please the minorities as soon as the Shah Banoo case was published. Compromising stand of Congress(I) has encouraged BJP and other communal organisations to strengthen themselves and carry on their poisonous propaganda and campaign. He appealed to carry on a determined propaganda against Communal forces.

Dr. G. Ramakrishna said that BJP is representing the most vulgarous and stinking culture of Hinduism. Hindu culture has high values and they do not come under the purview of BJP-RSS-VHP etc. He said if the BJP feels that they can wash out the insults perpetrated on them by demolishing the mosque supposed to have been built in a place

where temple existed, then what all the things have to be demolished to wash out the degradation and insults imposed on Dalits 50000 yearsback. He gave a call to fight against both Hindu & Muslim fundamentalism.

E.P. Menon said that we could not build secular India which was our dream. If Russia, China and India were united that would have created a new situation. But what that did not happen. Communal parties like BJP is keen to topple the present Govt. and some to power. People ask one question as to how the Central Govt. could not stop such a vandalism and destruction of Babri Masjid inspite of huge military and full power.

V.J.K. Nair said CITU chose this topic for seminar due to its relevency. Fighting against communal forces has been a basic line of T.U. movement. He said that main trend of nationalism did not take an anti-communal approach instead appeased communalism taking present day rulers to December 6 fiasco. He drew attention to the latest edition of bundle of thoughts published by RSS and said that book does not mention anything about Ayodhya but demanded that the Kasi mosque be handed over to them. He said grievances of Hindus are made up and orchestrated according to political expediency. Finally he quoted Gandhi who said "religion is no test of Nationality but a personal matter between man and his God. In the sense of nationality they are Indians first and Indians last no matter what religion they profess."

S. Suryanarayananarao who presided appealed to the working class to carry on united campaign against the communal forces and said that it is the working class alone which is capable to fight against such forces.

C. Nanjundappa welcomed and N.K. Upadhyaya delivered vote of thanks.

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# Fertiliser Scenario During Nineties Vis-a-Vis India's Food Security

S. B. Sengupta

The fertiliser consumption level signifies to a great extent the level of agricultural productivity of a country. During the last two decades, fertiliser consumption in India showed sustained increase.

During the recent past, fertiliser has become a focal point of discussion, debate and controversy. Discussion at different forums reflects diversified interest and opinion. But to the agricultural scientists and farmers, it remains the most important single ingredient for increasing the agricultural productivity. Co-relation between fertiliser consumption and foodgrains production has become more prominent with the advent of high-yielding varieties from late-sixties. This has laid the foundation of self-sufficiency in foodgrains production.

Crop yields have shown marked increase also in some other developing countries like China, Philippines, Vietnam, Bangladesh etc. during the period. Most of these increases have been due to the development of crop varieties which respond well to fertilisers. Consumption of fertilisers will continue to play a dominant role in increasing the agricultural productivity in the foreseeable future.

In India, consumption of fertilisers (NP&K) has increased from a meagre 0.78 million tonnes in 1965-66 to 12.8 million tonnes in 1991-92 which contributed additional foodgrains production to the tune of 99 million tonnes (raising it from 72 million to 171 million tonnes). It is now an established fact that there is a positive co-relation between the level of fertiliser consumption and India's food security.

## Imbalance Between Consumption & Domestic Production

While entire requirement of K is met through imports, the requirement of N & P is met by domestic production and import. During the space of 15 years from 1971-72 to 1986-87 our level of self-sufficiency in N & P through domestic production rose from 53 per cent to 91 per cent. But, during the subsequent years (1987-88 to 1990-91) our self-sufficiency level came down to 81 per cent.

The year 1991-92 has been a disappointing year from the point of fertiliser consumption and foodgrains production, the reason being steep increase in fertiliser prices by the Government of India. As a direct result of this short-sighted Govt. policy on fertiliser pricing,—both fertiliser consumption and foodgrains production showed a downward trend. As against a target of 13.25 million tonnes for fertiliser consumption (NP&K) in '91-92, the actual consumption was around 12.8 million tonnes, registering a shortfall of 3 per cent. Similarly, against

the target of 182.5 million tonnes for foodgrains production, the estimated production stood at around 171 million tonnes, registering a shortfall of more than 6 per cent. It once again revealed the co-relation between fertiliser consumption and foodgrains production.

## The estimated Consumption during 1992-93 & beyond

The target for fertiliser consumption (NP&K) for the current year (92-93) has been fixed at 13.5 million tonnes, when the target for foodgrains production has been fixed at 183.5 million tonnes. This represents a growth of about 5 & 7 per cent respectively over the 1991-92 level.

Annual growth in the consumption level of fertilisers from 1993-94 onwards upto 2000 A.D. should be of the same order i.e. 5 per cent per year. It puts the fertiliser requirement in 2000 A.D. at about 20 million tonnes to achieve a foodgrains production target of 240 million tonnes to feed the projected population of 99 crores by the turn of the century.

## How to meet this Requirement ?

Of the total requirement of 20 million tonnes of NPK, the estimated consumption of K, which will have to be imported totally, would be about 1.8 million tonnes. So, the estimated N & P requirement by 2000 A.D. would be to the tune of 18 million tonnes. Our indigenous production of these 2 nutrients in 1991-92 stands at 9.35 million tonnes leaving a gap of 3.45 million tonnes. This gap between indigenous production and consumption would gradually widen and in 2000 A.D., the deficit would be a staggering 9.5 million tonnes. We shall have to double our existing production within next years to meet the estimated requirement of 2000 A.D. How do we plan to bridge this wide gap ?

The sane and wise proposition would be :

To follow the policy of planned development of domestic capacity, as was done in early eighties, which narrowed the gap considerably upto 1986-87, in the following manner :

1. (a) to augment the capacity utilization of existing old Plants through revamping, which alone can add 5 lakh tonnes of N production substituting import to the tune of about 25 crores dollars (about 750 crores) annually;
- (b) expansion of old plants at the existing sites making use of infrastructural facilities and experienced technical human resources available there. Thus, additional capacity to the tune

of 12 lakh tonnes of N (1000 tonnes per day capacity) can be built at the old Plant-sites at almost half of the cost of new grass-root level Plants at new sites :

2. (a) to set up-gas-based new Plants where natural gas is available at present through existing pipeline :
- (b) to link naptha-based Plants with gas pipeline through extension gradually converting those to gas-based ones starting with Gorakhpur, which is only 150 Kms away from the existing HBJ pipeline.
- (c) the Zonal/Regional imbalance in fertiliser production should guide us while setting up new Plants.

It should be remembered that Naptha, Fuel oil and Coal-based Fertiliser Plants accounts for nearly 60% of the existing installed capacity, while gas-based Plants account for the remaining 40 percent. So, we cannot ignore or neglect the Plants, which are not gas-based, in the national interest of maintaining fertiliser supply in the one hand and removing imbalance on fertiliser production on the other.

#### Government Policy on Fertiliser

The Government policy on fertiliser (domestic production & pricing) during the last one and a half year has been neither sane nor wise. It was rather erratic. During the period, the Government has strangely pursued the policy of pushing the existing old Plants in the Public Sector towards death. Instead of taking timely steps (about 5/6 years) to revamp the old Plants (at a much lesser investment at that stage) leading to substantial increase in their capacity utilisation and thereby making those Plants viable, the Government has now withdrawn even the budgetary support hastening the process of virtual closure of these Plants in near future. This is being done when the universally acclaimed expert opinion is "There are obvious advantages of cost-effectiveness in modernisation and expansion of existing Plants. New Plants at existing locations will save cost on account of infrastructure and off-site facilities".

Under this gloomy fertiliser senario during the nineties, the Country is heading towards a situation of importing foodgrains reminding all patriotic people the humiliating years of fifties & sixties when we had to go with begging bowl and import foodgrains under disgraceful condition of PL-480 from America. Keeping in view the serious repercussion of fertiliser availability on country's food security, Trade Unions of Fertiliser Industry under the aegies of Fertiliser workers' Federation of India (FWFI) took the lead to prepare a detailed 'Techno-economic Revival Plan' for the revamping of Public Sector Fertiliser Units of HFC, FCI & PDIL, who are in the 'hit list'

of the Govt., along with proposal for expansion Projects in the existing Plant-sites. This joint move by the Trade Unions (FWFI), Officers' Associations (NCOA) and Forum of Scientists, Engineers & Technologists (FOSET) in formulating an 'Alternative Action Plan' was timely and much called for. It was an epoch-making development in the annals of Public Sector as it was aimed not only to thwart the onslaught of the 'New Industrial Policy' of the Government and protect the right to work of the employees but also towards attainment of self-sufficiency and reliance in fertiliser production and technology so vital for the country's food-security.

While the Prime Minister, Finance Minister & Fertiliser Minister had assured time to favourably consider the aforesaid 'Techno-Economic Revival Plan' submitted to them, the Labour Minister had categorically assured in the 'Special Tripartite Committee Meeting' on 22nd April 1992, in reply to the strong arguments put forward by Comrade S. Dev Roye, Secretary, FWFI, that the Government would favourably examine the 'Revival Plan' and discuss the matter at the Unit, Company and Ministry level at further details. Though there was no discussion at Unit and Company level, a meeting took place in the Ministry on 1st October 1992 with the representatives of FWFI, NCOA and FOSET where only broad outlines were discussed with the decision that further rounds of discussion will follow. But strangely enough these Companies were referred to BIFR. The BIFR, in its hearing on 12th November last, took cognigence of the "Revival Plan" and asked the Fertiliser Ministry to complete the process of ongoing negotiations and scrutiny to evolve a viable alternative within 31st March 1993, —the Ministry's (and Govt's) sincerity in this respect is suspect.

Now when the Government has already taken certain steps to push these fertiliser Units towards their ultimate closure and when its fertiliser policy including pricing manifests it least concern for the Industry as a whole and particularly the Public Sector Fertiliser Industry and least regard for the long-term agricultural productivity based on balanced fertiliser application, how the goal of maintaining Country's food-security can be achieved? Food security is inseparable from national security. Should we increasingly become more dependant on important for a vital input like fertiliser? Fertiliser prices in international market are now rising and any nominal shortfall can accelerate this trend. The cost of imported fertiliser are getting even higher in view increase in freight, insurance and rupee depreciation.

#### Recent Shift in Fertiliser Pricing Policy & its Effect:

Fertiliser was being rightly considered so long as an essential commodity and farmers got it at statutory price. The Government compensated for the deficit in cost of production to the manufacturers.

The cost of production was being calculated under certain fixed normative yardstick called "retention price formula". This formula of calculating retention price was heavily tilted in favour of new Plants. The old Plants became the constant victim of this distorted retention pricing policy. A rational and prudent pricing policy would not have made the picture of FCI & HFC so dismal.

The Govt. of India suddenly declared a steep increase of an average of 40 percent in fertiliser prices first on July 25, 1991, and later bringing it down to 30 on August 14, 1991. The Govt has further declared 3 months back complete decontrol of Phosphatic & Potassic fertilisers. This has created a lopsided nutrient price structure. As a result, prices of Diammonium Phosphate has doubled and muriate of Potash has tripled. Apart from its direct impact on cost of production, what matters seriously is its negative impact on the efficiency of fertiliser use in country. The imbalanced use of Nitrogenous fertiliser has already started showing its harmful effect on soil fertility and productivity even in Punjab and many other areas of northern & eastern zone. When N alone is used, fertiliser application becomes uneconomical at application rate of 100 to 120 kg. per hectare, analysis of data has shown. But when appropriate amount of P & K is added, fertilisers continue to be economical boosting yield even at application rates of 230 to 250 kg. per hectare. The price structure resulting from decontrol will thus contribute to the decline of its productivity. So, the partial decontrol represents a most inappropriate step.

The increase in Phosphatic and Potassic fertilisers, in conjunction with 10 per cent decrease in Urea prices (bringing down the quantum of increase to 20 per cent) are expected to bring about a saving of nearly 3000 crores annually, as against the current subsidy bill for fertilisers amounting to 6219 crores. However, the reality will be different as the savings in subsidy will be offset in large measure by the revenue deduction in Railway freight, abolition of import duties, raw materials etc., recommended by Joint Parliamentary Committee.

Another significant impact would stem from the increase in support prices to compensate farmers for higher fertiliser prices. This means that unless issue prices are increased, the food subsidy-bill will increase. If prices are not raised, the decrease in fertiliser subsidy would result in the increase in food subsidy. If issue prices of food are

also raised under the pressure of IMF, as has been done in case of reducing fertiliser subsidy, the inflation will be further fuelled by rising food prices.

Now let us see the farm-subsidy scenario of America and other developed countries. The per hectare and per capita farm-subsidy in America is 195 and 149 dollars respectively, in Canada it is 152 and 264 dollars and in European countries it is 987 and 238 dollars respectively whereas in India farm-subsidy is a meagre 22 dollars per hectare and 4 dollars per capita. The above figures show the subsidy outgo to the farm sector in developed countries in comparison to which India's farm-subsidy is rather negligible. The per hectare consumption of fertilisers and the productivity in India and other developing countries are also much less than the developed countries. Yet the U.S.A. and its allies dictate us through IMF most unabashedly to reduce further whatever meagre farm-subsidy is given in India and our Govt. carry out most obediently their dictates even if it means pushing the wheels of green revolution back, being totally oblivious of the plight of 50 per cent of our people, who are below the poverty line having very little purchasing power.

Joint Parliamentary Committee has itself acknowledged that Institutional factors such as a reliable and adequate input delivery system backed up by good extension services are the more important determinants of fertiliser consumption and efficiency of fertiliser use. And it is an well-established fact that Institutional infrastructure for fertiliser promotion through farmers' education in our country is lacking to a great extent. With the increase in fertiliser prices, fertiliser use efficiency has become all the more necessary and relevant. The Govt. & the Fertilizer Industry will have to give more emphasis on increasing fertiliser use-efficiency. Institutional network has to be expanded further. But, the most shocking feature under this perspective is the decision to wind up the premier fertilizer Promotion Division namely, Fertilizer Promotion & Agricultural Research Division (FP&ARD) now under Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation Limited.

All these shocking developments point towards a gloomy picture of fertiliser scenario during the nineties and its inevitable impact on the country's food security which call for a national debate involving Agricultural Scientists, eminent Economists, People's representatives and the media to create a strong public opinion to reverse the anti-farmer and anti-people fertiliser policy of the Government.

## Fertilizer Workers to Launch Nationwide Vigorous movement

The recently concluded 9th biennial conference of the Fertilizer Workers' Federation of India (FWFI) has decided to launch a massive campaign jointly with other trade unions to culminate into a countrywide vigorous long drawn movement to save the country's fertilizer industry which is moving towards ruination due to the policies pursued by the Narasimha Rao Govt in the matter of developing indigenous technology and increasing production, pricing of inputs and the products, imposing higher taxation burden, withdrawal of subsidy and extending concessions to foreign companies to capture the country's market. As a result of the dangerous steps of the Govt many fertilizer units in dire need of investment for technological upgradation are facing the threat of closure and consequent loss of job by about 25,000 employees, healthy units are turning sick and instead of expansion, the indigenous fertilizer industry is facing shrinkage and the usage of fertilizer is declining which in turn would bring down the agricultural production of the country threatening to create a situation of shortage of food-grain.

The FWFI has also decided to organise country-wide campaign against communalism and welcomed decisions of the Rashtriya Ekta Abhiyan and has asked its constituents to play active role for successful implementation of the programmes. The conference has asked the unions to start fullfledged preparations for the 72 hours strike called by the CPSTU and also implementation of the programmes of the Sponsoring Committee of Trade Unions in its fight against the new Economic Policy.

The conference was held at FACT, Udyogamandal, Kerala from 27th to 30th December 1992. 172 delegates from 22 unions from all over the country representing a membership of 28,000 attended the conference.

In his inaugural speech Com. M K Pandhe denounced the new Economic Policy of the Govt and explained as to how the country is facing the danger of de-industrialisation. He said that the well run public sector units are becoming sick due to the wrong policy of the Govt. He highlighted the role of the working class in the two successful nationwide strikes and historic march to Parliament on 25th November 1992. He asked the delegates to prepare for the next phase of action as decided in the 25th November rally. While condemning the Ayodhya incident and expressing serious concern for the communal virus which has engulfed the country he urged to fight the communal forces unitedly on priority basis.

The conference adopted many resolutions on issues of national and international importance and concerning the trade unions, peasantry, unorganised workers, working women etc. The conference unanimously elected a 45 member committee with

18 office bearers.

The distinguished features of the conference were the seminars and traditional cultural functions of Kerala organised on the occasion. "The New Economic Policy and Its Impact on fertilizer Industry" was addressed amongst others by Com. E. Balanandan, Padmashree Paulpothen, Director, Marketing and General Manager (Tech) of FACT etc. Com. Balanandan in his speech spoke on the economic crisis in the advanced capitalist countries and inferred why and how the New Economic Policy is bound to bring disaster to our economy. He also noted how the strategic and core sector industries are handed over to the multinational companies by the Govt. and concluded the crisis in the fertilizer industry is the result of such policy. The positive development noted by him is the growing united movement of the working class against the policies which must be intensified and carried forward which can defeat the anti-national policies of the Govt. The other speakers also criticised the fertilizer policy of the Govt. as a pursuit of the New Economic Policy. Mr. Paulpothen, who is considered as one of the pioneers of the fertilizer industry in the country, narrated how the country was brought to the position of self-sufficiency in indigenous production and consequent growth in foodgrain production. He expressed his strong opposition to the current policy which is bound to bring disaster to our indigenous fertilizer industry and seriously affect the country's foodgrain production.

The other seminar titled 'Secularism and Working Class' was addressed amongst other by Dr. M. Leelavaty, Prof. M.K. Sanu ect. The speakers expressed their grave concern at the communal holocaust witnessed by the country consequent upon the national crime committed by demolishing the Babri Masjid at Ayodhya. The speakers pointed out as to how the working class becomes the major victim of communal orgy. They, therefore, concluded that in the fight against communalism and for safeguarding secularism and communal amity the working class must play most vital role.

32 delegates participated in the discussion on the General Secretary's report which included 4 women speakers. The speakers made many important suggestions which were accepted for incorporation. As per the credential committee report 79 delegates were in the age group of 31-40 and 64 in the age group of 41-50 which indicates youthful character of overwhelming majority of the delegates.

A public meeting was held in the evening of 30.12.92 presided over by the re-elected president Com. R.K. Pandey of the federation and addressed by amongst others by Com. E. Balanandan, M.P., Com. Pankajakshan, former Labour Minister of Kerala and Com. Meenakshi Thampan, MLA.

# Trade Unions Oppose Privatisation of IISCO, Burnpur

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions has issued the following statement on 7.1.93:

In a meeting held in New Delhi on 6.1.93, convened by Sankaran Committee appointed by the Government of India to recommend about private participation in Indian Iron and Steel Company (IISCO), all the Central Trade Unions namely, INTUC, CITU, AITUC, HMS, and BMS expressed their strong opposition to any measure to privatise IISCO.

The bids given by various private parties both Indian and foreign will be opened on 27th January 1993 and the Committee wanted to know the views of the Trade Unions.

The Trade Unions demanded that the IISCO should be modernised as per commitment given by the SAIL management to the Trade Unions in July 1989.

The trade unions wanted the Committee to

explore the possibilities of keeping the IISCO in the public sector and workers will cooperate to make the unit viable.

M K Pandhe, General Secretary, CITU drew the attention of the Committee that the IISCO Workers will physically resist any attempt to privatise the IISCO. He pointed out that privatisation of IISCO may be used in other steel plants also and therefore this may be a beginning of further privatisation of public sector industries.

Gopeswer, General Secretary, INTUC observed that government must honour all the commitments given to the workers. The unity achieved among trade union movements in IISCO will not accept any step of privatisation. Among those who spoke in the meeting were Prabhakar Ghatte, BMS, H. Chatto Roj, AITUC, R. Verma, HMS.

The CITU was represented in the meeting by Chandrashekar Mukherjee, Hardhan Ray, M.P., J N Kar Chowdhury and Ashok Mukherjee.

## Consumer Price Index Numbers for Industrial Workers

(Base 1982 = 100)

Centre	Sept. 1992	Oct. 1992	Linking factor for Old base									
ALL-INDIA			4.93	Belgaum	252	253	—	Varanasi	262	260	5.12	
Gudur	244	263	4.33	Hubli-Dharwar	235	235	—	Asansol	226	228	4.77	
Guntur	246	245	5.60	Mercara	235	235	—	Calcutta	245	248	4.74	
Hyderabad	230	231	5.23	Alwaye	223	230	5.19	Darjeeling	220	223	4.55	
Visakhapatnam	242	245	—	Mundakayam	227	236	4.67	Durgapur	245	248	—	
Warrangal	247	247	—	Quilon	226	237	—	Haldia	255	256	—	
Doom-Dooma-				Trivandrum	234	242	—	Howrah	259	263	4.12	
Tinasukia	221	219	4.05	Balaghat	251	246	5.24	Jalpaiguri	229	229	4.16	
Guwahati	241	243	—	Bhilai	222	220	3.49	Raniganj	222	223	4.40	
Labac-Silchar	220	223	3.96	Bhopal	257	259	5.46	Chandigarh	243	243	—	
Mariani-Jorhat	236	236	3.95	Indore	255	252	5.18	Delhi	256	259	4.97	
Rangapara-Tezpur	234	237	4.29	Jabalpur	262	259	6.41	Pondicherry	264	267	—	
Jamshedpur	230	232	4.68	Bombay	262	260	5.12					
Jharia	223	225	4.63	Nagpur	263	258	4.99					
Kodarma	216	220	5.43	Nasik	262	256	—					
Monghyr	239	243	5.29	Pune	269	266	—	Kothagudem	245	247	3.25	
Noamundi	233	233	4.58	Sholapur	269	266	5.03	Himachal Pradesh	234	233	3.75	
Ranchi-Hatia	240	242	—	Barbil	236	238	5.00	Bhilwara	245	244	3.20	
Ahmedabad	246	245	4.78	Rourkela	222	225	3.59	Chindwara	245	245	2.59	
Baroda	244	246	—	Amritsar	225	225	5.19	Tripura	242	246	4.37	
Bhavnagar	248	245	4.99	Ludhiana	224	224	—	Goa	263	262	3.40	
Rajkot	244	241	—	Ajmer	249	247	5.01					
Surat	260	254	—	Jaipur	235	233	5.17					
Faridabad	236	235	—	Coimbatore	232	233	5.35					
Yamunanagar	229	225	5.53	Coonoor	249	252	4.80					
Srinagar	238	240	5.47	Madras	242	247	5.05					
Bangalore	252	250	5.66	Maduri	246	250	5.27					
				Salem	223	230	—	Ammathi	1960	873	895	
				Tiruchirapally	239	247	—	Chickmagalur	1960	887	894	
				Agra	238	235	—	Kolar Gold Field	1960	910	914	
				Ghaziabad	241	238	—	Gwalior	1960	1022	1025	
				Kanpur	249	248	4.69	Sambalpur	—	—	—	
				Saharanpur	236	236	5.06	Berhampur	—	—	—	
								Cuttack	—	—	—	

Note: Figures on old base can be obtained by multiplying the Index Number on New Base by the linking factor given and rounding off the result to nearest whole number.

—Dash denotes new centres under 1982 series.

# Textile Workers Strike In Tamilnadu

Nearly 2 lakhs of Textile Workers in Tamilnadu went on an indefinite strike from 15th December, defying a ban order issued by the Government of Tamilnadu, on the eve of the strike.

Textile workers in Tamilnadu have been preparing for the struggle in support of the 30 point Charter of demands. The existing wage settlement, in continuation of an earlier award by special Industrial Tribunal had expired by March 91.

After submission of separate charter of demands all the seven central Trade Unions—CITU, AITUC, LPF, INTUC, HMS, NLO and ATP—had submitted joint charter in October 1991. After district level Joint Action Committee held a state wide convention in Madurai on 15th August. The convention had decided to go on a state wide strike. Later, the Joint Action Committee decided to go on strike which was postponed to 15th December after the State Labour Commissioner had intervened.

## Managements attitude

During the conciliations, SIMA (South Indian Mills Association) took the stand that no management has authorised them to discuss the wages issue. Actually, SIMA and employers were preparing for a counter offensive. After a meeting of SIMA, they decided that mills will separately give counter demands to the unions. The major points in the counter demands were similar.

These counter demands included increase of work load, modernisation which meant reduction of workforce, wages including DA linked to productivity freezing of the right of the management to deploy the workers as they wish, contract workers to be utilised in regular production process, a scheme to appoint workers for 'Training' for 36 months and lumpsum payment for the next 36 months and gradual absorption to regular employment and occupational wages etc. Joint Action Committee rejected the position of employers. CITU led Textile Workers Federation published 60,000 copies of a hand bill explaining the anti-labour content of the counter demands and calling upon workers to resist this offensive.

It was in these circumstances, the State Labour Minister called a meeting of representatives of employers and joint Action Committee on 11th December. SIMA repeated their earlier position. The Minister then suggested a tripartite committee under the chairmanship of the state labour commissioner, which will discuss the demands of employees and the employer and unsettled issues will be left to the decisions of the Government. Joint Action Committee could not accept this. It was decided to have a full meeting of JAC on 13th. This meeting decided to go ahead. With the strike on 15th December, all members of JAC, except ATP, the ruling

party's Trade Union wing, opposed the Ban order and added upon workers to go on strike defying the ban. Textile workers all over the state responded to the call and strike was complete success. Even the employers had to agree that the response to strike call was much more than what was expected by them.

The State Government, which had banned the strike was forced to intervene again. The Labour Minister called a meeting of both parties. Joint Action Committee except ATP demanded revoking of 10(B) order, interim relief of Rs. 200 per month, a lumpsum of Rs. 2000/- and payment of interim relief to all workers, including casual, temporary, Apprentices etc. It was also demanded that some of the demands which were not included in the reference should be included and the employers demands should not be considered. If all these were accepted, JAC was prepared to accept a tripartite body to discuss the issue. Employers were not for any change in the earlier Govt. order.

On 20th Government decided to have certain modifications in the earlier order. In addition to the interim relief, an adhoc amount of Rs. 750 to permanent workers and Rs. 450/- to Badlis workers in mills in the more than 6000 spindles will be paid. In the mills with spindles between 2201 and 6000 this amount will be Rs. 300/- while permanent workers and Badlis will be paid Rs. 125 per month as interim relief, all other workers like casual, temporary will be given an increase of Rs. 3 per day.

Some more demands of unions, like medical allowance, fixation number of workers required were also referred. It was also agreed that a special Industrial Tribunal with the status of the High Court Judge will be constituted.

It was also agreed that there will be no victimisations and all case registered during strike will be withdrawn.

Though CITU was not happy with the situation, all unions unanimously decided to withdraw the strike from 21st morning and continue to jointly fight the offensives of the employers.

CITU and its Textile workers federation has congratulated the workers for this magnificent strike. Though the ruling party's Trade Union wing had withdrawn from the strike, the strike was cent percent in almost all mills.

SIMA and the employers now trying to break the unity of the workers by trying to foist new agreements on denying interim relief in the name of earlier settlement some managements have gone to court on this.

Joint Action Committee has decided to fight this offensive and chalked out a programme of tour by the State Leaders. It is sure that the textile workers in Tamilnadu will face this offensive jointly and defeat it.

# Second Indian Ocean Region Trade Union Conference

L. Uma Maheshwari

The Second Indian Ocean Region Trade Union Conference was held at Perth, the Capital City of Western Australia during December 4-11, 1992. The Conference was hosted by the Trades and Labour Council of Western Australia. 75 delegates from 12 countries in the Region participated in the Conference. The participants were from India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Hong Kong, South Korea, Philippines, Australia, Vietnam, Zimbabwe and South Africa. A Special Representative from Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) greeted the Conference.

From India, only CITU was invited. The team was led by Com. Chitta Brata Majumdar, General Secretary, CITU, West Bengal and consisted of Com. Tapan Sen, Secretary, Steel Authority of India Employee's Union, Com. Chandran Pillai, General Secretary FACT Employees Union and Com. Uma Maheshwari Vice President, Tamil Nadu General Insurance Employees' Association, a State Unit of All India Insurance Employees' Association (AIIEA).

The conference was inaugurated by Mrs. Yvonne Henderson, Minister for Labour Relations, Australia.

The main focus of discussions was on the impact of Economic Restructuring under the aegis of IMF-World Bank, on the working class, State and Labour movement responses, Building up of Regional Solidarity and the role of women in Trade Union movement. The Conference also discussed about the future directions for the Indian Ocean Region.

The Conference discussed at length the experiences of the participants on economic trends, viewed in terms of their implications for the social, economic and political experience and position of the working class. The experiences reflected many common features-privatisation, opening of national economy to multinationals and foreign capital. How these affected the working class and the steps being taken by the Trade Unions to resist the onslaught were also discussed.

The experiences of delegates, in particular, from South Korea, Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia and Hong Kong vividly revealed how repression was let loose by the Government in these countries on the working and common people, deterioration in the standards of living of the people, mounting unemployment problem and infringement of rights of the workers and the common people and increasing domination of foreign capital. It is to be remembered here that the Indian rulers project these countries as the examples of success of the kind of economic programmes that are being followed presently by the Indian Government. The plight of the working and common people of the countries menti-

oned above was due to the economic restructuring programmes as dictated by the World Bank, IMF and other international agencies, it was felt.

## Special Conference of Working Women :

A special conference of woman delegates who attended the Conference from South Africa, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Indonesia, India, Philippines and Australia was also held. Experiences on organising women in trade union movement in these countries were exchanged. Ignorance of laws and their rights and non-involvement in trade union activities for fear of losing jobs were the root cause of exploitation of woman workers by the employers could be gauged from the discussions. To overcome this, it was felt necessary that besides giving exclusive attention to the problems of women, serious efforts should also be made to bring them to the forefront in trade union movements.

The notable feature of the discussions in the 8 day Conference was the expression in unambiguous terms that capitalism cannot be the solution to problems of workers. This was expressed while deliberating on problems arising out of the new offensive of capital both nationally and internationally in the backdrop of collapse of socialist economies in Soviet Union and East Europe.

The conference also stressed the need for developing permanent co-ordination among the trade union movements in the different countries of the region and also developing common strategies for struggle and mutual solidarity between the movements in these countries and decided to develop a system of co-ordination within the region with a view to exchanging experience and information, carrying on research on political, social and economic impact of economic restructuring. It was also decided to publish new letters periodically so as to exchange information.

It was decided to hold the next conference of the region in November 1994.

The conference also adopted a Social Code of Conduct highlighting demands for basic trade union and human rights and the aspects of solidarity between the movements of different countries against the offensive of multinational corporations.

The message of the conference in essence was that the working class struggle in any country must address the problems internationally in cohesion with their counter-parts in other countries as well while carrying on struggles at national level.

## Cultural Conference:

A conference of cultural activists within the trade  
(Con'd on page 21)

## The Concrete Wall, A Symbol of Division

A concrete wall dividing Korea into two parts stretches out in the area south of the Military Demarcation Line.

It is 240 km in total length. It is 10 to 19 meters wide at the bottom, 3 to 7 meters wide in the upper part and 5 to 8 metres in height. It was built by the south Korean authorities for several years from 1977 and 800,000 tons of cement, 200,000 tons of reinforcement and 3,500,000 cubic metres of mixtures were used for its construction.

Because of this concrete wall 27 sub-counties and 8 counties were divided into halves and 514 villages disappeared.

Four railways including the Seoul-Sinuiju Line and Seoul-Wonsan line, 3 first-rate highways, 24 second-grade highways and 197 small and medium-sized roads were cut.

The Korean people have been living separated in the north and the south for 46 years and many of them are so unfortunate as not to know whether families and relatives are alive or not, barred from meeting or writing each other. In addition to this great tragedy the concrete wall was built to bisect the Korean territory in two forever. What a disgusting thing it is.

In his New Year Address last year, respected President Kim Il Sung advanced a historic proposal for pulling down the concrete wall, ensuring free travel and opening all doors between the north and the south in order to put an end to the misfortunes and tragedy of the Korean people.

This proposal enjoys full support among the peace-loving people the world over, to say nothing of the Korean people.

Flurried by the evermounting public opinion at home and abroad which calls for tearing down the barrier, the south Korean authorities are foolishly describing this huge concrete wall as an "anti-tank barricade".

If it is true, they would not have needed to build it so largely and so highly & even on the steep mountaintops which are inaccessible to the tanks.

The concrete wall is dotted with pillboxes and iron gates can be seen at regular intervals. Therefore, from there military provocations can be committed against the north at any moment. It is a disgrace to our nation that such a concrete wall exists in Korea.

Construction of the concrete wall by the south Korean authorities is an unpardonable criminal act designed to bisect Korea into the north and the south and perpetuate national division.

If they truly want the north-south interchange and national reunification, the south Korean authorities must remove this concrete wall.

The Korean people do not want to live separated by longer. If the concrete wall is demolished and free travel is ensured and all doors opened between the north and the south a favourable phase will be brought in achieving national reunification.

## Meeting of the Road Transport Co-ordination Committee

All India Road Transport Coordination Committee met on 23rd January 1993 at HMS office. M.K. Pandhe and Shyamal Chakrabarty (CITU), Bhao Fatak (HMS), Ishwar Singh (AITUC) and some leaders of different Trade Unions attended the meeting. The meeting expressed its deep concern to the recent communal disturbances in our country. The meeting urged upon the workers in general and transport workers in particular to make vigorous campaigns for communal harmony. The communal riots which took place in different parts of our country already made a set back of the going movements against economic policies of the Central Government. Unless unity of the working class is achieved we will not get the desired result of the movement.

The Coordination Committee noted with great satisfaction some of the decisions arrived at the meeting of the Transport Development Council where Transport Ministers of all the States participated. The TDC unanimously rejected the Planning Commission's guideline aimed to reduce the operational strength of the State Transport Corporation. The guideline of the Planning Commission was (I) There should be no expansion of the State Road Transport Undertaking (II) The State Road Transport Undertaking should gradually make room for private sector except in cases where private sector is unlikely to come.

Again the TDC rejected the proposal that State Road Transport Undertakings would not get preference to obtain permits. The proposal mooted that preferential allotment of the STUs should be given only to a maximum of 50% of the total number of the State carriage permits which would include cooperative societies and ex-servicemen and for the balance 50% may be allotted to the private sector. This proposal also rejected by another proposal put forward by Shri Shyamal Chakrabarty, Transport Minister, West Bengal to maintain existing preference for the STUs which was supported by some other States and the proposal to curb the preference to the STRUs has been rejected.

The TDC also unanimously passed a resolution to restore capital contribution to Road Transport Corporations which was stopped by the Central Government by a cabinet resolution.

The Coordination Committee decided to hold a national seminar on 4th and 5th March at Bangalore where eminent personalities like economists, Ministers of Transport, Trade Union leaders, Chairmen and Managing Directors and Union leaders irrespective of their political affiliations will be invited. This seminar will conduct different workshops on road transport industry and express its views.

The Coordination Committee urged upon all its friendly Unions demand immediate wage settlement of Karnataka Road Transport Workers and withdrawal of all the anti-labour policies and atrocities let loose by Kerala Government. The Committee also decided to protest against U.P. Government's move to dismantle the State Transport Corporations and offering the buses to the Workers' Cooperatives.

## Pledge to Maintain Unity

# INTUC Joins Trade Unions to Appeal to the Working Class of India

*[We are publishing hereunder the Appeal & Pledge signed & issued by the INTUC jointly with other Trade Unions—Ed.]*

December 6, 1992 plunged the country into darkness. The destruction of the Babri Masjid and consequent events are a determined attack on the nation's unity.

The worst sufferers were the poor people who were deprived of their livelihood. The recent holocaust in Bombay had tarnished our country's image. Communal bigots have stopped so low as to prevent workers of a particular community from entering into the factories.

Religious intolerance and communalisation of politics are the negation of our rich heritage, our composite culture of tolerance and secular democracy and are posing a grave threat to the unity and integrity of our nation.

Mahatma Gandhi had said: "The ideal of communal unity is not a new one. It has always been before the country as one of the pillars of national independence. Without it independence cannot last."

On January 23, 1948, just a week before his assassination, he had said: "It would spell the ruin of both the Hindu religion and the majority community if the latter, in the intoxication of power, entertains the belief that it can crush the minority community and establish a purely Hindu Raj."

The workers and their trade unions are free from all considerations of religion, community caste and language, which are being used by unscrupulous communal elements to divide the people. The need of the hour is for the working class movement to rise to the occasion as it is ideally suited for an integrated thinking and preserve India as indivisible whole.

We, therefore, appeal to all workers and their unions, irrespective of affiliation, to assemble on the 30th January 1993, Gandhiji's martyrdom day and take the following pledge at 11.00 AM.

### PLEDGE

With the nation's unity in mind, I pledge:

I, as a citizen of India, believe in a peaceful, united, humane, egalitarian and prosperous India.

I pledge to root out communalism from our land and reject all moves to arouse religious passions for political ends.

I dedicate myself to defend the secular and democratic foundations of the Indian constitution.

I solemnly commit myself to preserve & strengthen India's unity and communal harmony.

We appeal to all workers to continue to struggle against all types of fundamentalism and preserve unity and solidarity of the working class of India against odds and under all circumstances.

Sd/-

(Gopeshwar)  
General Secretary  
INTUC

(Umraomal Purohit)  
General Secretary  
H.M.S.

(Prithi Chandra)  
President  
UTUC (LS)

(Abani Roy)  
Secretary  
UTUC

Sd/-

(M.K. Pandhe)  
General Secretary  
CITU

(B.D. Joshi)  
Actg. General Secretary  
AITUC

(N.M. Barot)  
General Secretary  
NLO

(D.D. Shastri)  
Vice President  
TUCC

## Tamilnadu Trade Unions Prepare for Campaign on National Unity

Working People all over Tamilnadu will join their brethren all over the country in the campaign for National Unity and Communal harmony. A State level meeting of sponsoring committee of Trade Unions, On 12th January endorsed the call given at the National level. The meeting was attended by CITU, AITUC, LPF, UTUC (LS) AITUC and representatives of Industrial Federations and Unions of employees in Banks, Teachers, Insurance, State and Central Government employees, Telecommunication and Medical Representatives.

The meeting called upon workers and employees to participate in the 'Human Chance' all over the State on 20th January.

Workers and employees will take the unity pledge on 30th January, along with people all over the country. All Unions will participate in the signature campaign and this will start on January 30.

A mass meeting is to be held in Madras, on 31st January, as a part of the All India Campaign and is to be addressed by All India leaders belonging to 'Campaign for National Unity'. The meeting called upon the Working people to attend the meeting in large numbers.

The meeting also decided to organise massive unity marches in Industrial Centres during February and also to organise conventions on communal harmony.

The committee also called upon all working sections or working people to participate in this campaign on National Unity.

# New World Order Invades Somalia

By Tom Pearson

*[We are publishing hereunder an article published in the Gurdian, Australia on 9.12.1992—Ed.]*

The invasion and occupation of Somalia, in the name of the United Nations, will give the United States a foothold on the Horn of Africa and a bridgehead to the Middle East.

It is a strategic military action carried out under the flag of the United Nations. Smaller forces from other UN member countries, including Australia, will follow in big brother's wake.

With breath-taking hypocrisy, George Bush justifies this latest military action by claiming that the objective is "humanitarian aid".

This is the same US and United Nations which, through the savage imposition of sanctions against Iraq, is bringing about the starvation and death of children in that country.

Following the overthrow of the US-backed regime of Siad Barre in January 1991, anarchy took hold in Somalia. Almost all the government disintegrated. Fighting between clan-based groups escalated.

Disease and starvation have spread throughout the country. The US watched and waited. For a time all attention was given to the conflict in Yugoslavia. Little was done by the US to assist the starving people of Somalia.

The US force is to comprise 30,000 heavily armed troops equipped with artillery, tanks, helicopters and other paraphernalia of war.

Why is such an iron fist and display of military power necessary when the Somali armed gangs are reported to be little more than roving bands of youths with rifles?

The answer is to be found in Somalia's strategic position. She has borders with Ethiopia and Kenya. For many years the Barre regime carried out a war with the then socialist Ethiopia.

Somalia's strategic importance can be seen in its proximity to the oil riches of the Middle East and north Africa. To the north-west is Sudan, Egypt and Libya.

To the north-east, across the Gulf of Aden, is Yemen, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Turkey. Due north, across the Mediterranean, is Europe. And across the Arabian Sea, India.

The US move may also be related to the new developments in the former Soviet Union.

Somalian territory could become yet another military launching pad, tightening US control over

political and economic developments in the region.

It is almost certain that attempts will be made to set up a government in Somalia which will be dependent on and answerable to the US.

The tens of thousands of Somalians who are dying from disease and starvation, while initially welcoming the food aid, may come to regret the price which will be demanded in return.

As in the Gulf War the US will command the occupation forces and give orders authorised by the UN Security Council and acting under its auspices.

The UN Security Council decision directs that a UN headquarters be set up. Boutros Boutros Ghali, UN Secretary-General has been given the final say as to when the forces must withdraw but this is subject to Security Council approval.

Once again the US is attempting to have others finance its military expeditions. Japan, Taiwan and Middle East countries have already been asked about paying for the invasion.

The spineless compliance of UN Security Council members shows yet again that the UN has become the vehicle by which the major capitalist powers, particularly the US, are attempting to impose their world domination. This is the New World Order in action.

To achieve their aims they will bomb countries to rubble, force whole populations to live in poverty and to die of disease and starvation and "send in the marines" when they decide to occupy a country.

The UN is increasingly becoming a military policeman instead of its intended role of peacemaker, upholding the right to independence of all member states and social justice for the people of all countries.

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*(From Page 18)*

union movement was also held simultaneously during December 7-12, 1992. Cultural delegates from the participating trade unions took part in the conference. From India, Com. Gopal Adhikari, Haldia Port Workers' Union and Com. Amal Nayak, Indian Oil Corporation, West Bengal participated. This conference also exchanged useful experiences of the cultural workers of the trade union movement in taking the message of struggle to workers and the people through cultural programmes.

## WFTU Calls for Halting Racist Acts

*(The World Federation of Trade Unions has issued the following Statement :*

The WFTU expresses its deep disquiet and its indignation at racist and xenophobic acts in Europe and in the world.

The WFTU offers its sincere condolence to the families of those who have paid for these barbaric acts with their lives.

At a recent trade union symposium held in Athens, the WFTU, together with other anti-racist forces, brought the attention of all to the dangers generated by the situation and called upon all trade union forces and others to act against the dangers of racism.

The WFTU shows solidarity and supports the position of the trade unions and anti-racist forces which are acting and demanding that the authorities responsible take all measures necessary to impose heavy penalties upon the authors of these inhuman acts.

The economic plundering of various countries in the world, a factor in the displacement of populations and immigration, should be ended; and in all areas should be created the conditions for economic development responding to the satisfaction of the needs of humanity in order to halt the permanent worsening of mass unemployment and social upheavals, a factor in insecurity and xenophobia.

The disastrous consequences of fascism for the World fifty years ago are not so distant a memory that they should be forgotten.

The WFTU considers that faced with the current situation, the very grave dangers of aggravation that it generates, and the development in extreme nationalism, as shown by the situation of the peoples in the former Yugoslavia, all trade unions and all forces acting for the respect for human rights, peace and social progress must take a united stand for effective action, to fight together against racist and xenophobic acts and to impose real and lasting solutions paving the way for a world characterised by peace and solidarity.

## CITU Condemns Attack on the Polish Trade Union Alliance

The Polish Trade Union Alliance (OPZZ), the largest Trade Union organisation in Poland having membership of 4.75 million, twice that of 'Solidarity' is strongly resisting the attempt of the Polish authorities to annihilate the organisation by freezing its accounts and demanding of the union to pay an inflated amount of US \$ 5 million dollars as compensation for the property transferred to union in 1984.

Towards this the Polish authorities have enacted a law on Oct. 25, 1990 which was only a colourable

excuse to financially strangulate OPZZ and against which the constitutional Tribunal of Poland on February 25, 1992 had decided that the adopted calculation index was exceedingly high and that bank interest should apply.

The Polish Trade Union Alliance (OPZZ) while supporting and contributing to the acceleration of the system changes in Poland has been consistently fighting against the anti-employees policy of the government leading to massive unemployment touching almost 3 million, reduction of social allowance, decline in education and culture.

The Alliance which was established in 1984, provided throughout 80's welfare and assistance to employees, irrespective of their union membership and protected the fundamental rights of the employees against the lawlessness of employers.

The Polish Parliament dominated by post 'Solidarity' groups has enacted the undemocratic anti trade union law in an attempt to liquidate the trade union movement represented by the alliance.

The Polish Trade Union Alliance (OPZZ) has appealed to the ILO and to the international Trade Union organisations for support and assistance in its fight against the authoritarian and undemocratic law.

The CITU has sent a protest letter to the Polish Government condemning its action and demanding repeal of the law.

## Assam Trade Unions Visit Riot Affected Areas

A trade union delegation from the Sponsoring Committee of Trade Unions of Assam consisting of CITU, AITUC, HMS, UTUC-LS, AICCTU and different federations of the employees of Bank, Insurance, Railway, Defence, Drugs, & Pharmaceuticals, Central & State Govt etc, visited the riot affected areas of Nagaon district on 29.12.92. The delegation visited Gastala, Gutigaon, Kurkut Basti, Niz Dabaka, Nahargaon, Mikir Hati, Puran Bazar, Binnakandi, Pachim Bagori, Burigaon, Changmazi, Mikirpathar etc and enquired on the spot about the unfortunate happenings that followed after the demolition of the Babri Masjid on 6th December 1992. The delegation were of the impression that timely deployment of forces would have averted the catastrophe. It remained a mystery why the army was sent back on 7.12.92 and that too under whose order. Allegations were there that due to interventions of a Ruling Cong (I) MLA and in presence of a Minister the entire situation took this worst turn resulting into burning of large number of houses and the death of more than 42 persons as per narration of the local people. Common people of different religion gave protection and shelter to the victims at the risk of their lives & properties. For instance according to Smt Sandhya Dev Nath of Niz Dabaka, her husband and a 5 year old small child was saved by Taiab Ali Doctor and his wife. Similarly Mahibur Rahman and Karm Ali gave protection to the victims for which the house of Karim Ali was burnt down. Similarly two Hindu villages namely Latakata

and Dakshin Noabali were being guarded by the neighbouring Muslim people.

The delegation offered token relief to the affected people at Dabaka Bidyamandir ME School, Choudhruy Saw Mill Camp No 4, Ramkrishan Ashram Camp, Vivekananda Colony, Jogijan and Madartali ME School. The delegation was of the opinion that Govt relief were quite inadequate and during this winter the people had not been provided with blankets and clothes.

The delegation demanded that the enquiry instituted should be expedited and in order to hold the enquiry properly, all the culprits should be nabbed without which the whole truth will not come out.

## **WFTU Condemns US Air Raids on Iraq**

The following communication was sent by the WFTU to Mr Boutros Ghali, U.N. Secretary General on January 14 :

World Federations on Trade Union and its affiliates in 92 countries which have always supported the United Nations' efforts to promote peace and disarmament, welcomes the positive changes which resulted in important disarmament agreements and in particular, recent developments in the field of nuclear disarmament as well as towards the abolition of chemical weapons. The trade unions consider that the worsening global economic and social crisis can be resolved only by concerted measures to carry forward this process, releasing resources now spent on arms expenditures in favour of creating jobs for the unemployed and fighting the global war on poverty.

These positive trends are now seriously threatened by unilateral actions being taken by the United States and two of its allies, three permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, which show a dangerous preference towards military solutions, as seen in the air raids on targets in Iraq on 13 January. Such unilateral actions which can possibly escalate causing immense casualties, as many apprehend, undermine confidence in the United Nations and the capacity of the U.N. to act in terms of its Charter.

The trade unions take a position of principle against the use of force, a principle which is upheld in the U. N. charter. It is in this spirit that we urge upon you to ensure that no military actions are undertaken in the name of the U.N. without consulting all member states and without specific approval of appropriate United Nations bodies.

Such unilateral actions also bring in accusations of double standards at the U. N. which are being applied to states which do not comply with resolutions of the Security Council counterposing, for example the military action against Iraq in contrast with the inaction in the case of Israel which till today refuse to implement U.N. resolutions, including the latest one demanding cancellation of the mass expul-

sions of Palestanians from territories occupied by Israel.

We would request you to transmit this serious concern of our organisation and its affiliates to the United Nations Security Council and the General Assembly.

## **CITU Opposes Amendment of FERA**

The Secretariat of CITU has issued the following statement of the press on 9.1.93:

The CITU strongly oppose the removal through an ordinance of all existing restrictions on foreign companies under the Foreign Exchange Regulations Act, 1973. It also condemns the Government for taking the mischievous path of Presidential Ordinance for taking this anti-national step behind the back of the Parliament.

This is yet another step of surrender to the multinational companies by the Narasimha Rao Government under its New Economic Policy as dictated by IMF and World Bank.

The degree of surrender can be gauged from the fact that the earlier ceiling on possession of foreign exchange equivalent to Rs. 250 has extended to Rs. 15,000. Further as per the amendment the FERA companies can acquire, hold, transfer or dispose of by any manner immovable properties without any permission of the RBI. Thus this unfettered authority granted to these companies will cause serious blow to the economic and industrial development of the country and foreign private capital will further tighten their grip on our economy. This will also have its impact on our foreign exchange earnings.

The withdrawal of restrictions on the appointment of foreign nationals in the FERA companies will have its contribution in aggravating the unemployment problem and also acquiring skill on modern industrial operations by the country's workforce.

The dangerous amendment would help the multinational companies to intensify their conspiracy in sabotaging and destroying the public sector industries of the country. The step is absolutely in accord with the imperialist design to make our economy completely subservient to the multinational companies.

This hasty step of the government is also utterly contradictory with the governments avowed objective of strengthening foreign exchange reserve since such unfettered rights to foreign company would inevitably result in outgo of foreign exchange, in a big way.

The CITU appeals to the working class to raise its strongest voice against the retrograde step of the government and organise protest actions to defeat imperialist onslaught and reverse the surrenderist path of the government.

## Phased Programme of Action Decided by CPSTU

A meeting of the Core Group of CPSTU was held at Delhi on 24-1-93 at 4.00 PM. The meeting was attended by M.K. Pandhe(CITU), Y.D. Sharma (AITUC), V. Tyagi (HMS), Michael Fernandes (JAF), William Passo(Co-Ordn. Comm., Hyderabad).

At the outset the meeting noted that in a letter addressed to all the constituent Central Trade Unions, the BMS has communicated its decision to withdraw itself from the CPSTU.

After due discussion the meeting re-fixed the dates of the programme of agitation adopted at the extended meeting of the CPSTU held at Hyderabad on 3rd and 4th Dec. 1992 and subsequently deferred due to the communal riots in the country. The following are the new schedule :

1. To take pledge by all employees on 16th February '93 to save and defend the public sector.
2. To observe protest week from 24th February to 2nd March on the following demands :
  - a) Withdraw ban on wage negotiations in public sector.
  - b) Immediately implement Rs. 2/- per point DA and finalise multi-slab system in consultation with trade unions.
  - c) Scrap DPE circular on pension and implement agreements on pension.
  - d) Remove ceiling on Bonus and enhance exemption limit of Income-tax.
  - e) Grant wage rise to contract labour and stop off-loading of jobs.
  - f) Scrap policy of disinvestment, closure of sick units and exit policy.

The week is to be observed by holding demonstrations organising processions, wearing badges and other forms of action.

3. Holding state level, industrywise convention over the country to highlight the problems of public sector Industry and the workers before the end of March 1993.
4. 1st Week of April 1993 —Holding a National Seminar/Symposium at New Delhi on the impact of the New Economic policies on the public sector.

5. 16th to 20th —To organise 24 hours Relay March, 1993 Hunger Strike by Trade Union leaders and activists in front of factory main gates/administrative building.

6. 6th April, '93—To organise mass dharna, if possible alongwith family members in front of factory gates/administrative building and to serve strike notice to the management of PSUs.

7. 20-22 April 1993 —To launch 72 hours strike by all the public sector workers all over India.

The meeting appealed to the workers of PSUs to take all necessary steps to successfully implement the agitational programmes including the strike. It also called upon the workers to participate with full strength in the on going campaign movement to defeat the designs of the communal forces and for preserving communal peace and amity.

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