



# THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITU

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## Third Conference of The CITU Calls For Greater Unity To Fight The Capitalist Landlord Offensive

WITH A GLORIOUS RECORD OF MILITANT UNITED struggles, wages under the banner of the CITU, behind them the working class and toiling people of Bombay rose to a magnificent height in welcoming the delegates to the Third All India Conference of the CITU held from 21st to 25th May, 1975 at the Shanmukhananda Hall in Bombay. Despite being in the midst of a prolonged strike by the 4,30,000 State Government employees, 700 volunteers and the 350-member Reception Committee comprising mostly of workers, toiled day and night for weeks to make a fitting preparation for the success of the Conference. The volunteers were mostly young factory workers, who had to sacrifice their wages for 10 days for this work. Besides, Adivasi volunteers from the Kisan Sabha, girl volunteers from working class localities, students, teachers, middle class employees from LIC, Banks, etc. all contributed their utmost for the success of the Conference.

About Rs. 2,30 lakhs were collected by the Reception Committee for the Conference, 90 per cent of which had been contributed by workers in the Engineering, Hotel, Woolen, Rubber and other industries in the form of one day's wage. The largest contribution of Rs. 20,000 came from the Ceat workers. Moreover Kisans of Thana district contributed 30 quintals of rice and vegetables required for delegates were contributed by kisan comrades of Nasik. Workers of Bardai factory, who had fought a 17-month strike for their demands, offered a power generator and the BEST workers union affiliated to HMP loaned the use of a Bus for the Conference work.

Shanmukhanand Hall, the venue of the conference, was beautifully decorated with arches, murals, banners and red flags depicting the historic victory of the people of Vietnam and Cambodia and the forward march of the working class in India. Welcoming banners, flags and wall paintings were put up in different parts of Bombay to welcome the delegates. All

### Editorial Board

B. T. Ranadive (Chairman)

P. Ramamurti      Monoranjan Ray

Niren Ghosh      Sudhin Kumar

the decorations were done by a squad of artists from the CITU Artists Front and the SFI comrades.

The Conference started at 12 noon on 21st May with the hoisting of the CITU flag by Comrade B.T. Ranadive, President CITU. Hundreds of delegates saluted the red flag with clenched fists and full throated slogans of "CITU Zindabad" and "Long Live CITU". The delegates entered the Conference hall after placing wreaths on the Martyrs column.

While welcoming the delegates S. Y. Kolhatkar, Chairman of Reception Committee referred to the glorious traditions of the working class in Maharashtra, particularly of the Bombay city, which had seen many a glorious working class actions in the past half a century. He expressed the hope that the delegates will be able to show a way out of the present critical situation facing the working class in the country.

The Conference paid its homage to the memory of hundreds of Martyrs who laid down their lives fighting for the cause of the working class and the leaders and workers of the T.U. movement who passed away since the Second Conference.

The Conference also paid homage to the memory of Comrade Muzaffar Ahmed, Comrade Hare Krishna Konar, Comrade R. P. Dutt, Comrade K. G. Bose, Comrade K. I. Rajan, Comrade Chandrasekhar, Comrade Sunkana and Comrade Nalini Mehta. The condolence resolution was moved by P. Ramamurti, General Secretary

CITU and was adopted with delegates standing in silence.

The Conference was attended by 2060 delegates representing 921 unions with a total membership of nearly 7,50,000. Besides, 59 fraternal delegates and observers also attended the conference.

Messages greeting the conference were received from the following fraternal organisations abroad: Vietnam Federation of Trade Unions, SOHYO of Japan, F.D.G.B. of German Democratic Republic, Committee for Solidarity with Workers' Commissions in Spain, U.A.R. Federation of Labour, Trade Union Internationals of Workers in Commerce (Prague) and of Chemicals, Oil and Allied Workers (Budapest).

Messages of greetings were also received from Dr. Cherif Y. F. Hetata, Sub-regional Adviser on Labour and Population, ILO Area Office, New Delhi, Comrade George Fernandes, Convener UCTU, All India Newspaper Employees Federation, Comrade Harkishen Singh Surjeet, General Secretary AIKS, All India Loco Running Staff Association, Andhra Paper Mills Workers' Union and S.F.I.

Comrade A. K. Gopalan, President All India Kisan Sabha personally conveyed the greetings to the Conference on behalf of his organisation.

Comrade Sudhin Kumar, ailing Vice-President of CITU sent a message greeting the Conference.

Comrade Suhrid Mullick Chowdhury, General Secretary, Forward Block (Marxist) personally conveyed the greetings on behalf of his Party.

The Conference was also greeted by Comrade Sunil Maitra on behalf of the All India Insurance Employees Association.

Comrade P. Sriramalu, General Secretary of the Maharashtra State Government Employees' Confederation greeted the Conference and thanked the CITU for solidarity support to their struggle.

Comrade B. T. Ranadive, President CITU then delivered his Presidential Address to the Session (For extracts see elsewhere in this issue.) Printed copies of the Presidential Address has been distributed among delegates earlier. Departing from his written address, B. T. Ranadive paid glowing tributes to the historic victory of the people of Vietnam and Combodia against American imperialism, their death-defying and indomitable courage in carrying on a life and death struggle against French and American imperialism for more than three decades. This final triumph of the entire Indo-Chinese people, he said, constitutes a great turning point in the world fight against imperialism.

A resolution hailing the epoch-making victory of the people of Vietnam over US imperialism was then moved by Comrade P. Ramamurti, and seconded by Comrade Biren Roy. After Comrade V. Vishwanatha Menon supported the resolution, it was adopted unanimously amidst thunderous cheers and with standing ovation from the delegates.

A resolution greeting the people of Cambodia on their historic struggle and victory was then

*(On Page Eighteen)*

## Realisation From Employers

The tricks of the employers have no end. It is well known that crores of rupees of provident fund of the employees are misappropriated every year and, when steps are taken by the Government, which are predicatably hesistant, to realise those arrears, all kinds of legal and technical difficulties are raised.

A case in point is the defalcation of provident fund by the management of two coal mines in Madhya Pradesh, namely, Ghorawari Hirdagarh Colliery and West Barkuhi Colliery which were owned by Messrs. J. A. Trivedi Brothers, a partnership firm.

These coal mines were governed by the Coal Mines Provident Fund and Bonus Schemes Act 1948. On 22nd February 1969, the Coal Mines Provident Fund Commissioner wrote that the employers had not deposited Rs. 3,15,866.30 of provident fund money in respect of West Barkuhi Colliery and Rs. 2,23,597.66 in respect of the Ghorawari Hirdagarh Colliery. They were also required to pay damages to the extent of 25 per cent of the arrears, amounting to Rs. 78,966.58 and Rs. 55,899.42 respectively.

In may be observed in passing that the Provident Fund Commissioner usually wakes up after big gaps of time when huge arrears have already accumulated and prospect of their realisation becomes dimmer. And all this inspite of demands

by workmen and their representatives. This bureaucratic irresponsiveness and irresponsibility are largely responsible for defalaction of huge arrears of provident fund every year.

To return to our present case. As was to be expected the employers took time, prayed for instalments, failed to pay them. Ultimately the Commissioner caused a certificate to be issued under section 10 A of the said Act by the Collector Dhanbad under Revenue Recovery Act for realisation of the arrears as well as the statutory damages as arrears of land revenue about a year later.

It is not understood from reported the decision by the Madhya Prade High Court between the parties, namely, Trivedi Brothers V. Union of India (1), why and how the certificate proceedings could drag for long three years. The query acquires relevance because in 1973, the Coal Mines (Taking Over of Management) Act and the Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act were passed and allowed urther technical pleas to be taken by the employers whose only aim would understandably be to delay the certificate proceedings and realisation of the dues from them.

As indicated, after these two Acts came into force, the management filed a writ petition in the Madhya Pradesh High Court and their plea in the petition was that these two later

Acts provided for other methods of realisation of provident fund amounts in the hands of the erstwhile owners of coal mines and, therefore, the method of realisation given in section 10 A of the 1948 Act was pro tanto and impliedly repealed.

The writ petition was filed in 1974 and the decision was given by the Madhya Pradesh High Court in December 1974.

Under the Taking Over of Management Act, the management of the coal mines vest in the Government with effect from 31 January 1973. Section 7 of the Act provides for payment of compensation and subsection 4 lays down that deductions may be made from that payment of all sums equal to the amount of arrears due to the employees on account of provident fund, gratuity fund, wages etc.

Under the Nationalisation Act, the ownership of the mines vest in the Government with effect from 1 May 1973. Section 8 makes provision for payment of compensation according to the schedule and section 9 makes provisions for further payments. Section 17 makes provision for the appointment of a Commissioner of Payments. Section 21 provides that an employee may make a claim to the Commissioner within thirty days from the specified date that the deductions already made under the Taking Over of Management Act was not sufficient to meet fully the amount of arrears due to him on the appointed day from the owner of the mine on account of provident

fund, gratuity fund or any other fund established for the welfare of the employees and also wages. On such claim being made the Commissioner shall determine the extent of the deficiency and deduct it from the compensation payable to the owner under section 8 of the Act.

The employer, in the case under consideration, claimed that realisation might be made from him only in terms of the aforesaid two Acts and not under section 10A of the 1948 Act.

It is good news, however, that the High Court of Madhya Pradesh rejected the contention, holding that section 10A of the 1948 Act was not expressly repealed by the two later Acts and because at the time when the contributions to provident fund became due the remedy under section 10A of the 1948 Act was clearly available.

The High Court also settled some important propositions of law and said that implied repeal should not readily be inferred and the mere provision of an additional remedy does not take away an existing remedy. "The reason is that normally there is no clash between the existing remedy and the additional remedy provided by the new Act and recourse to them can be taken in the alternative by the person for whose benefit the remedies are so provided."

The cat the malafide motive of the employers was, however, let out of the bag by the High Court in its subsequent observations where it proceeded on to say that compensation under the

Taking Over of Management Act may not at all be sufficient to meet the dues and to make up the deficiency under the Nationalisation Act may not be possible for years because no date has been specified making it impossible for any employees to register his claim under section 21 of the Nationalisation Act.

We do not, however, see any reason why the High Court should have gone out of its way to express commiseration for the employers, who felt no compunction in gobbling up the provident fund dues of the poor

employees. The Court has referred to the "hardship of the owners" and observed that "it would be very hard on the owners to pay huge arrears when they are deprived of the mines and when they have not yet been paid the compensation to which they are entitled..." Such sympathies are entirely misplaced for persons who misappropriated the hard earned money of the sweated workers.

(1) 1975 Labour Industrial Cases 629

**Arun Prokas Chatterjee**

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## Reports from Unions

### **Bhilai Blast Furnace Strike**

About 280 hearthmen of the Blast Furnace of Bhilai Steel Plant went on strike from April 9 last protesting against their use by management for other work, refusal to pay additional allowance for the same and suspension of 3 hearthmen. The strike continued for five days and completely paralysed the Blast Furnaces and seriously affected production in the Coke Ovens and Rolling Mills.

Although the hearthmen belonged to the HMS Union, it failed to mobilise the other workers of the Blast Furnaces and refused to build up a united movement. As a result the INTUC, AITUC, BMS and some other organisations went against the HMS forgetting that this harmed the workers cause. Although the other workers went on strike on April 13 in support of the striking hearthmen, they

later withdrew their support due to some misunderstanding. The Hindusthan Steel Employees' Union (CITU) issued leaflets supporting the strike and demands of hearthmen.

Taking advantage of the isolation of the HMS and the hearthmen, the Police imposed Sec. 144 in Bhilai township and arrested 3 HMS leaders. The hired blacklegs and goondas of the management forced the striking hearthmen to join work under threat of assault and eviction from quarters. In the circumstances the workers were forced to withdraw the strike from April 15.

### **Anti-Emergency Day Observed**

6th April was observed as protest day against MISA, DIR, and continuation of EMERGENCY, in the colliery area of

( See Page 6 )

# Railmen Pledge Preserving and Strengthening Unity

On May 8, 1975 railway workers all over the Country once again took pledge to preserve and strengthen the unity already achieved. As suggested by various organisations including Comrade Samar Mukherjee M.P., Comrade George Fernandes, in his circular no : NCCRS/1/75 dated April 23, 1975 appealed to all participating unions to celebrate this day unitedly.

Reports received from various centres indicate that the day was observed with much enthusiasm at various places. In Calcutta, a meeting was held in Subodh Mullick Square. Workers thronged at the meeting in thousands.

### **Railwaymen's resistance mounts Up.**

Resistance to the offensive of the authorities by the railwaymen is mounting up. After the stoppage of work at Patratu and Gaya, reports from Jamalpur (ER) showed that workers refused to punch cards for about a fortnight.

Locomen of N. E. R. have started a movement of "work as per designation". In Varanasi division, 33 workers were reverted and hence the movement is being conducted with determination, which has affected the train service. The authorities failed to suppress the struggle, through arrest, suspension removals etc. and have been

forced to negotiate with the Locomen.

At Anara (SER) the authorities have started a new procedure like "Warning Call Book", which does not specify destination, train etc. This meant additional waiting duty without remuneration, which the workers have refused to accept. Authorities have resorted to penal measures to break the struggle, but the workers continue the movement.

The train services in Bikaner division came to a stop due to agitation by Locomen. Over 10 thousand railwaymen demonstrated before Parliament on April 22, at the call of AIRF.

### **Accidents on the increase.**

Due to defective Engines and Coaches accidents are taking place. Within the first 4/5 months, there have been accidents at Sondimra (SER), Ultadanga (ER) Sealdah(ER), and Danapur (ER) involving loss of lives of both passengers and railwaymen.

### **Conference, Conventions, Meetings**

The Divisional Conference of SMs Association was held at Adra on April 23, after which a largely attended mass meeting was held in which all other constituents of NCCRS except SERMU participated. The meeting was addressed by K.M. Bhadra, A. C. Lahiri among others.

Comrade George Fernandes, Convenor, NCCRS visited Bondamunda on March 23 when a largely attended mass meeting was held.

Divisional Conference of LRSA of Chakradharpur (SFR) was held on March 27, at Chakradharpur and a mass deputation was led to the Divisional Superintendent.

The 14th Annual Conference of All India Guards Council was held at Gauhati on April 26-27, which was attended by 360 delegates. Shri R.P. Jadav M.P. and Shri C.L. Upadhyaya were re-elected as President and General Secretary respectively.

The S-E-Railway Ministerial Staff Council held its third annual meeting at Chakradharpur on May 4-5 in which 182 delegates attended. Shri G.K. Murty and Shri Uday Chatterjee were re-elected as President and General Secretary. The Meeting decided to merge with the A.I.-M.S.A. The mass meeting was addressed by Dipen Ghosh, S.K. Dhar, C.M. Singh and others.

The CEC meeting of SER Electric Staff Council was held on April 26, at Adra, where campaign programme was decided.

The 21st annual meeting of All India Station Masters Association was held at Dhanbad on May 3-5 in which 262 delegates attended. Resolutions expressing joy at the liberation of Vietnam and Cambodia were adopted. Shri H. S. Chatterjee and Shri A. C. Lahiri were re-elected as President and Secretary General.

The annual meeting of All India Ministerial Staff Associa-

tion was held at Lucknow on May 11-13. The annual meeting of NER LRSA was held at Alipur Duar Jn. on April 29. A committee of 25 has been elected with Com. Medhi as President and Com. S. Sarkar as the General Secretary.

Brisk preparations for the 5th Annual meeting of All India Loco Running Staff Association at Khargpur on May 29-31, is on. Authorities have refused to extend water, electricity or sanitation facilities, though such facilities are given to the public including Circus Parties on cost. The Workers demonstrated before the Divl. Supdt. on April 25 against this, and also for food supply. Shri A. K. Saha M.P. addressed the rally.

### Reports from Union

(From Page 4)

Bisrampur. The demonstration in the evening at the call of Koyla Shramik Sangh was participated by over 400 workers and 200 kisan workers. The well attended public meeting at Lal Maidan was addressed by Comrades Viswakarma and S. Sudevan.

### Protest Day Observed at Bilaspur

At the joint call of Confederation of Central Govt. Employees and the AIRF, a meeting was held at the Bilaspur Head Post Office on March 13 to observe "Protest Day" against Wage Freeze; D.A. cut etc. The meeting was presided over by M.M. Moitra (AIPEU) and addressed by V.G. Khanjhoje, R D Sharma and others. A resolution was adopted unanimously.

## Consumer Price Index Numbers

(Industrial Workers/1960 = 100)

State/Centre	1975			State/Centre	1975		
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.		Jan.	Feb.	Mar.
<b>Andhra Pradesh</b>				<b>Orissa</b>			
Gudur	362	342	323	Barbil	310	304	320
Guntur	341	324	324	Sambalpur	342	346	347
Hyderabad	325	320	317	<b>Punjab</b>			
<b>Assam</b>				Amritsar	333	328	326
Digboi	318	320	314	<b>Rajasthan</b>			
Doom Dooma	289	289	280	Ajmer	334	332	325
Labac	282	281	288	Jaipur	340	339	329
Mariani	285	280	274	<b>Tamilnadu</b>			
Rangapara	278	276	265	Coimbatore	341	353	335
<b>Bihar</b>				Coonoor	320	324	321
Jamshedpur	304	301	297	Madras	327	326	323
Jharia	320	316	304	Madurai	371	372	356
Kodarma	361	361	357	<b>U. P.</b>			
Monghyr	357	357	333	Kanpur	332	324	317
Noamundi	339	329	336	Saharanpur	356	349	341
<b>Gujarat</b>				Varanasi	390	380	377
Ahmedabad	311	305	304	<b>West Bengal</b>			
Bhavnagar	345	340	333	Asansol	320	320	319
<b>Haryana</b>				Calcutta	289	279	275
Yamunanagar	338	337	332	Darjeeling	259	259	255
<b>J &amp; K</b>				Howrah	300	294	289
Srinagar	250	252	257	Jalpaiguri	254	255	252
<b>Karnataka</b>				Raniganj	326	326	319
Ammathi	324	341	353	<b>Delhi</b>			
Bangalore	335	340	336	342	335	335	
Chikmagalur	339	339	343	<b>Other Centres*</b>			
Kolar G. F.	347	360	352	Berhampur ('49)	472	463	465
<b>Kerala</b>				Cuttack (1949)	403	394	389
Alleppey	398	398	396	Jabalpur (1949)	431	425	428
Alwaye	368	365	378	Beawar ('51-'52)	378	372	359
Mundakayam	353	349	366	Tripura (1961)	263	275	298
<b>M. P.</b>				H. P. (1965)	243	242	242
Balaghat	368	360	357	Goa (1966)	210	211	213
Bhopal	325	325	320	Bhilai (1966)	206	205	208
Gwalior	350	350	343	Kothagudam('66)	211	204	201
Indore	358	360	353	<b>All India</b> ('49) 396 395 390			
<b>Maharashtra</b>				do ('60)	326	325	321
Bombay	298	300	301	* Figures in bracket indicate base year.			
Nagpur	322	336	332	(Labour Bureau, Simla)			
Sholapur	346	349	345				

# Overcome The Weaknesses, Carry Forward The Class Line Of Unity And Struggle

*Extracts from the Report of Com. P. Ramamurti, General Secretary,  
to the Third Conference of CITU*

Comrades,

The line of united actions, of unity for struggle that we have pursued has produced big results and it is time for us to understand the changes that have occurred in the course of struggle—changes in the charter of the struggle itself.

More than two million workers have waged the strike struggle every year for the last three years. No other section of the Indian people has been in such continuous conflict as the working class, and also the employees. With the growth of unity and united struggles the sweep and extent has been immense.

## **Struggle Against Crisis**

In the course of the developing economic situation and the fight against it the struggles are undergoing an important transformation. Form immediate issues affecting wages, bonus, D.A. of one or the other section of industry, the struggle raises the demands of a general character—which affect not only the workers but other sections of society, high prices, of food, rationing, wage-freeze, need-based wage. In effect it is becoming more and more a general struggle against the burdens of the crisis placed on the entire working class and society.

## **All Sections Join**

Just because of the crisis every section of urban toilers is forced

into the arena. Employees—Central Government and State, LIC and mercantile, professionals and salaried officials, teachers and professors all are in the fighting arena for their own demands or for common protest action. They are joined by the working women and housewives. The struggle initiated by the working class merges into the common struggle of all sections in the cities.

## **Likely Mistakes in the Struggle for Unity**

In these days when the working class masses are incessantly engaged in struggle, when their spontaneous anger and the lash of economic situation is egging lakhs to seek action there are two types of mistakes that are possible. Firstly, to over-estimate our own strength and neglect the struggle for unity, thereby often landing ourselves in trouble or reducing the sweep of the movement. Some such development took place in connection with the strike call of Central Government employees in 1974. The second mistake is to wait too much on the goodwill and willingness of the reformist leaders, forgetting the welling discontent below. This slackens independent activity at the base once again undermining the strength of the united struggle.

There have been instances when our comrades fall victims

to provocations. On other occasions they remain firm and in spite of provocations carry the struggle for unity.

There are occasions on which we are unable to meet the manoeuvres of the reformist leaders of the INTUC and are compelled into action at a time not of our choosing, i.e. not favourable to the workers. This happened in 1975 jute strike of West Bengal.

## **Lessons of the Historic Railway Strike**

The three weeks' strike of railwaymen constituted a historic action in the trade union annals of India's working class. This was the first all-India railwaymen's strike.

The political significance of this mighty railway strike is that it was made possible by the united front of the left and democratic parties and the mass organisations led by them.

It was made possible because we followed the correct tactics of unity, applied in the conditions of the railways. It is because before and during the strike our comrades worked selflessly and heroically often bearing the brunt of repression and terror in certain localities. They went underground but they did not slacken their efforts and emerged as local leaders

## **Categorywise Unions**

Our comrades had noted certain important developments affecting the unity of the railway workers three years before the strike. There was a spurt in the formation of sectional and craft unions which later on formed a

separate confederation. Our comrades correctly understood that though the craft unions were a step backward from industrial unions on which the AIRF was based, still they could not be boycotted and condemned as they were coming into existence as a protest against the inactivity and criminal failures of some reformist leaders of the AIRF and NFIR. At the same time craft and sectional spirit was considered to be harmful to railway workers' unity. Our followers therefore correctly decided to work in these new unions and in the course of action and struggles bring about unity between different sections. The rise of these categorywise unions soon led to rise of struggle and actions and our comrades fully participated in them.

### **Rising Struggles**

Inside the unions affiliated to the Railway Federations also local actions began to develop frequently and our adherents supported them, for which they were often expelled by the reformist leaders or the fighting branches were suspended.

### **Changes in AIRF**

The established leadership maligned these struggles and helped the authorities to crush them. But times were rapidly changing. The simmering discontent among the railwayman found expression in AIRF annual gathering in Sept. 1973. A resolution for strike was passed and delegates moved with our support an amendment to the General Secretary's report

demanding AIRF initiative to unite the resistance of the railway workers by calling a conference of all railway organisations. This was anathema to the old leadership and was against their compact with the railway board. But the spirit of discontent also took care of the old leadership. George Fernandes was elected as the new President. Though the rest of the office bearers remained as before, the election of Fernandes brought about a change which gave further impetus to the railway movement.

### **Hundred Organisations Meet**

The AIRF sponsored convention became a huge demonstration of railway workers' unity attended by over 3,500 delegates representing about 100 organisations excluding the INTUC controlled NFIR. The CITU along with other Central organisations was invited to the Convention.

The Convention was important for several reasons. It gave concrete shape to the demand for united struggle that was sweeping the railway workers. It was the first time that the AIRF leaders were joining hands with other organisations and breaking their compact with the Railway Board. The formation of the NCCRS in composition of which Comrade Samar Mukherjee played a role, was not only the organisation of united leadership it also lessened the deadweight of old reformist leaders working hand in hand with the authorities and passed on the initiative to the combined

leadership from AIRF and other organisations.

It was obvious from the beginning that some constituents did not have a correct estimate of the sweep and strength of the struggle, the repression that was likely to be released and the tenacity with which the workers would face the terror.

The main body of leaders representing the railway unions regarded the strike as an ordinary trade union struggle. They gave it at best seven days to last during which a settlement must be reached. They perhaps thought of a moral victory which would enable them to strengthen the organisation.

That is why on the morrow of the strike hurried negotiations were started and serious settlement formulae were floated.

What was really needed especially in the first week of the strike was undivided attention to strengthen the strike at the base, to consolidate it against the monstrous repression and rouse the people against its brutalities. The pointless top negotiations side-tracked attention from the main task.

### **Bombay Textile Strike 1974**

Comrades, the 1974 textile strike of Bombay which went on for 42 days constitutes yet another example of our successful fight for united action and the counteracting of disruptive tactics of the revisionist Dange Leadership.

By the middle of 1973 with increased inflation and the wage of textile workers lagging behind the wages of some other sections, the question of immediate rise

in wage and DA and of need-based wage became live issues. Our Union and the Lal Nishan organisation invited others including the GKU for deciding the strike date.

The revisionists finding that the atmosphere was getting hot attended the meeting and agreed to serve strike notice for 30th December.

The workers did not accept the settlement reached with the INTUC Union and the strike started on December 29-30. With two lakh workers on complete strike, the revisionist leaders refused to have a joint strike committee to conduct the strike. This would have come into conflict with their secret negotiations and plans for compromise.

The strike went on for weeks. But this was a peculiar kind of unity, united front, united struggle whatever you might call it. Every day there would be two separate meetings on two platforms (CITU & Lal Nishan together). Not only no joint committee was there. There was no joint meeting. The joint demonstration in front of working mills was the only joint activity. On 16th January, there was a united demonstration before the Maharashtra Sectt. The joint representatives met the Chief Minister and came with empty hands. Then the mass of workers demanded that the separate meetings should stop and only joint meetings should be held. Full three weeks after the start of the strike the first joint meeting was held on 18th of January.

The failure to develop a broad based strike committee again reflects a certain lack of consciousness among the workers due to a failure on our part to educate them. In its absence unity was represented as only a top unity of a few leaders without the mass having any role to play in the conduct of the strike.

### **Mighty Jute Strike**

The two jute strikes of W. Bengal involving two lakh workers on each occasion have an importance of their own. They were taking place not only in the context of semi fascist terror, but precisely in some of the areas of direct terror. And yet the two strikes were completely successful, cent per cent workers participating in them and the 1974 strike lasted for 34 days and that of 1975 strike continued for 46 long days.

Despite the rapidly developing discontent developing among the jute workers over unfulfilled demands, the INTUC and the Congress rulers thought in 1974 that the disruptive influence of the INTUC leaders supported by widespread terror would coerce the workers and us into accepting any agreement signed by the INTUC leaders. The INTUC leaders betrayed openly and signed an agreement all alone at the behest of the IJMA and the Congress Labour Minister. In the process of negotiations the INTUC leadership got isolated from its ally, the AITUC.

The strike began by isolating the INTUC and forging the unity of all other centres of trade union organisations. It must be

noted with pride that this united strike was the first all India Jute Workers strike. It spread to all State except Andhra.

The 1975 jute strike, another glorious struggle against the broken promises of the Government and the IJMA exhibited new manoeuvres on the part of the INTUC and showed that the reformist leaders are unscrupulous enough to put on a radical mask to cheat the workers.

Finding that their influence was dwindling and this was dangerous for the moneybags certain leaders of the INTUC decided to play a pro-strike role. They knew we were preparing for a struggle as none of our demands have been met. Again some leaders of the AITUC and the HMS joined the INTUC. In November the INTUC and the other two organisations told the workers to go on strike from 6th January.

We decided to support the call for 6th January. However, as later events showed January was not a favourable time for strike. The world recession was in full swing; the American orders had gone down. In fact, stocks had accumulated and the INTUC leaders were taking a radical pose to bail the IJMA out of the difficult position.

Though there was this time complete unity of the organisations, the strike started in unfavourable conditions. The staying power was on the side of the employers. The workers heroically carried on for 46 days. So

( See page 15 )

# Strengthen The Unity In Action! Fight The Coming Offensive!

The Third Conference of the CITU was held at the spacious auditorium of the Shanmukhanand Hall, Bombay from 21st to 25th May, 1975. Comrade B. T. Ranadive, President CITU inaugurated the Conference and delivered his Presidential Address before more than 3000 delegates who came from all corners of the country to review the valuable experience gained in the course of leading the rising wave of united struggles during past two years.

After paying homage to the memory of Comrades Muzaffar Ahmed, Hare Krishna Konar and K. G. Bose, the hundreds of martyrs of the working class movement who have fallen victims to gangster terror and Police bullets and the fighting workers and cadre in all States who fell fighting for the cause of workers, Ranadive said,

"We send our warm message of solidarity to the hundreds of our comrades, trade union leaders, leaders of the democratic and Kissan movements, all political prisoners languishing in the prisons of West Bengal, Kerala, and other States.

"Hundreds have been arrested during the course of strikes in all States and are undergoing prolonged persecution.

"We assure all of them that the CITU will work for the release of all irrespective of their organisational and political affiliations.

"Comrades, above all, we assure our Kota comrades who have been recently sentenced to transportation for life that we will not rest till justice is done to them and they are released.

"We denounce the savage sentences passed in our fighting trade union and kisan comrades of Burdwan and 24-Parganas in West Bengal. Recently, thirty comrades have been sentenced to transportation for life and comrade Monoj Paul of Burdwan has been sentenced to death.

"We demand an end to this terror, we demand that the death sentence on Comrade Paul be set aside. We demand that the withdrawal of life sentences passed against others."

## Significance of the victory of the people of Vietnam and Cambodia

While offering warm greetings to the fighting people of Vietnam and Cambodia for their epochal victories against American imperialism, he said,

"Comrades, these two historic victories of the Indo-Chinese people inspire the entire fighting millions of the world with great confidence. They are victories scored for the entire peoples of the world. Future generations will be grateful to these two peoples for paving the way for the final rout of U. S. imperialism.

"The victory of the people of Vietnam and Cambodia is a victory of the international working class, of the world people. The help rendered by the Socialist countries to the struggle of Vietnam, the help rendered by Socialist countries, especially People's Republic of China to the struggle of Cambodian people have played a vital

role in facilitating the rout of American arms.

"Secondly, the political and moral support of the working class all over the world, and the democratic forces in the USA who opposed the continuation of war have made a significant contribution towards it."

## Perilous Political Situation

Drawing the attention of the delegates to the perilous political situation in the country, he said,

"The continuation of the emergency under one pretext or another, (the new excuse is arming of Pakistan and American moves in Diego Garcia), the use of DIR and the Misa against democratic movements, the shameless abuse of the powers vested under the Constitution, the use of asmed goonda gangs against the trade union and democratic movements and the complete rigging of the last Assembly elections in W. Bengal clearly show that the ruling party is determined to establish a one-party dictatorship in India. It is not accidental that Indira Gandhi should congratulate Mujibur Rahaman on the assumption of dictatorial powers.

"Our CITU had seen the danger earlier, but many other trade union organisations and political parties had failed to see it till recently. The ruthless repression directed against the Gujarat movement, the repression against the Bihar agitation led by Shri J. P. and the rigging and terror

## B. T. Ranadive Addresses The Third Conference Of CITU

during some of the recent bye-elections are all leading several parties to realise the danger of one party dictatorship."

## The Characteristics of the Crisis

Explaining the significance of the alarming economic situation and crisis facing the country, he said,

"Comrades, the economic situation in our country runs almost parallel with the crisis situation in the advanced countries, revealing almost the same characteristics and features.

"During the last three years, and especially during the last year, the working class had to face repeated economic attacks accompanied by repression and atrocities. The attacks on trade union rights, the wage freeze Act, the lay offs and closures all were instruments to pass on the burdens of the crisis to the working class.

"These are having disastrous effects on our living standards, on job security. And we have not seen the end of all this. Economic portents point out to bigger assaults and greater trials in the near future. Every measure of the Government from wage freeze to budget proposals, from credit squeeze to taxation is intended to throw the burden of the crisis on the working class and the people.

"It is not realised by the organised trade union movement how jobs of the workers have been attacked; under one pre-

text or another tens of thousands have either been laid off or sent home with factories ordering closure. And this has happened because high prices have affected demand; at the same time prices are not coming down."

## Monopolies Thriving

Strongly attacking the policy of the Government to foster the interests of monopolies and capitalists, who have achieved roaring prosperity during the last two decades or more, Ranadive said, "The policy of the Government is all along to foster the interests of the monopolists and big capitalists. Nothing could be more devastating than this tribute to the Indira Government from G.D. Birla, one of the notorious top monopolists. A PTI message dated 18th March from Gwalior said, "Eminent industrialist G.D. Birla ridiculed the habit of the business community to criticise the Government for the sake of criticism only. Appreciating the present policy of the Government, Mr. Birla said that he did not feel that the Government in practice was tough towards monopoly houses which he said were criticised only in speeches. Both big and small sections continued to get equal treatment in respect of licences.

"Between 1951 and 1970, the assets of Birlas rose from Rs. 51 crores to Rs. 687 crores; the assets of Tatas rose during the same period from Rs. 95 crores to Rs. 711 crores. Profits of 353 non-Governmental non-financial companies during 1973-74 recor-

ded a significant rise of Rs. 56 crores to Rs. 280 crores after tax against a fall of Rs. 14 crores in the previous year according to Reserve Bank Bulletin, December 1974. Taking into consideration the rise in tax and interest charges the actual increase would be of the order of Rs. 94 crores.

"Gross profits i.e. total surplus value or unpaid labour increased by Rs. 100 crores from Rs. 596 crores to Rs. 690 crores, while salaries and wages of lakhs of workers etc. increased by Rs. 91 crores".

## Soft Pedalling Foreign Capital

Referring to the dangerous policy being pursued by the Government of wooing foreign capital and multinational corporations, he said, "What is most dangerous is that multinational corporations—the biggest foe of democracy, national independence and working class are also being shamelessly wooed. It seems there are more than 200 branches of these corporations which are not industrial concerns but economic empires. They bring down governments, instal puppets to ensure their own designs. The Allende Government in Chile was overthrown by conspiracy of these corporations. The India Government while talking now and then about CIA activities is permitting this important agency of the CIA and American imperialism to endanger the freedom of the country.

"The working class in its own and national interest denounce the Congress policy of wooing

the multinational corporations and warn the people against it."

### **No Relief from High Prices**

He then pointed out how the wage freeze offensive launched by the Government has failed to lower prices, and said, "Ten months back the Government introduced the notorious wage freeze Act in the name of countering inflation and high prices.

"The Government is advocating that prices have started falling. But do the people know about it? Have they got any relief? Are food and other necessities of life within easy reach of the workers and other toilers?"

"The fact is that food articles have registered decline in wholesale prices of 7 per cent between the end of September 1974 and February 15, 1975. The decline in the general price index also comes to about 5 per cent.

"Notwithstanding this fall, prices are higher by 18.8 per cent in December 1974 than what they were a year ago. The Economic Survey also does not promise a halt in price rise, it only promises a slowing down of the rate of growth of prices."

### **High Taxation and Wage Freeze**

Referring to the various ways in which the workers are being made to bear the burdens of crisis, he said, "Comrades, it is not only through high prices that we, the workers and the people, are made to bear burdens of the crisis. The enormous taxation of the Congress Government which escalates

the prices of all commodities is another weapon of the unscrupulous rulers. We witness the same phenomenon in advanced capitalist States. In 1974-75 alone total additional taxation of Rs. 935 crores (in a full year) was levied by the Central Government.

"The first step which the Government took to fight inflation was to curb the purchasing power of the workers. But this time the attack had to be broadened and crisis burdens had to be directly placed on a vaster section of the people. Employees, doctors, teachers, professors, engineers, all who earned their bread by their honest efforts were drawn into the net. To make it appear that the Government was impartial, some restriction was placed on declaration of dividends also. But in this year's budget this fig leaf has been removed and the wage freeze measures stand out as class measures of the capitalist class to attack all its employees—all whom it exploits.

"Comrades, the so-called anti-inflationary measures of the Government have fallen heavily on the peasant producer. Like the working class he has become the direct victim of the crisis and the official measures to pass on its burdens to the people."

### **Discrimination against Central Employees**

He then referred to the discriminations being practiced against the Central and State Government employees and said, "Comrades, our CITU must take special note of the fact

that the Central and State Government employees, our valiant railway workers and defence workers have been made the special victims of the Freeze Act. They were entitled to get in cash at least half additional D. A. due to them under the terms of the Pay Commission. But though four to six increases in D. A. are due, since July 1974 the employees have received almost nothing. The Government of India recently offered a bogus and defrauding compromise which the fighting leaders were justified in refusing.

"We solidly stand by the Central and State Government employees, by the railway and defence employees in their just struggle. We demand that the Central and State Governments desist from the illegal withdrawal of the D. A. We send our warm congratulation to the fighting 30,000 State Employees of Tripura who waged a heroic strike in March."

### **Discrimination Against Women**

Calling upon the CITU and the working class to seriously take up the issue of discrimination against women workers, he said, "Comrades, in our last Conference we decided to fight against the wage and other discrimination in relation to women workers. Our plantation and bidi unions have already taken up the question.

"The discrimination against women must be taken as a serious challenge to our movement. It violates the basic principles of equal pay for equal work."

## Rising Unemployment

Drawing the attention of the delegates to the rising unemployment in the country, Ranadive said, "The tortuous growth of the economy is converting a large mass of people into destitutes. The growth of employment in the organised sector, public and private, was only 1.5 per cent between April and December 1973. What else can one expect with the economy crawling at the rate of 0.7%? The last year will show further deterioration with an expected rate of growth of only 3.5 per cent. We have already seen how thousands have been thrown out on the streets.

"The number of applicants on live register has therefore continued to swell. Within a year of our last conference, the number of unemployed rose by 10 per cent and reached the staggering figure of 83.54 lakhs by June 1974.

"By August 1974, the number of registered unemployed had reached 8.7 million.

"Comrades, the trade union movement has hitherto neglected the question of unemployed. And there is every danger of the unemployed youth being used against the working class *a la* Adolf Hitler. West Bengal already shows that the danger is real."

## The Workers' Resistance

Referring to the increasing resistance of all sections of workers against the misdeeds of Congress rule, Ranadive said, "Comrades, on an average more than a million and a half workers are engaged in strike action since

1966, a whole decade. No other section of the Indian population has been waging such a persistent struggle against economic conditions against the misdeeds of Congress rule.

"Comrades, last three years have been years of continuous struggle. In 1972, the loss of mandays in strikes and lockouts was 20.5 million; in 1973, when we met last it was 20.6 million; in 1974, the year of the valiant fight of the railway workers it was 31.2 million, the highest on record, the railways contribution is 4.5 million days.

"This increasing resistance was the reply of the working class to continuous attacks on its standard of living, inflationary price spiral, fraudulent cost of living index and pilferings in the market with its shortage of commodities.

"The railways, the Central Government and State employees, the LIC and other employees, the valiant jute strikes of West Bengal, the cotton textile workers of Tamilnadu and Bombay and Delhi, the heroic mine workers of Raniganj, Dhanbad, the workers of Durgapur, the plantation and industrial workers of Kerala, the workers of Bharatpur, Kota and Jaipur all have played a valiant role in this great fight. Comrades, behind these strikes is the story of courageous fight against police persecution, victimisation, goonda terror and hireling murder gangs. Several have laid down their lives in this struggle.

"These struggles have often enabled us to defeat the offensive and even advance our interests.

In spite of the crisis, many sections have won important victories and advanced the cause of unionism."

## Political Repression

Referring to the ruthless repression on T.U. and democratic movements, he said, "The weakness of the peasant movement in rural areas, and the weakness in the political consciousness of the working class have enabled the ruling party to deal with the democratic movement in a ruthless way and perpetrate every kind of atrocity on the fighting people. I have already referred to the largescale repression against the trade union movement which was also shared by all sections of the people including the students, peasants, the agricultural workers, the teachers and the mass of untouchables. A Government which is ruthless to them in their struggle is equally cruel to them when they are arrested and jailed. The treatment of political prisoners in India has become an international scandal and it is no surprise that the Government of India did not vote in the U.N. for a resolution demanding the release of all political prisoners kept by Chilean fascist junta. Beatings, shootings, tortures—all have reached such a height that in the end the Supreme Court had to warn the Government that even prisoners in jails possessed certain fundamental rights which no bureaucracy could override. Add to this the statement made by responsible leaders in Bihar that in certain jails of

Bihar, women prisoners are virtually kept naked, the authorities refusing to supply them with clothes according to jail rules.

"Comrades, the working class and the trade union movement has been facing a growing attack against its liberties for a long time. Our movement in West Bengal has been facing a semi-fascist terror with complete extinction of all liberties in some parts of West Bengal. Recently, it was the turn of Sri Jayaprakash Narayan to face the Congress goonda gangs aided by the revisionist collaborations. It is clear that unless all the democratic organisations join together for civil liberties the Congress Government will extinguish them in no time. The CITU and its unions must take initiative in organising this fight for the protection of civil liberties."

### Tasks

Outlining the tasks before the working class, Ranadive said, "To be able to do this, we must persistently wage a battle against the alarming economic situation that face the working class and the trade union movement. It presages closures, loss of jobs and wage reductions.

"It is a menace which faces the entire working class and employees and it threatens all sections of our toilers—the agricultural labourers, poor peasants. It is due to the capitalist-landlord policies of the Government, the policies which protect the profits of the foreign and Indian monopolists, of the landlords and

attacks the incomes of the workers and the toilers.

"It calls the entire working class, all trade unions to unite to resist this offensive more all-pervading and pernicious than the wage freeze. The workers and employees have achieved unprecedented unity at the August Convention in Delhi and carried forth the battle in various conventions and above all, strike and bandhs. This unity in action has to be further strengthened to ward off the coming attack. Against the threat of unemployment the workers must unitedly raise the demand for right to work, unemployment benefit. They must again raise their voice against rising prices, wage freeze and demand drastic reduction in profits, nationalisation of monopoly concerns, confiscation of food stocks of landlords to distribute them among the people at prices within their reach. Raising the demand for need-based wage they must demand better living condition for the agricultural labourers, fair price to the peasant for his produce and drastic increase in taxation against the monopolists, big capitalists and the landlords. They must demand elimination of black market and its operations and confiscation of all wealth earned in blackmarket transaction.

"It is only with this programme that the workers can fight the attempts of the capitalists and landlords to make them along with the people the scapegoats of the crisis; of the ruling party to introduce one-party authoritarian rule in the country."

## Third Conference Of Punjab & Himachal CITU

The third Conference of the Punjab and Himachal Pradesh State Committee of CITU was held at Pathankot on April 26th and 27th last. 115 delegates representing 23 unions with a total membership of over ten thousand, besides 17 fraternal delegates from mass organisations and unaffiliated unions, attended the Conference.

After the hoisting of the Red Flag by Com. Kishori Lal, the delegates paid homage to the memory of Comrades H.K. Konar, R.P. Dutta, K.G. Bose, Ramaswamy of Madurai and martyrs who laid down their lives before police bullets of the Congress Government.

Jagjit Singh Lyallpuri, General Secretary of the State Committee presented a comprehensive report highlighting the serious economic crisis in the capitalist world and its repercussions on the economy of India and the life and living conditions of the working class. After discussions the report was adopted unanimously.

The Conference adopted resolutions on Vietnam and Cambodia, on Wage Freeze, on retrenchment of Project workers, on anti-working class policies of Punjab Government, on unemployment, on victimisation of Electricity workers etc.

The Conference elected a new Working Committee and the Office-bearers of the State Committee including Com. Kishori Lal as President and Com. Lyallpuri as General Secretary.

# The Class Line Of Unity And Struggle

( From page 9 )

long as the INTUC was in the strike there was not much repression. But later on the usual repression started.

Comrades, it is amazing that during the entire period of 46 days there was no call for a solidarity strike to the rest of the industrial workers. The jute workers fought on their own. It seems this was not done because the INTUC leaders were opposed to it. While it is true that during the course of a strike differences among leading bodies often lead to demoralisation among the workers and the sense of unity must be preserved, the reformists should not be permitted to take advantage of the situation to lay down harmful conditions.

## Struggle for All-India Unity

The National Council of Trade Unions formed by the AITUC, INTUC and HMS with official patronage has become completely defunct.

On the other hand, the UCTU organised a convention in New Delhi in July 1973 in which it focussed the two demands "Bonus for all and need-based minimum wage". The Convention was a great success and it rejected the central Pay Commissions recommendations.

It is true that the AITUC leaders refused to respond and hobnobbed with the Govt. and settled for a paltry sum in modification of the Pay Commission's recommendations. However, many conventions were

organised in most States on the demands "Bonus for all and need-based minimum wage".

After the Rly. strike was suppressed, the Government was emboldened to launch an offensive on the entire working class by an Ordinance, later enacted by the Parliament as law, which is known as the Wage Freeze Act. In order to defeat this tremendous offensive, an Anti-Freeze Convention was held in August 1974. Although the AITUC, INTUC and HMS officially boycotted the convention, it evoked tremendous response. 1400 delegates representing various unions, State and Central Government employees' organisations, Federations not affiliated to any Central T.U. organisations etc. and even unions affiliated to the HMS and a section of the HMS Working Committee participated in the Convention. The Convention decided to hold conventions and demonstrations against the wage freeze Act in States, regions and wherever possible conduct local or State-wide protest strikes. Over 200 conventions have been held throughout the country. It is also significant that AITUC leadership due to fear of isolation from their own workers, participated in some State and Regional conventions. Four State-wide strikes had taken place, one each in Maharashtra and Rajasthan and two in Kerala. In the Maharashtra strike and in one of the Kerala strikes, the AITUC leadership had to take part.

It is necessary to state that the CITU units everywhere took the initiative in organising the anti-Freeze conventions and actions.

## Overcome the Weaknesses

The task of democratisation of the trade unions, through which alone the consciousness of mass of the workers could be raised to high level is still being neglected. In many unions, the pattern of 'leader-followers' still continues. It is absolutely essential to group the militants' thrown up during the struggles, constantly educate them, consult them on every important step, and through them educate the mass of workers on multifacious problems facing the working class—not only the particular problems in the factory, but more important than that on the problems and tasks facing the working class, the Government's entire economic and political policies and the foremost role the working class play in defeating these policies.

This alone is real trade union democracy and not just holding formal meetings of the Executive Committee and taking formal decisions. This alone will rapidly enable us to draw into the service of the working class and democratic movement innumerable cadres, the lack of which prevents the expansion of our activities despite the tremendous scope and opportunities that have opened up before us.

Another important failure is to build united committees at the lower levels during united struggles. Only through such committees, it is possible for us

to inform the mass of workers is a blow struck at the line of the day to day developments, the class collaboration and disruption. the intrigues of the disruptors. When these leaders join who have reluctantly joined the the united struggle they are not strike, and foil their attempts at happy at heart and do everything disruption.

These weaknesses must be quickly overcome. The last two years have been years of great struggles. As noted earlier, these struggles have outgrown the elementary consciousness of workers in a factory vs. the employer and the beginning of the consciousness of the working class versus the employing class as represented by the Government have already appeared.

### Carry Forward The Class Line

The struggle between the two lines—the line of unity and struggle and the line of disruption and brutal suppression of struggles—has become more intense. We see that struggle at only in those unions directly led by the CITU but also in all the fighting organisations of the workers and employees—among LIC employees, among the Central and State Government employees, among the railway workers, the L. R. S. etc. In many of these the disruptors have suffered defeat. Among the Central Government employees, the disruptor have been forced to enter into negotiations for restoring unity.

Comrade, we must realise that the line of unity and struggle is our class line and the line of disruption and class collaboration is the line of the bourgeoisie and its collaborators. Every united struggle of the workers in any unit or industry

is a blow struck at the line of class collaboration and disruption. When these leaders join the united struggle they are not happy at heart and do everything to prevent the struggle from going forward to its full fruition. Every effort on our part to defeat their line therefore not only strengthens our line of class struggle, but also brings new strength to our organisation.

That is why we must persist in this line and strive every nerve to carry it forward.

At the same time, it must be realised that opportunities for such united struggles are growing. The Government cannot find a way out of the deepening crisis, within the framework of its present policies, except by attacking the working class and all sections of the toiling people. Even small industrialists are going down in this crisis due to the measures of the Government. Hence, whatever attempts the Government and the employers might make to sow disruption in the working class through its proteges like the INTUC and AITUC, the objective conditions are such that the appeal for unity and united struggle will receive still greater response than before from the mass of workers. It is therefore of utmost importance that we encourage the building of fraternal relations among the workers and seize every opportunity for building unity and launching united struggles, and thereby frustrate the attempts to divide the working class.

## Second Conference of All India Plantation Workers Federation

Vandeperiyar, a small hill town in the Peermedu Taluka of Idikki district in Kerala became a town of Red Flags and festoons and resounded with the thunderous slogans of thousands of plantation workers on the occasion of the Second Conference of the All India Plantation Workers Federation (AIPWF) held from 11th to 13th May, 1975.

The venue of the open session, held on 11th May, was named 'Rajan Nagar' after Comrade. K.I. Rajan, a beloved leader of the Plantation workers in Kerala who died a few months back. About 25,000 plantation workers came in procession from Wallardie, three miles from Vandiperiyar, shouting slogans, all the way along the flag and arch bedecked route. Inaugurating the open session, Comrade, B.T. Ranadive, President CITU, demanded uniform wages for all plantation workers all over the country and called upon the workers to stand united to fight the offensive launched by the Government on the T.U. and democratic rights of workers. The open session was also addressed by P. Ramamurti, General Secretary CITU, Monoranjan Roy, K. Padmanabhan, E. Balanandan among others. Comrade Ranadive presented a purse of Rs. 50,000 to Comrade Sharada, wife of Comrade K.I. Rajan.

The delegates session of the Conference was inaugurated by Comrade P. Ramamurti, General Secretary CITU, after Comrade M. G. Ramchandran, Chairman Reception Committee welcomed the delegates. Comrade K. Padmanabhan, President of the AIPWF presided over the Conference.

Messages greeting the Conference were received from Democratic Workers' Congress of Ceylon, South African Congress of Trade Unions, Spanish Overseas Trade Unions, Agricultural, Food Industry, Waterfront Union of Rumania. A. I. Kisan Sabha, A. I. Transport Workers' Federation etc.

In his report presented to the

Conference, Monoranjan Roy, General Secretary highlighted the questions of closed and sick gardens, nationalisation of big plantations, equal pay for equal work and suppression of T. U. and democratic rights. Eighteen delegates participated in the discussions on the report including Anand Pathak, H. P. Rai, C. K. Unnikrishnan, Kunhikannan, Brahmanadan, Amal Ghosh Dastidar, J. Hemachandran, P. Sadasivan and G. Vardhan among others. After discussions the report was adopted unanimously.

Resolutions were adopted on condolences, on martyrs, on liberation of South Vietnam and Cambodia, demanding

resignation of the Achutha Menon Ministry etc. The resolution of Equal Pay for Equal Work was moved by Vimal Ranadive and supported by L. Mary and P. K. Kunjamma, women workers from Tea Estates.

After accepting the Statement of Accounts and the report of the Credentials Committee, the Conference elected a 28-member Working Committee and Office bearers including K. Padmanabhan as President, Monoranjan Roy as General Secretary, Parimal Mitra, Ratanlal Brahman, Biren Dutta and C. Nanjundappa as Vice-Presidents, Vimal Ranadive, J. Hemachandran and Amal Ghosh Dastidar as Secretaries and Ananda Pathak as Treasurer.

## Delhi Regional CITU Conference

The third Delhi Regional Conference of CITU was held at Delhi on April 26 and 27 last. 289 delegates representing 50 unions of Western U.P., Haryana and Delhi attended the Conference, besides 19 observers. Fraternal delegates from LIC, Bank, Teachers, SFI, Kisan Sabha and UTUC also attended. The unions represented at the Conference ranged from Textiles, Engineering, Sugar, Pottery, Power and Handloom industries to municipal employees, LIC, Bank, Newspaper and Shop employees.

B. T. Ranadive, President CITU inaugurated the Conference after B. K. Paliwal, Chairman Reception Committee welcomed the delegates.

In his inaugural speech, Ranadive pointed out the trends

towards authoritarian rule becoming increasingly manifest in the Indian subcontinent, including our country. He underlined the international significance of the glorious victories in Cambodia and Vietnam for the working class movement. He also outlined the growing resistance of the working class and other toilers against the attempts of the ruling classes to shift the burden of capitalist crisis on the workers, the increasing use of force to crush the resistance and the continued use of semi-fascist methods to curb T.U. and civil liberties.

Addressing the Conference, P. Ramamurti, General Secretary CITU stressed the implications of the anti-working class measures of the Government in the form of wage freeze, Indust-

rial Relations Bill etc, and called upon the working class to fight these measures and integrate it with the struggle for withdrawal of Emergency, DIR, MISA etc. He also called upon the Delhi CITU workers to take leading part in the observation of the National Protest Day on May 15 at the call of the National Campaign Committee.

The report of the Regional Secretary, Ghanashyam Saran Sinha, pointed out the growth of the Delhi CITU despite repression on CITU unions and activists in U.P. and Haryana—particularly in Ghaziabad, Faridabad and Delhi. The resolute fight carried on by the Delhi CITU against anti-labour policies of the Government and its persistent efforts to build up unity and united struggles has enhanced its prestige among workers.

(On Page Eighteen)

### Third Conference Calls

(From Page Two)

moved by Comrade Samar Mukherjee and seconded by Comrade Suhrid Mullick Chowdhury. This resolution was also adopted with standing ovation from the delegates.

The Conference unanimously adopted a resolution supporting the strike of 4,30,000 State Government employees and demanding withdrawal of victimisation and repressive measure against the employees and immediate settlement of their demands. The resolution was moved by Com. S. Y. Kolhatkar and seconded by Com. E. Balanandan.

(From Page Seventeen)

The discussions on the report highlighted the growing strength of the CITU in Delhi and its achievements, as well as the weaknesses to be overcome. Summing up the discussions, Ranadive warned against certain possible mistakes which should be guarded against. He also stressed the need for democratic functioning of the unions, and more attention to politicalisation of the working class.

The Conference decided on three immediate tasks—united struggle for need-based minimum wage for Engineering workers, achieving target of one-lakh membership and strengthening the Regional Centre.

Resolutions were adopted at the Conference on Vietnam and Cambodia, on decisions of National Campaign Committee, on Index, Fraud, on Police repression, etc.

The conference elected a Committee of 36 with T.M. Nagarajan as President and Ghanashyam Saran Sitha as General Secretary.

The Conference also decided to collect rupee one each from the delegates and hand over the amount to the striking State Govt. employees as a token of CITU's solidarity support for their struggle. A sum of Rs. 5096 was collected on the spot which was handed over the leaders of the State Govt. employees by Com. P. Ramamurti at a meeting in the after-noon. In addition, a sum of Rs. 1000 was handed over to the State Govt. employees on behalf of the LIC employees.

The Conference elected the Resolutions Committee consisting of the following members: Samar Mukherjee (convener), R. Umamath, K. P. Ghosh, Santi Ghatak P. Sanzgiri, Mohan Punamia, V. Vishwanath Menon, Ravindranath, N. Prasada Rao, N. Chakraborti, Biren Roy and Suhrid Mullick Chowdhury.

The conference also elected the Credentials Committee consisting of the following member: A. Nallasivan (convener), Bisweswar Ganguly, O. J. Joseph, D. D. Shirali, P. Satyanarayana and Prakash Ghosh.

P. Ramamurti, General Secretary CITU then presented his report, copies of which had been circulated earlier (For extracts of the report see elsewhere in this issue). While presenting the report, he outlined the salient features of the report and highlighted the lessons with reference to some of the major struggles conducted by the working class in India during the last two years.

The discussion on the General Secretary's report continued for two days—23rd and 24th May. Thirty speakers took part in the discussions on the report which

centred round the main points raised by Com. Ramamurti while presenting the report. The speakers narrated their experiences while conducting movements and struggles in their own States, in support of the points made out in the report. Some delegates pointed out certain shortcomings in the report and made some suggestions.

Among those who participated in the discussions on the report were Monoranjan Roy, C. Padmanabhan, Gerald Pereira, K. Ramani, Ghanashyam Saran Sinha, S. K. Buxi, Biren Roy, Ramchanra Rao, Janaradhan Kurup, P. K. Kurane, Santi Ghatak, Dharmarajan, Govind Gupta, Bimal Chatterjee, V. Karmegam, K. M. Abraham, Hari Krishna, Md. Israil, S. N. Tiwari, Mohan Punamia, Kamal Sarkar, P. Sanzgiri, K. Gopalan K. K. Tripathy, Hari Sadhan Mitra, Jagjit Singh Lyallpuri, Ajeya Rout, Bhaskar Rao, Harkabahadur Rai and Haradhan Roy.

Replying to the points raised during the discussions on the report, Comrade P. Ramamurti stressed the need of arming the workers and educating them about the danger posed by the economic crisis and recession and prepare them for waging prolonged struggles against this menace. Referring to the offensive of the Government against the civil liberties of the people he emphasised the need of rousing the workers and fighting for civil liberties politically. He also pointed out the paramount need of democratising our movement so that the mass of the workers consciously take part in the struggles and in every sphere of trade union activities.

Besides, 26 resolutions printed and circulated earlier, the Resolutions Committee considered twenty more resolutions of which forty resolutions were finalised and approved for adoption. Six resolutions could not be finalised and were referred to the Secretariat. Two resolutions, one on Greetings to Cambodia and another on arrest of CPI (M) Legislators in Tripura were moved from the Chair and adopted unanimously.

The resolution on Repression was moved by Comrade Jyoti Basu and seconded by Comrade Niren Ghosh. A printed report on the repression and goonda attacks on the CITU had been circulated earlier among delegates. While moving the resolution, Jyoti Basu explained that the violence and terror, which has been adopted by the Congress party and Government as an organised policy to crush working class and democratic movement, can only be fought back successfully with the help and cooperation of the entire democratic masses.

The resolution was supported by O. Bharathan, D. Janakiraman, P. N. Dhanda and Jiban Roy. Replying to discussions Jyoti Basu said that the booklet on repression brought out by the CITU will be sent to different organisations and bodies. He asserted that if the facts about repression and terror were only carried to the masses, half the battle would be won. The resolution was then adopted unanimously.

The resolutions on Death Sentences and on Sentences on Life Imprisonment of Democratic Workers were moved Comrade Santi Ghatak and seconded by Comrade A. Balasubramaniam. Both the resolutions were adopted unanimously.

While moving the resolution on Chile, Comrade Mathew Kurian stressed the need of drawing correct lessons from the Chilean experience and of organising solidarity actions. The resolution was adopted unanimously.

Comrade D. D. Shirali moved the resolution on Life Imprisonment of CITU Workers in Kota (Rajasthan) which was seconded by Comrade C. Kannan. Comrade Jagjivan from Kota, one of the workers convicted of life imprisonment, while speaking in support of the resolution expressed the determination of fighting the offensive of the Government against the trade union and democratic rights of the workers. The resolution was adopted unanimously.

A lively discussion took place on the resolution on International Women's Year moved by Comrade A. Balasubramaniam and seconded by Comrade Ahilya Rangnekar. After the resolution was supported by Comrade Vimal Ranadive, it was adopted unanimously.

The resolution on Recession was moved by Comrade K. P. Ghosh and seconded by Comrade R. Umanath. The resolution was supported by Comrade Dinendra Bhattacharyya, K. Ravindranath, Ramchandran Rao, Jamini Saha, K. Venkateswaralu and Dip Majumdar. The resolution was adopted unanimously.

Comrade Sushila Gopalan, while moving the resolution on Equal Pay For Equal Work, pointed out that unless the working class takes the lead in carrying out the tasks of working among the women workers and bringing them in forefront of the struggles, the goal of equal pay for equal work cannot be reached.

The Conference also adopted resolutions on Electoral Reforms, on Sikkim, on Nagaland and Mizoram, on Emergency, DIR and MISA, on Unemployment, on Fraudulent Index, on Railway Workers, on Solidarity with Central and State Government Employees, on Solidarity with Peasant Movement, on Non Implementation of Bid and Cigar Act, on Bonus Review Committee Report, on Indian Penal Code (Amendment) Bill, on Withdrawal of Wage Freeze Act, on Food Crisis and Femine etc.

Comrade Samar Mukherjee, Treasurer CITU, presented the statement of Accounts for the year 1973-74 which was passed unanimously by the Conference.

Comrade A. Nallasivan presented the report of the Credentials Committee. According to the report, the total membership of the CITU stood at more than 11 lakhs. Applications for affiliation were received by the Committee from 217 new unions with a total membership of 50, 897, of which 66 unions were recommended by the Committee for grant of affiliation. The report was adopted unanimously.

Comrade R. Umanath proposed the names of the new offices-bearers and Comrade P.K. Kurane supported them. All the office bearers were elected unanimously amongst prolonged applause. Comrade P. Ramamurti, then read out the list of 220 proposed General Council members which was adopted unanimously. The General Council members elected by the Conference, elected 35 Working Committee members and their name were announced in the Conference. (The list of Office-bearers, General Council members and Working Committee

members will appear in next issue).

During the session industry-wise meetings were held for the Coal, Sugar, Plantation, Handloom, Beedi, Gas, Rayon, Rubber and Tyre and Road Transport industries.

The women delegates and observers to the Conference were given a reception by the Bombay Shramik Mahila Sangha.

In his concluding speech, Comrade B.T. Ranadive highlighted the lessons of the historic victory of the people of Vietnam against US imperialism and reiterated the CITU's stand for the unity of the socialist camp. Referring to the growing prestige of the CITU as the defender of the interests of the working class and the main unifying force in the trade union movement, he outlined the tasks to be carried out by the CITU in the near future to play its role in carrying forward the line of unity and struggle. His speech was punctuated by frequent applause of delegates.

The open Session of the 3rd Conference, held at the Shivaji Park, Bombay on 25th May

Detail Reports of Observance of National Protest Day Against Wage Freeze, Victimization and Emergency will appear in our next issue.

truly reflected the rising consciousness of the working class in Maharashtra and the growing strength of the CITU in this State. Thousands of workers, besides the delegates, came in huge processions carrying aloft the red banners to the Shivaji Park to attend the open session which was presided over by Com. B.T. Ranadive and addressed by Comrades B.T. Ranadive, Jyoti Basu, A.K. Gopalan, P. Ramamurti and S.Y. Kolhatkar. Addressing the open session, Comrade Ranadive exposed the anti-working class, anti-people policies of the Indira Government which was responsible for the economic crisis and pauperisation of the masses, while the monopolists and landlords, hoarders and profiteers were minting crores of rupees at the expense of the people. He called upon the working class to take up the cause of the peasantry and other sections of the people and lead them in the fight against the anti-people policies of the Government and the attempts of the Congress Party to establish one-Party dictatorship in the country.

The 3rd Conference of the CITU manifested a new awareness and determination among the working class of India in carrying forward the task of building up united struggles of workers. The delegates and observers who attended the Conference returned to their bases armed with the valuable

experience gained during the Session and with the confidence of strengthening the CITU organisation to face effectively the growing offensive of the capitalist-landlord class against the working class and people of the country.

Despite heavy odds, the Reception Committee and the Maharashtra State Committee of the CITU took up the challenge of organising the Conference and did a magnificent job of making the Conference a grand success. Since February 1975, during the last three months, intense preparations were made with the help of hundreds of volunteers and workers. Ten thousand posters and more than 75 thousand handbills were distributed, 150 group, mass and gate meetings were held to popularise the message of the CITU and prepare the working class for the Conference.

All the major documents were printed in English as well as in Hindi, Bengali, Malayalam, Tamil, Teluge, Marathi and Urdu languages. During the Session, arrangements were made for translation of the speeches in most of the regional languages. The staff of the CITU Central office and the Maharashtra State Committee office, as well as LIC and Bank employees also worked tirelessly for the success of the Conference.