



THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITU

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EDITORIAL

A Futile Exercise To Hoodwink The Workers

WITH great fanfare and publicity the meeting of the State Labour Ministers was held in New Delhi on September 27 and 28 but failed to take any concrete step that would lead to improvement of industrial relations in India.

K. V. Raghunatha Reddy, Union Labour Minister, who presided over the Conference began his speech with a big bang against capitalist system itself but ended it with a whimper of a call for strengthening the public sector only.

As reported by The Economic Times (Sept. 28, 1974) he further elaborated his ideas about social change thus: "The Industrial Relations Bill is designed to streamline the existing procedures and machinery in the field of labour management relations and trade unions and to make these institutions relevant to a changing industrial society".

Earlier, a couple of days ago, before the INTUG audience in Punjab the Union Labour Minister went to the extent of criticising even the concept of mixed society and advocated a full fledged socialist society. However his socialism does not go beyond what the Prime Minister is advocating. Hence there is no wonder that the proposed anti-working class Industrial Relations Bill appears to him as an instrument in the march towards socialism! The frequent use of DIR during industrial disputes by the Union Labour Ministry gives us sufficient indication of the working of the mind of the Union Labour Minister.

According to the press reports the Industrial Relations Bill would be cleared by the cabinet soon and the State Labour Ministers may meet again in November to consider it. It is said that the Bill may be brought before the next session of Parliament. The Bill which hits at the very basis of trade union movement will be a challenge to the working class of India for a new countrywide struggle.

Much is said about the time-bound programme agreed to by the State Labour Ministers. It appears that the Conference agreed to implement the concept of equal remuneration for men and women workers as well as linking of minimum wages with price index within a period of three months. Both issues are agitating the minds of the workers since long and implementation of these concepts within 3 months would be an achievement even within present limitations. However the question arises: Are these decisions meant for serious implementation?

Regarding equal remuneration of men and women workers the question was brought before the meeting due to the complaint launched by the CITU with the ILO which referred the matter to the Government of India. In a Memorandum to the Director General of ILO on May 6, 1974, B. T. Ranadive, President CITU stated.

"The Government of India has ratified the ILO Convention No. 100 concerning "Equal remuneration for Men and Women" in 1958. Though 16 years have passed since then it is noteworthy that women workers still continue to get less wages than men for the same type of work. The wages of women workers in India are extremely low compared to men workers".

He further emphasised,

"In this regard we would like to state here as to how the legal machinery of the Government itself is responsible for violating their own decisions and recom-

mendations in their awards, the tripartite Committees, wage fixation Committees etc. wherein they have accepted unequal wages for women workers in Plantations, Building and construction and in other industries. The same can be said about the Public Sector. For example, Central Public Works Department is under public sector where the principle of equal remuneration is violated. Is it not strange that the Minimum Wage Advisory Committees in States and Centre also have recommended unequal wages for men and women workers? If the Central Government violates these principles, the industries under the Private Sector cannot be expected to behave differently."

It is clear that all the State Labour Ministers who were refusing to implement the principle have been forced to accept it due to the intervention of the ILO. However they have not explained how they would implement it within three months. If, as some press reports indicate, this would be done by amending the Minimum Wages Act it would be a mockery of the principle itself. A formal modification of the Act may only lead to large scale retrenchment of women workers as was done in other organised industries and the trade union movement will have to be on guard to protect the interests of these women workers.

Moreover the wages fixed under the Minimum Wages Act are such that it has become a Starvation Wages Act and there

is no machinery even to enforce implementation of these wages.

Therefore the trade union movement should raise the following demands to ensure payment of equal wages to men and women workers:

1. To introduce comprehensive legislation to ensure that all women workers are paid at par with men workers in every branch of employment.
2. To protect the existing jobs of women after introduction of such measures by introducing ban on retrenchment of women workers.
3. To remove all discriminatory restrictions on jobs to women workers.
4. To impose heavy punishment to employers for paying less to women workers.
5. To provide for supervision of trade unions to ensure implementation of such a law.

Only such measures will protect the women workers from the violation of the ILO Conventions.

The agreement that the Minimum Wages Act should also provide for linking of DA with the Price Index is very vague and does not ensure cent per cent neutralisation to workers. Thus the partial rate of neutralisation will perpetuate the trend towards further erosion of real wages of the workers in the organised sector. The State Labour Ministers have not shown their readiness to bring the level of minimum wages under the Act at least at par with the poverty line calculated by the Planning Commission!

The question of non-implementation of Beedi and Cigars

Act, despite the decision of the Supreme Court in January this year, had assumed scandalous proportions. Emboldened by the Govt.'s attitude the employers were non-chalantly refusing to implement the provisions of the Act. In Tamilnadu and other States the employers have been compelling the workers to declare themselves as self-employed persons under the Act and openly evade its provisions. The State Government authorities are openly supporting the employers and reducing the law into a farce. The State Governments have been misusing powers to exempt certain factories from the purview of the Act. Under these circumstances formal decision to implement the Act will not protect the interests of the workers. Trade unions will have to fight against the loopholes which the employers are using to evade the Act and demand necessary amendments so that the loopholes are plugged as soon as possible.

The decision to increase the minimum wages for 1000 Beedis from Rs. 4.50 to Rs. 5 is accompanied by allowing State Governments to defer its implementation till May 1, 1975—a time when a demand for another rise would be long overdue. Such dilatory tactics only suit the convenience of the employers. Moreover in many States the workers have already achieved this level or exceeded it. It may benefit marginally the States where the wage rates are lower than Rs. 5 but there too the workers will have to fight hard to get it implemented.

The State Labour Ministers

have virtually put in cold storage the decision to reopen the closed gardens and subjected thousands of plantation workers to destitution. The West Bengal Labour Minister openly supported the planters by advocating abolition of the existing system of supply of foodgrains at fixed prices and suggested cash payment in lieu thereof. This would reduce the burden of planters and adversely affect the workers by further erosion in their real wages.

The decision to constitute a Guide-lines Committee to consider the standardisation of wages in plantation industry, if seen in the light of the experience of similar Committee in electricity undertakings, may prove to be a time consuming device. In the electricity industry the employers refused to participate in the negotiations and the Government behaved like a silent spectator. Even the recommendations regarding interim relief were not implemented in full by many State Governments. The trade unions in plantation industry have to take into account the past experience in this regard and build a powerful movement in order to compel the Central Government to give up its deliberate inaction.

The question of standardisation of wages in jute industry is allowed to hang in the balance over years and nothing is heard except occasional promises from the Union Labour Minister. Of late, he was assuring the Trade Unions in jute industry that the matters would be discussed with the State Labour Ministers. Now

the Conference has postponed the decision for 2 months on the plea that Andhra Government would get a Report of the Committee on the question of wages for jute workers. These two months will perhaps provide enough time for the bureaucrats of the Union Labour Ministry to find out further methods of delaying the matters. The united strike of 2.5 lakh jute workers in West Bengal did not bring sense to the State Labour Ministers. It may require a still bitter struggle to compel them to give up their prevaricating stance.

Perhaps the most obnoxious decision of the Conference is to give up all series of index prior to 1960 and link up all the DA with the 1960 series. Already faulty conversion factors are operating in most of the Centres with the 1960 series and the trade unions are rightly demanding rectification of the old series in order to arrive at a new conversion factor. Without rectifying the old series if the new series are introduced then the fraud will be perpetuated. The trade unions have to resolutely oppose the decision and carry forward their campaign for rectification of the past series with more vigour so that the Government is forced to give up its conspiracy to cheat the workers by denying them part of their hard-won DA.

The Government, while plotting to bring forward a Bill to suppress the genuine T.U. movement and impose company unions on the workers, is giving a sop to them by offering free

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Report of the Bonus Review Committee

THE Bonus Review Committee has produced a report after two years of "hard" labour. We have not had any occasion to go through the entire report, but what we may presume to be some of its salient points seem to have been published in the Press.

For one thing, the Committee by a majority has turned its face against any increase of the minimum bonus above 8.33 per cent which it recommended in its interim report submitted two years earlier. In this connection, it may be recalled that the CITU urged upon the Review Committee a minimum bonus of ten per cent to rise by one per cent every year for the next five years, the question of minimum bonus again to be reviewed after it reaches the level of 15 per cent.

The Committee has also by a majority rejected the claim that the employees of the Government, its undertakings and departments and of the Public Sector Undertakings should be entitled to bonus. Here also the CITU demanded that no section of the workers should be excluded from bonus. The CITU in its memorandum pointed to the impending Railway Strike in which one of the demands was that bonus must be paid to the Railway employees. The CITU also urged that workers in non-factory establishments and other undertakings employing less than twenty workmen should also be

included within the scope of the benefit of bonus.

This has also been rejected and the Committee has refused to widen the scope of the Bonus Act.

Not to speak of recommending additional and further benefits, the Committee has suggested that section 34(3) of the Bonus Act under which the workers could earn more than twenty per cent of bonus by collective bargaining be deleted.

The labour representatives have characterised the report as a "status quo report". It may be noted that the employers were in a majority of 3 : 2 because one of the accredited labour representatives died in an accident and his place was not filled.

The poverty of the report of the Bonus Committee arises from the fact that the employers refuse to admit that bonus is nothing but deferred wages as even held by Tribunals and Courts. In fact, by paying bonus, they do not do any charity to the workers though such a pretence is often rigged up by using such expressions as "ex gratia". In the CITU memorandum it was sharply pointed out that a worker is forced to work free for a part of the working day thus generating surplus value or profits for the employer. Bonus is only a part of this surplus value which is created by the worker but misappropriated by the employer. This basic fact is denied

by the capitalist and the working people are deceived through the jugglery of the balance sheet showing sometimes nil profit and sometimes such profit as seems to leave nothing for the employer himself, not to speak of the worker.

The Bonus Act gives a seal of approval on this deception practised on the workers. Otherwise, how could one explain the whole fraud of prior charges embodied in section 6 of the Bonus Act?

In fact, it is the bonus which should be a prior charge on the gross profits calculated in accordance with the schedule to the Bonus Act, because bonus is nothing but deferred wage. After deducting the so-called prior charges set forth in section 6 of the Act, more often than not the workers are left nothing, not even such amount which could meet the minimum bonus which even would thus have been in jeopardy had it not been made obligatory. Both depreciation and development rebate are deducted at the Income Tax rates which are generous for the employer. It is within everyman's knowledge that depreciation rates are a method of cheating on State revenues. The machinery do not depreciate at the rates allowed under the Income Tax Act. Moreover, there is no way to check whether the depreciation fund is really utilised to replace obsolete and worn out machinery. Experience tells that the capitalist in India rarely replaces his machinery because

the rate of surplus value is more with increase in variable capital than with increase in constant capital.

Similarly with development rebate. It is also another method of pocketing profits and thus depriving the workers.

Previous to the Payment of Bonus Amendment Act 8 of 1969, the available surplus used to be calculated by deducting from the gross profits calculated in accordance with the Schedule to the Act also the direct tax which the employer was liable to pay for the accounting year in respect of his income, profits and gains. That deduction was in addition to the depreciation and development rebate we have referred to above. From the language of provisions of section 6 (c) of the Act, one should have thought that the direct tax to be deducted was the actual tax that the employer was liable to pay. But the Supreme Court held in the case of Metal Box Company of India Ltd. v. Their Workmen (1) that it was notional tax liability, that is to say, it does not matter whether the company actually pays or has paid or will in the future pay the tax so notionally calculated to the Income Tax Authorities. The worker must in any event be deprived.

Thereafter there has been some amendment of Section 5 of the Payment of Bonus Act to minimise the impact of the Supreme Court decision in the above case. The amendment is also obscurely worded and does not take the bull by the horn, the result being that the deprivation of the worker is not substantially

resored. Moreover, no retrospective effect has been given to this amendment thus giving legal recognition to the crores of rupees taken away from the workers on the basis of national tax liability.

The provision of set-on and set-off in section 15 of the Act is another way in which the employer deprives the worker. Where the allocable surplus exceeds the maximum bonus payable to the workmen, instead of paying it off to the workmen who have earned it by their labour, the excess is carried forward to successive years till the fourth year from the accounting year in question for payment of bonus in those years. Again, where the company does not show any allocable surplus, the minimum bonus that it is obligatory on it to pay is carried forward for being set off in the succeeding year till the fourth accounting year.

These iniquitous provisions of the Payment of Bonus Act are not remedied. On the other hand, collective bargaining is banned, because section 34 (3) of the Act by which the workers could secure bonus even exceeding the maximum provided in the Act is deleted.

Bonus itself did not fall from the skies for the workmen. They have had to fight bitterly to get their right to bonus recognised. But the capitalist, if forced to go one step forward, does not lose time to get back two steps at the first opportunity available to them. And he has gone back.

The next step for the workers is, therefore, a united Trade

Union movement. Let us hope that, in this struggle, all the central Trade Unions will put up a United Front, though we also know that "La Belle Dame Sans Merci hath in thrall" some of the leaders of some Trade Unions!

—Arun Prokas Chatterjee

Durgapur Steel Workers' Strike In Support Of Contract Workers

AT the joint call of CITU, AITUC, UTUC (Lenin Sarani) and Progressive Labour Union, workers of Durgapur Steel Plant observed one-day strike on October 3 protesting against the arbitrary dismissal of 700 contractors workers of the Steel Plant. The employees of the Calcutta office of DSP also observed half a day's cease work.

The Cooperative Labour Contractors of Durgapur dismissed these workers arbitrarily in August despite the fact that they have been working for years. When they protested against this under the leadership of the United Contractors Workers' Union, they were attacked by goondas and police and 35 leading workers were arrested. Even women workers were beaten and arrested.

The Hindustan Steel Employees' Union (CITU) and UCWU made repeated representations to the Plant authorities and Central and State Labour Ministers to intervene, but without any result. When all other methods failed, the workers were forced to go on strike to compel the contractors to reinstate the dismissed workers.

Successful One-day Strike By Ranigunj Colliery Workers

ABOUT forty thousand colliery workers of Ranigunj coal belt successfully observed a one-day strike on October 7 in support of their demands. Although the strike call was given unilaterally by the AITUC and INTUC without consulting the CITU, the Colliery Mazdoor Sabha of India (CITU) supported the strike and CITU workers participated wholeheartedly in the strike. Robin Chatterjee, Colliery Mazdoor Sabha has congratulated the workers for the successful strike.

Earlier, on September 1 last, a Convention of Ranigunj colliery workers held at Asansol under the auspices of the Colliery Mazdoor Sabha of India (CITU) decided to give call for a one-day strike on October 15 on a 7-point Charter of Demands including immediate acceptance by the bi-partite Wage Negotiations Committee of the formula of wage structure proposed by CITU; 10 per cent underground allowance; 1.30 paise per point at 246 index; House Rent allowance of Rs. 15 p. m.; introduction of statutory rationing and supply of essential commodities through fair price shops etc. The Convention also decided to organise regional Conventions and observe 'Demands Week' from September 23 to prepare for continuous strike in November if the demands were not met in the meantime. Strike notices were issued accordingly.

The Colliery Mazdoor Sabha

of India (CITU) also approached the AITUC and INTUC unions to build up a united movement on the demands. However, instead of responding to the CITU's appeal, the AITUC and INTUC held a separate Convention at Dhanbad and unilaterally gave a call for a strike on October 7.

It may be pointed out that during the bipartite Wage Negotiations, the INTUC and AITUC came to an understanding with the Government and signed an agreement with the management agreeing to increased work-load and less wages than demanded by the CITU. The CITU expressed its strong reservations on these points. However, even that agreement was not implemented by the Government.

After the strike of October 7, the Government has called the INTUC and AITUC for discussions excluding the CITU from these talks. This is a deliberate move on the part of the Government to undermine the unity of the workers and strike a bargain with the INTUC and AITUC at the cost of the workers' interests.

Thus, the attitude of the INTUC and AITUC unions of negative response to the CITU's appeal for united struggles and patching up with the Government is doing incalculable harm to the workers' interests. The CITU appeals to the AITUC and INTUC to desist from such practices and strengthen the unity of

Long Live The Great November Revolution

THE Secretariat of the CITU conveys its fraternal greetings to the working class and people of the Soviet Union on the occasion of the 58th Anniversary of the great November Revolution which blazed the trail of Socialist revolutions in the world.

The gigantic task of Socialist construction fulfilled by the Soviet people under the leadership of working class has established the superiority of the Socialist system over the capitalist system. When the advanced capitalist countries are in the vortex of deep economic crisis the Soviet Union has made continuous progress in all spheres of life. There is no inflation, price rise, unemployment and other ills in Soviet Union which dog the capitalist world most ferociously.

The substantial rise in the military capabilities of the Soviet Union and other Socialist countries has been a source of strength in checking the imperialist designs against socialist camp and the people of the world.

While wishing further successes to the working class and the people of the USSR in Socialist construction the CITU cherishes the hope that the present disunity in the Socialist camp would come to an end soon and path of triumph of Socialism would be cleared all over the world.

the workers so that the management may be forced to concede the legitimate demands of the workers.

Tamilnadu Committee Of CITU Meets

THE Tamilnadu State Committee of the CITU met on September 27-29 at Mettur under the Chairmanship of K. Ramani, President of the State CITU. 34 out of 41 members attended.

At the outset the meeting paid homage to the memory of Com. Hare Krishna Konar.

A. Balasubramaniam, Vice-President, in his report reviewed the world situation and pointed out how the crisis of the capitalist system was getting accentuated and at the same time imperialists were hatching conspiracies in Chile, Cyprus, Cambodia and Vietnam and trying to foment troubles by setting up a base at Diego Garcia and supplying arms to Pakistan. Only the united action of the working class on international plane can foil these conspiracies, he said.

He also reported in detail on the all-India T. U. Convention against Wage Freeze held in Delhi on September 28, and explained its decisions and the tasks arising out of it.

R. Umanath, General Secretary, then reported on the various struggles and united actions in the State during the past 3 months and the experiences gained therefrom. He also reported on the activities of the State CITU to implement the decisions of the last meeting of the Committee.

18 comrades took part in the discussions on the report after which some important decisions were taken.

The Committee formulated some demands on procurement price of paddy, supply of rice at Rs. 1.25 per Kilo etc. and directed the T. U. cadres to popularise these demands around the industrial units and to lead the people to intervene to get the demands fulfilled. The Committee also directed the cadres to organise the struggle of agricultural labourers and get them enrolled in unions.

Regarding the campaign against Wage Freeze, the Committee decided among other things, that the decisions of the Delhi Convention should be popularised, United Committees should be formed everywhere by October end, attempts should be made to make the Madurai District Convention of October 27 a success and the idea of a day's General Strike throughout

the State should be popularised.

The Committee also directed the CITU unions and the Dakshin Rly. Employees Union to try to activate the local NCCRS units through meetings etc., collect funds for victimised Railwaymen and render all possible help to them.

The Committee also took industry-wise organisational decisions regarding the Electricity, Transport, Sugar, Beedi & Cigar, Plantation, municipal and local bodies and other industries.

The Committee noted the offensive launched by the managements, aided by the Police and the Courts, against CITU activists and union officials in Mettur Chemicals Ltd. and elsewhere and decided to observe October 14 as "Defence of T.U. Rights Day" throughout the State.

The Committee decided to hold its next meeting in December at Nellikuppam.

Labour Handbook 1974

ERRATA

Page No.	Table No.	Line No.	In place of	Read
4	1.3 (Heading)	2	(TONNES)	(000 TONNES)
30	4.9 (Col. 2)	Last	203,161	43,346
38	—	18	net intake	net daily intake
39	—	4	Sugar 20 Ozs.	Sugar 2 Ozs.
54	6.13 (Col. 1)	last	1371	1971
69	—	23	ESI Review Committee	ESI Enquiry Committee
70	—	21	P.F. Commission	P.F. Commissioner
73	11.5 (Col. 1)	5	1972-72	1971-72
75	11.7 (Contd.)	last	Total 1,900.84	Total 1,904.83
77	—	2	4 crores 49 lakhs	4 crores 74 lakhs
113	—	8	Circulation (100)	Circulation (000)

Demands Week Observed By Road Transport Workers

ACCORDING to the decision of the A. I. Road Transport Workers' Convention held in Calcutta on July 28-30 last, Road Transport workers all over India observed 'Demand Week' from 24th to 30th September. Reports have been received so far about observance of the week in Punjab, Orissa and West Bengal. More reports are coming in from other States.

Punjab : Demands Day was observed on September 27 by Punjab Roadways employees, workers of Private transport companies, Taxi workers etc., all over the State. In Amritsar and Jullundar big rallies were held at the Punjab Roadways Workshops and Demand Charters were submitted to the concerned authorities. In Pathankot, a rally of 300 workers was held at the general bus stand.

Orissa : Demands Day was observed by road transport workers of Jeypur Rayagada on September 30 through protesting, processions etc. Brundaban Bakshi Patra, member Working Committee of the AIRTWF led demonstrations in both the places. Demand Charters were also submitted to the concerned authorities in mass deputations.

West Bengal : Demands Day was observed on September 25 both at Durgapur and Calcutta under the auspices of the Durgapur State Transport Employees Union and Calcutta State Transport Employees

Union respectively. Meetings were held in both the places where resolutions were adopted supporting the Charter of Demands after which the reso-

W. Bengal Jute Workers Prepare For Continuous Strike

AFTER the successful one-day strike of September 24 on their 7-point demands including 20 per cent Bonus, 2.5 lakh jute workers in 62 jute Mills of West Bengal again created history when, on October 7, they observed a 30 minute strike in each shift on all the three shifts on the demand for 20 per cent Bonus. This is the first time in history that such an action was taken by workers on an industry-wide scale. Although the call for the 30-minute strike was given by Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor Union (CITU), workers of all affiliations participated in the action in all the Mills. This magnificent action denotes the fighting mood of the workers who are getting prepared for another continuous strike to realise their demands of September 24 as well as their earlier outstanding demands.

The Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor Union (CITU), which will hold its next Conference on November 29 to December 1 at Jagatdal, an area predominantly inhabited by Jute workers is taking all organisational steps to prepare the workers for this impending struggle.

lutions were sent to the State Transport authorities, Central and State Governments. Mihir Sen, Working Committee member addressed the meeting at Durgapur, while Narayan Saha, General Secretary of the Federation spoke at the Calcutta meeting.

Workers of Rajasthan Atomic Power Project Join CITU

The overwhelming majority of the workers of Rajasthan Atomic Power Project, Anushakti have decided to leave the INTUC union and seek affiliation with the CITU under the leadership of Rajasthan Anushakti Karmachari Union Rawatbhata. They have informed the Project authorities of this decision and have demanded de-jure recognition.

Since the formation of the INTUC union in 1969, the workers of the Project were bravely fighting the repression of the management but the repeated betrayal by the INTUC leadership enabled the management to suppress their struggles with heavy hand. In 1970, the workers went on strike for 16 days on their demands but due to the betrayal of the INTUC leadership they had to withdraw the strike unconditionally. The management took this opportunity to deduct the workers' wages for the strike period and retrenched four leading workers.

The treacherous role played by the INTUC leadership during the past five years ultimately led to the decision of the workers to leave the INTUC union and seek affiliation under the militant banner of the CITU.

Working Committee Of Punjab and H. P. State CITU Meets

THE Working Committee of the Punjab & Himachal Pradesh State Committee of CITU met at Jullundar on September 15. At the outset homage was paid to the memory of Com. Hare Krishna Konar.

The Working Committee condemned the anti-people policies of the Congress Govt. and decided to organise all sections of the working class to resist this offensive of the Govt.

By another resolution the Committee condemned the proposed retrenchment of about ten thousand workers engaged in the construction of the Pong Dam at Talwara. A similar attack is impending on thousands of workers engaged in the construction of Beas, Sutlez Link Projects as the project is nearing completion. The Committee decided to forge a broad-based united front of workers, peasants and industries to force the Central Govt. to start construction of Thein Dam, Anandpur Project and other construction work which can absorb the workers retrenched from the Pong Dam and Beas-Sutlez link projects.

In Marathi

WARG YUDDHA

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The Committee also adopted resolutions—(i) condemning the brutal firing and the murder of Comrade Chanan Singh and other agricultural workers by the the landlords of Bath village (ii) condemning the brutal firing on the CIMCO workers at Bharatpur (Rajasthan); and (iii) extending full support to the demands of the Press workers Jullundar.

The Working Committee has also decided to approach AITUC, HMS, HMP, and other State level organisations of workers and employees to organise a joint Convention against Wage Freeze legislation.

Countrywide Strike

A countrywide strike, lasting two to four hours by 10 workers and employees paralysed industries, transport and communication, Banks etc. throughout Italy on October 17. The call was given by Italy's three major labour confederations.

The strike was sparked off by a massive lay-off of more than 70,000 workers by the Fiat and Alfa Romeo automobile firms in the wake of severe economic crisis. It first started in the automobile industry but later spread to other sectors. State workers, air-line employees, rail, municipal and urban transport workers all joined in Banks closed shutters and telephone services also stopped for two hours.

Thousands of workers and employees attended mass rallies in Milan, Bologna, Genoa and other large cities.

CITU Greet People's China

THE Secretariat of the CITU conveys its warmest greetings to the working class and people of China on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the Great Chinese Revolution.

The glorious revolution in China has always been inspiring the working class and the people of the world in their anti-imperialist struggle. The spectacular achievements of the Chinese people in socialist construction within a short time has become a shining example for others to follow. People's China has convincingly shown to the people of the world that backward regions can build their economy independently by only relying on proletarian socialism.

The remarkable advance made by China in science and technology has astounded the people of the world including those in advanced countries. People's China foiled all imperialist machinations and stood firm as a result of which many imperialist powers had to give up policy of confrontation against China and resume normal relations with her.

The CITU wishes all round advance to the working class and the people of China. It hopes that the unity of the socialist camp will be strengthened which alone is a guarantee of successful worldwide struggle against imperialism.

DECEPTIVE EXPLANATION OF FRAUDULENT INDEX

THE Labour Bureau, Simla has recently brought out a brochure "Consumer Price Index—An Anatomy" in order to explain how "Scientifically" the Consumer Price Index Numbers are compiled. The brochure was circulated in the meeting of the Consultative Committee of M. P. s attached to the Ministry of Labour in September last.

From the trend of discussion in the meeting the M. P. s were in no way convinced about the explanation offered by the Labour Bureau. Even the Congress M. P. s attacked the faulty index. If the Labour Bureau could not convince the M. P. s, its explanation would only anger the workers who are the victims of the cruel statistical jugglery.

The Director of Labour Bureau K. K. Bhatia is perhaps unaware of the deep resentment among the workers on this question. In his preface to the brochure he mentions "Fevers rise to a pitch when vested interests begin shadow fighting, reading commendations as condemnations and finding faults where none exists". Thus, the campaign launched by the trade union movement for rectification of index is mere shadow fighting. He further claims that all the complains about the price index arise out of misconceptions or ignorance on the part of trade unions. He says, "Besides the doubts due to lack of understanding on the subject not becoming fewer, some more continue to be added arising out of conceptual misconceptions and historical misconstructions". He lamented that despite the publi-

cation of the Labour Bureau's "Consumer Price Index Numbers in India—a Monograph", such things should have happened about "the most used piece of statistics in India",

The present brochure makes an undue claim that "If there was something wrong with the index in the past as found by expert economists, it is not certainly wrong now. We have learnt by past experience....."

After giving a history of the index numbers the brochure makes an attempt to reply to the so called misconceptions arising out of "inadequate knowledge and erroneous beliefs about the Consumer Price Index Numbers among the users".

A ridiculous attempt made by the Labour Bureau to explain the correctness of the index is that it is guided by the Technical Advisory Committee constituted by the Government. This Committee has no representatives of the trade unions and workers cannot be expected to consider the decisions of such a Committee as gospel truth. The trade union movement has every right to challenge the competence of the TAC to supervise the working of the index.

The Labour Bureau's efforts to malign the trade union movement by saying that it has no knowledge of the compilation of the index is strongly objectionable. At least, after so many fraudulent practices were brought to light through several Expert

Committees, one expected some modesty in the top hats of the Labour Bureau in the matter.

Though Labour Bureau was in charge of compiling All India Price Index for decades at no stage it ever pointed out a single mistake about compilation of index in any centre. The Technical Advisory Committee also has not been able to detect a single fraud. It goes to the credit of the T. U. Movement that it fought on this question and even organised strikes which compelled some State Govts. to appoint Expert Committees to rectify the index. Those with "inadequate information" were proved to be correct while those with expert knowledge found to be wrong. The struggle still continues and mere assertion by the Director of Labour Bureau will not stop it.

Replying to the complaint of the trade unions that the prices collected do not reflect the prices at which the workers purchase commodities, the brochure explains how the elaborate machinery checks the work of collectors, "The work of these price collectors is supervised by Price Supervisors who are also responsible State Government employees and have been engaged by the Bureau on a part time basis. The price data collected by the Price collectors and checked by the Price Supervisors is further audited by the Regional officers at Bombay, Calcutta, Madras and Kanpur. Thus there is a system of three

checks on the accuracy of the prices."

The real point is that the prices given by the shopkeepers to the collectors are not the correct prices. The employers find it more profitable to spend thousands on shopkeepers than spending lakhs on additional dearness allowance. No lecture on the scientific method of index compilation will convince the workers. If the basic data collected is faulty no formula will give you a correct index. What the Director of Labour Bureau is unable to understand is that the trade union movement does not challenge the statistical methods but the basic data itself. He wants us to believe that the data is correct because it is supervised by certain officers! As the Economist of London once commented, a house wife knows more about the price index than the official statisticians.

Another objection the trade unions have raised is that in the open market things are available at a much higher price than the controlled shops. In this connection the Labour Bureau has claimed, "In centres, where informal rationing is in force both the prices i.e. open market prices and controlled prices of rationed commodities are used in proper conjunction".

The brochure however does not explain from where the Labour Bureau gets the open market prices. The "open market"

is actually the Black Market where the prices are exorbitant. What "open market" prices the collectors are recording is anybody's guess. No shopkeeper will tell the Govt. official the real prices for fear of penal action from the authorities. Therefore the open market prices are only the prices quoted by the shopkeepers to the price collectors or the inspectors.

The artificial scarcity created by hoarders of all the essential commodities has pushed up the prices phenomenally higher and the workers are forced to purchase them at whatever cost they are available or forgo their consumption. When they express their experience that the prices are going up much higher than the index, their experience is characterised as "popular misconceptions" while those who are responsible for cooking up the index are characterised as "scientists" by the Labour Bureau!

Trade unions have shown from time to time that substitution of inferior items have been recklessly resorted to on the plea that the original specifications are not available in the market. But except saying that "great care" is being taken in the matter of substitution the Labour Bureau has nothing to say in the matter.

If in the ration-shop there is a cut and workers have to purchase in black market what the Labour Bureau has to say? If the short-

fall is upto 15 per cent of the basic requirement as seen in the family budget survey then no action is required. Only if the shortfall is more than 15 per cent then the Labour Bureau will not collect the actual prices for that shortfall but it will be distributed to all other items in the food group. The open market prices again are prices quoted by the shop-keepers and recorded by the collectors with "utmost care". What credence one can give to the following observation of the Labour Bureau in these circumstances, "The index compilers are also alive to the situation of shortages and inadequacy of supply from controlled sources and appropriate measures have been taken to ensure that the position is objectively reflected in the index"?

Referring to the allegation of the trade unions that while the prices are rising the index numbers with which their payments of DA are related falls, the Labour Bureau has tried to make out a case that it is due to quarterly calculation of DA and not due to fault in index. Instead of going into the fact that when the workers are experiencing overall rise in prices of all essential commodities the index shows a decline, the Labour Bureau has characterised it as a matter of seasonal fluctuations. The workers may not be statisticians (they have been called illiterate and semi-illiterate by the learned Director of the Labour Bureau) but they are intelligent enough to understand that seasonal variations are nominal but the drop in index is

substantial—what the common sense in a worker could see from his experience the statisticians are unable to realise despite their so called qualifications.

The Labour Bureau has further made ridiculous attempt to prove their case by quoting from the judgement of courts. This will not at least impress the trade unions because from their experience they have seen that judiciary is by and large biased in favour of the ruling classes. Moreover, quotations also can be given from the judgements indicating that price index is not a reliable indicator of rise in prices.

Thus instead of replying to the valid objections raised by the trade unions the Labour Bureau has only tried to present a usual type of bureaucratic justification of the gross bungling in compilation of index which is totally unconvincing. Perhaps this will only convince the employers who are the sole beneficiaries of the index fraud.

The Labour Bureau's claim that there is nothing wrong in 1960 series of index is rejected by the trade union movement. If it is so confident about its scientific character then why is it against any Expert enquiry into the entire ramifications of compilation of index. The trade unions will continue to demand rectification of the 1960 series which is also fraudulent. The Labour Bureau cannot be the prosecutor and the judge of its own series. Let the Union Labour Ministry appoint such a Committee and trade unions are prepared to place facts before it. Strangely

enough, when the West Bengal Government due to pressure of the Trade Union movement, agreed to investigate into 1960 series for Calcutta, the Labour Bureau and the Union Labour Ministry opposed it and the 1960 series is yet to be rectified.

Instead of facing an Expert Committee in order to restore the confidence of the workers the Labour Bureau now proposes to perpetuate the fraud by emphasising that the D. A. should not be calculated on the pre 1960 series. Due to the past bungling the conversion factor between the old series and the new series are faulty and without rectification of the old series if the system of DA based on the old series is abolished the workers would stand to loose. Therefore the conversion factors of all the old series with the 1960 series must be arrived at properly and not arbitrarily calculated by the Labour Bureau.

Similarly trade union movement will also not accept the

introduction of the new series with 1971 as the base year unless 1960 index is rectified. The conversion factor of 1960 and 1971 series will be faulty as in the case of earlier series.

Since the confidence of the workers on the Consumer Price Index is an essential requirement it is necessary that the Union Labour Ministry should discuss the matter with the trade unions in an appropriate forum. Unless this is done the introduction of 1971 series will only evoke spate of industrial disputes.

The trade union movement should come together and discuss the ways of mobilising the working class so that the price index including 1960 series is rectified. Without a concerted action it will not be possible to move the Union Labour Ministry in the matter.

Since huge amount of DA of our workers is at stake it is extremely important that the trade unions should discuss the matter as soon as possible.

Bangladesh Jute Workers On Strike

IN support of their 5-point Charter of Demands, including Id-Bonus, House Rent etc., 45 thousand workers of Jute Mills of Khulna in Bangladesh started indefinite strike from October 14. The managements of four Mills have declared lock-out and large scale mobilisation of Police and Rakshi Bahini men have been made in the Mill areas.

In a joint statement A. Jalil, Vice President of the Bangla-

desh Jute Mill Workers' Federation and Dewan Sirajul Huq, General Secretary of the Bangla Mazdoor Federation appealed to the Government to concede the demands of the workers. They also condemned the arrests of several leading workers including the Assistant Secretary of the Workers' Federation when they went for negotiation on the demands, and demanded their release.

Reports From Unions

Chemical & Pharmaceutical Employees Observe Demands Day

Workers and employees employed in the Chemical & Pharmaceutical industry all over India observed 'Demands Day' on September 9 last on their Charter of Demands through wearing of demand badges, holding gate meetings and demonstrations before offices and factories and by submitting memorandums to their respective managements.

The Charter of Demands include guaranteed minimum wage of Rs. 550 at CPI of 250 (1960 base) irrespective of region and size of company; D. A. linked to CPI with full neutralisation; amendment of Bonus Act to provide minimum 10 per cent bonus and removal of ceiling; nationalisation of the industry; etc.

The West Bengal Committee of the Federation decided to submit memorandum to the State Minister on September 16 in a mass deputation.

Glaxo Workers Protest against arbitrary transfers and Wage Freeze

At the call of the All India Glaxo Employees Union, 4800 Glaxo workers and employees including field staff all over India launched a protest struggle from August 12 last against the arbitrary transfer on medical representative, in the Delhi and Maharashtra areas. They held demonstrations, wore demand badges and observed work-to-rule demanding withdrawal of

the transfer orders. On August 19, seventy field staff from all over India started a Dharna inside the factory premises at Worli, Bombay which continued till August 21.

At an emergency general body meeting of the Glaxo, Calcutta Employees Union held on August 28, a resolution was adopted unanimously condemning the Wage Freeze Ordinance and demanding its immediate withdrawal.

Hotel Employees Resist Wage Freeze Through United Struggle

Led by the Employees, Union (CITU), employees of the Ritz Continental Hotel in Calcutta successfully resisted wage cut under the Black Ordinance.

The employees started agitation against the attempts by the management to deduct D. A. for July and August 1974. They boycotted payment from September 5 and held gate demonstrations and deputations. When the workers threatened to go on strike if the wage cut decision was persisted with, the management agreed to reconsider the decision and stopped the proposed wage-cut.

Employees of Mercury Travels Fight Illegal Lock-out

The management of the Mercury Travels (India) Ltd., have declared an illegal lock-out in their Calcutta office from September 7, throwing 100 employees out of employment. Only two months back, the

management retrenched 23 employees without assigning any reason, against which the employees were observing 3-hour strike everyday. Failing to break the workers' unity, the management declared a lock-out. The employees are fighting against the lock-out with the fraternal support from different unions under the Federation of Mercantile Employees' Unions.

Anti-Wage Freeze Demonstration in Bihar

Under the banner of the Trade Union Co ordination Committee of Workers and Employees, a big procession of workers and employees of Radchi was taken out on September 19 to protest against the Wage-Freeze law. It was led by J.N. Sen Sharma, Convener of the T.U. Co-ordination Committee and was participated by workers and employees of A.G. Bihar, LIC, Banks, Railways, H.E.C., Engineering, Cinemas, etc. The procession ended in a public meeting where a resolution was adopted demanding immediate withdrawal of the Wage-freeze law, withdrawal of victimisation measures against Railway and other Central Govt. employees etc.

T.U. Convention Against Wage-Freeze in Karnataka

The Bijapur Dist. T.U. Convention against Wage Freeze was held on October 6 at Jamkandi. 83 delegates and 4 observers representing 18 unions of State Govt. employees Local Bodies, Banks, LIC, P & T Cement, Sugar, Spinning Mills
(See page 14)

Central Govt. Employees & Railmen Observe 19th September

THE All India Railwaymen's Federation and Confederation of Central Government Employees and Workers called upon their affiliates and their Branches all over the country to observe 19th September, 1974 as a day of dedication. Six years back in 1968, all Central Government employees including Railway and Defence employees observed a token strike on 19th September in defence of their trade union rights and for securing their legitimate demands and faced severe repression. During the Railway strike, the Central Government let loose unprecedented repression on the striking workers. Even after the strike was over, the repressive measures and victimisation of Railwaymen

and other industries attended. M.K. Deshpande (LIC) inaugurated the Convention and a Presidium of three conducted the proceedings. The Convention gave a call to fight against the Wage freeze and other anti-people policies of the Indira Govt. Resolutions were adopted against wage freeze, condemning the Bonus Review Committee's report and repression against Railway employees supporting the demands of State Govt. employees, demanding minimum wages for Beedi workers etc. After the Convention a rally was held addressed by S. Suryanarayan Rao, President of the State CITU, Venkaramana (HMP) and others. kb

and other Central Government employees continues. Recently, the Central Government mounted further attack on the working people by promulgating the Wage-freeze ordinance. The National Convention of Central Trade Unions and National Federations held in New Delhi on August 28 last unanimously adopted resolutions :—(1) Against Wage-Freeze Ordinance ; (2) Against victimisation of Railwaymen and other Central Government employees.

In this background, the decision to observe 19th September assumed added importance. The day was successfully observed all over the country. Meetings, rallies and demonstrations were held. Resolutions were passed against the Wage-freeze Ordinance and against victimisation of Railway and other Central Government employees. In meetings, homage was paid to the martyrs who laid down their lives in 1968. In Calcutta, demonstrations were held in all Central Government offices—Telephone Bhawan, Post and Telegraph, Income-tax etc. The Railway employees held demonstrations before the General Managers of the South Eastern Railway and Eastern Railway. In many places, martyr's columns were built.

The Railwaymen and other Central Government employees through the observance of the day paid homage to the martyrs of 1968 and renewed the pledge not to rest till their democratic rights and legitimate demands are won.

General Strike in Maharashtra Against Wage Freeze Planned

A meeting of the Action Committee, comprised of CITU HMP, HMS, Sarva Shramik Sangh, as well as State Govt., Railways, Bank, LIC, Dock and other employees, held on October 4 in Bombay decided to give call for a one-day State-wide General Strike at the end of October, 1974 to protest against the Wage Freeze law, the Bonus Award, price increase and shortage of essential commodities, as well as for unemployment relief.

The meeting also decided to hold a Conference of representatives of all organisations mentioned above in Poona on October 13 in preparation for the General Strike. Another important decision of the meeting was to hold local Conferences at different centres on the questions of protection to Adivasis against eviction by landlords, minimum days of employment in a year for agricultural workers etc.

Plantation Workers in West Bengal Observe Strike.

In protest against the Wage Freeze law, the Tea Plantation Workers of West Bengal observed a one-day strike on October 3 at the call of the Co-ordination Committee of Plantation Workers in West Bengal. In spite of the opposition of the Congress unions, majority of the workers came out on strike. A joint rally on behalf of CPI(M) and Gorkha league in support of the demands of the workers was held in Darjeeling and a deputation waited upon the Collectorate Officer to submit a memorandum.

Loco Running Staff To Intensify Struggle

THE CEC of the All India Loco Running Staff Association met at Itarsi on October 7-9. 172 delegates attended the Session. In his report, the Secretary General reviewed the earlier decisions and the problems before the Loco Running Staff. It was pointed out that the Railway authorities are now backing out of earlier agreements about reduction in hours of duty and some of the main demands like "Equal work—Equal pay", and "Protection of emoluments to medically decategorised staff" were only partially met. The basic demands for which the railwaymen fought in May '74 have yet to be fulfilled. Besides there is very slow progress in reinstatement of the victimised workers. On the other hand, working condition at several places have deteriorated due to withdrawal of hard earned facilities, as well as increase in work-load. It was decided that while extending full support to and strengthening the NCCRS, the LRSA should take up independent programme. 'Anti-victimisation Day' is to be observed on November 7 all over the country and a "Demand Week" should be observed between November 24 and 30 during which divisional Conventions are to be held on November 25 and zonal Convention on November 30. It was decided that all T.U.

organisations are to be invited to these Conventions.

The question of action against the strike-breakers was discussed. It was decided to suspend some of the office-bearers for two years during which they were not to hold any elective post in the organisation. A section of delegates opposed this move and walked out of the meeting. The meeting decided to call upon the leaders of this move to explain their absence from the meeting and their support to the strike-breakers.

Hunger Strike in S.E. Railway

As decided by the zonal NCCRS in the S.E. Railway, hunger strike was observed by railwaymen all over the zone on October 7 and 8. Section 144 was clamped at several places in West Bengal and Bihar to prevent the railwaymen from observing the programme. Except Anara and Ranchi, the programme was observed everywhere.

Train Runs without Brake van, cause accident

Since June '74, the authorities have been running some goods trains without brake-van. Samar Mukherjee M. P., drew the attention of the Railway Minister to this safety hazard in July and August '74 without any result. On September 15, a train (Rou/SPL) run by a non-striker

Driver without any brake van in the rear, caused an accident at Nimdih (SER) and six persons including the Gaurd, Shri Ram Prasad, who was travelling in the rear-cab of the engine died as a result of this accident. Shri N. Dutta, Divisional Superintendent, Adra who came to the spot, was callous about the life of the Guard who was trapped between his seat and the Engine box. Due to the misdirection of Shri Dutta it took 14 hours to rescue the Guard and though his injury was minor, he later on died in the hospital. A protest movement was launched by the Gaurds and the Loco Running Staff rendered support. One of the office-bearers of the Gaurds Council negotiated a settlement with the D. S. and on his verbal assurance, the movement was withdrawn. The practice of trains without brake van at the rear however continues.

Adra D. S. Office Turned into a Prison Camp

From early May '74, the office of the Divisional Superintendent Adra, has been turned into a prison camp. All gates, save one, are locked and has been kept under heavy guard. Admission of staff as well as the public is regulated on the basis of gate-pass, for which a Welfare Inspector has been posted at the gate. Victimised railwaymen are not allowed to enter except with the permission of the D. S. On October 22, when a worker asked for a gate pass, he was refused. But when another paid some money, he was allowed to enter and there was protest. The RPF

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posted at the gate assaulted the protesting worker and it drew hundreds of workers to the spot. A demonstration of about 500 workers went round the Adra colony in protest of this. The police launched a case involving 12 leading workers of the Divisional Railway Action Committee.

General Manager gheraoed in NFR

Due to delay in reinstatement of victimised railwaymen, resentment amongst the workers is on the increase. Officers are facing demonstrations everywhere when they visit railway centres. Recently at Alipur Duar Jn., the General Manager had to face a demonstration and accept a memorandum from the railwaymen. As a measure of retaliation, 20 workers have been suspended afresh for taking part in the demonstration. Such measures had, however, not been able to cow down the workers who are preparing for another struggle against this.

Calcutta Dock Workers Continue Struggle For Bonus & Other Demands

LED by the Dock Mazdoor Jukta Morcha, composed of 18 unions and Committees, 14000 dock workers of the Calcutta port have been, for some weeks past, carrying on a work-to-rule agitation for legitimate Bonus and other demands.

Last year, the dock workers achieved 11.86 per cent bonus through united struggle. But this year the Central Government and the Dock authorities are insisting on 8.33 per cent bonus.

It may be noted that the Bonus to dock workers is paid by the Stevedores, and not by the Dock Labour Board or the Government, and the Stevedores are willing to pay Bonus at the same rate as last year's. But strangely enough, it is the Central Government and the Dock authorities who are not only instigating the Stevedores to pay only 8.33 per cent but have come forward with their repressive machinery to crush the workers' struggle for legitimate bonus.

With a view to arrive at a negotiated settlement, the Dock workers held repeated discussions with the Union Minister of Shipping & Transport, the State Labour Minister, the Chairman of the Port Commissioners and the Dock Labour Board, but all their attempts at a peaceful settlement failed. On the other hand, failing to disrupt the unity of the workers, the Port and Dock authorities invoked the DIR on October 5 and launched brutal repression

on the workers. 40 union leaders and leading workers were arrested and many union leaders and workers including the President of the Dock Shramik Association (CITU) were suspended.

To protest against the use of DIR and arrests and suspension of leading workers, the workers went on a half-shift strike on October 7 at the joint call of CITU, INTUC, AITUC and HMS.

The work-to-rule was ultimately withdrawn from October 11 after a written assurance by the Labour Minister that there will be no victimisation or pay-cut and the arrested leaders will be released. Although the Dock Shramik Association (CITU), a constituent of the Morcha, agreed to this decision for the sake of unity, it was of the opinion that the movement could have been continued if the other constituents agreed to it.

Although the work-to-rule has been withdrawn, it was decided at a meeting of the Jukta Morcha that the Bonus-boycott movement will continue until their demand for 11.86 per cent Bonus is conceded.

The Dock Shramik Association (CITU) and the Forward Seamen's Union (CITU) have condemned the severe repression on Dock workers and have congratulated the workers for their united and determined struggle in the face of repression.

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Struggle Of Calcutta Corporation Workers & Employees

CALCUTTA Corporation Clerks' Union started an agitation on its own Charter of Demands more than two months back. The union started continuous cease-work from 22nd August and a complete deadlock was created in the Central Municipal Buildings. The Corporation authorities backed by West Bengal Government attacked the movement by issuing show cause notice on the leaders and pay-cut order on three thousand employees. The leadership of the Clerks' Union which belongs to AITUC elements carried the movement in a casual fashion forgetting the anti-people and anti-labour character of the Congress Government. Calcutta Corporation Workers' Union (CITU) took initiative in building united movement through the Joint Committee, a united forum of 22 unions, on the basis of charter of demands which included Rs. 250 as minimum wage pending implementation of need-based minimum, linking up of D.A. with rise in CLI, payment of ex-gratia at 133% and defence of of trade union rights etc. As the movement gained momentum, the Sangram Committee which is the united forum of all the unions, was forced to take initiative of movement.

It is to be remembered that there are a large number of unions in Calcutta Corporation and though the Sangram Committee has different political

forces—from Congress to Communist, the leadership mainly belong to the Congress.

The Sangram Committee submitted a strike notice on September 17 and a strike of 33 thousand Corporation workers and employees started on October 1 at 4 a.m. The strike was a unique success. The West Bengal Government and the Corporation authorities made large scale preparations to break the strike. The military was called to guard pumping stations etc. DIR was invoked against the strike and a lock-out was declared in the Central Municipal Building for the first time in the history of the Corporation. The leadership of the Sangram Committee, instead of fighting back this offensive, surrendered and the strike was called off unconditionally within 10 hours of commencement. The Calcutta Corporation Workers' Union protested publicly against the withdrawal of the strike but it was too weak to carry forward the strike. Thus the movement ended in a defeat.

The Sangram Committee entrusted the Municipalities Minister to adjudicate on the demands. Now the Minister has given his award which has not only failed to fulfill the demands but has sought to curb the trade union rights. The Government has banned strike in the Corporation for six months under the DIR. The Corporation movement has clearly revealed the vacillating and

The CITU Secretariat Meets

THE meeting of the CITU Secretariat held on 5th October decided to hold a meeting of the Working Committee at Calcutta on 11th to 13th December to review the situation after the General Council meeting held at Vishakhapatnam in April last.

B. T. Ranadive, President CITU presided over the meeting.

At the outset the meeting expressed its heartfelt condolences at the untimely death of Comrade Subodh Banerjee leader of the UTUC (Lenin Sarani) due to Cancer on 16th September 1974.

The meeting considered the activities of CITU in Plantations, bidi and cigar, port and docks, Electricity, jute, rayon and coal industries and finalised programme of industrywise meetings for improving the co-ordination of activities of CITU unions.

The meeting nominated Comrade R. Umanath, General Secretary, Tamilnadu State Committee of CITU to participate in the I.L.O. Seminar on Minimum wages to be held in Madras on 18-20th November.

B. T. Ranadive and M. K. Pandhe reported on the Second Conference of Kerala State Committee of CITU held at Trichur on 20th-22nd September last. The members appreciated the progress made by the CITU in Kerala.

betraying character of the existing leadership and the weakness of the militant leadership. The movement faces a serious problem in future. Unless the existing co-relation can be changed through active intervention of militant forces in the Corporation, the movement can hardly go forward and realise the vital demands.

CITU Condemns Police Firing in Bihar

AN orgy of police repression was let loose on the people of Bihar both before and during the 3-day "Bihar Bundh" called by Jay Prakash Narayan. Arrests started even before the Bundh started on October 3; Sec. 144 was imposed in Patna and other big towns; and hundreds were arrested. During the 3-day Bundh, fourteen persons were killed in Police firing, hundreds were injured and nearly 3000 were arrested. Condemning the police repression, B. T. Ranadive, President CITU has issued the following statement to the Press:

"The Centre of Indian Trade Unions strongly condemns the reckless firing by the Bihar Police on the people of Bihar during the Bihar Bundh agitation since 3rd October resulting in killing of 14 persons and injury to several others. The CITU also condemns the imposition of Curfew in Patna and 5 other towns. More than 2000 persons have been arrested during the agitation.

The CITU demands immediate punishment to guilty officials responsible for the police firing and other repressive measures and calls upon the people of Bihar to resist the attacks on their democratic right and civil liberties.

The CITU congratulates the people of Bihar for their united struggle against the anti-people policies of the Congress Government and assures them solidarity in their struggle."

Consumer Price Index Numbers

(Industrial Workers/1969=100)

State/Centre	1974			State/Centre	1974		
	June	July	Aug.		June	July	Aug.
Andhra Pradesh				Orissa			
Gudur	308	313	324	Barbil	284	302	309
Guntur	315	318	327	Sambalpur	286	297	315
Hyderabad	284	291	299	Punjab			
Assam				Amritsar	316	328	328
Digboi	282	297	316	Rajasthan			
Doom Dooma	269	287	321	Ajmer	311	325	332
Labac	281	299	288	Jaipur	317	326	341
Mariani	258	279	311	Tamilnadu			
Rangapara	282	290	300	Coimbatore	272	280	303
Bihar				Coonoor	307	314	334
Jamshedpur	311	317	324	Madras	271	280	299
Jharia	330	348	354	Madurai	298	311	332
Kodarma	398	419	421	U. P.			
Monghyr	360	378	389	Kanpur	305	312	326
Noamundi	341	369	378	Saharanpur	318	333	332
Gujarat				Varanasi	345	364	382
Ahmedabad	290	295	307	West Bengal			
Bhavnagar	302	310	320	Asansol	301	312	325
Haryana				Calcutta	276	282	295
Yamunanagar	316	323	331	Darjeeling	269	272	282
J & K				Howrah	285	291	304
Srinagar	236	240	245	Jalpaiguri	279	283	296
Karnataka				Raniganj	325	337	349
Ammathi	313	332	328	Delhi			
Bangalore	299	306	314	330	335	345	
Chikmagalur	309	324	324	Other Centres			
Kolar G. F.	301	309	317	Berhampur ('49)	368	374	398
Kerala				Cuttack (1949)	331	346	365
Alleppey	372	377	369	Jabalpur (1949)	402	396	405
Alwaye	322	338	353	Beawar ('51-'52)	343	358	363
Mundakayam	323	333	338	Tripura (1961)	257	266	264
M. P.				H. P. (1965)	226	226	232
Balaghat	318	341	349	Goa (1966)	201	202	201
Bhopal	295	311	321	Bhilai (1966)	186	188	195
Gwalior	339	342	354	Kothagudam ('66)	186	188	192
Indore	344	351	357	All India ('49) 366 378 390			
Maharashtra				do ('60) 301 311 321			
Bombay	277	282	290	* Figures in bracket indicate base year.			
Nagpur	299	308	310	(Labour Bureau, Simla)			
Sholapur	302	314	318				

Massive Anti-Wage Freeze Demonstration In Bhartpur

Under the auspices of the All India Insurance Employees' Association, a massive rally and demonstration was organised in Bharatpur (Rajasthan) on September 27 last to protest against the Black Wage freeze law. All local trade unions and organisations of Central and State Government employees, Bank and LIC employees, teachers etc. besides the CITU, AITUC and HMP participated.

The rally, led by leaders of LIC union, W. Rly. Union, Bank Employees Union, CITU, AITUC HMP and others, paraded the main centres and ended in a public meeting at the Laxman Temple. The meeting was presided by Harbans Singh of Teachers' Association and addressed by Harbans Singh, S. D. Sharma (LIC), S. Chaturvedi (Convener) and other leaders.

The meeting congratulated the CIMCO Workers' Union (CITU) which first raised its voice against wage-freeze and sacrificed the lives of three workers on this issue. The meeting called upon all workers to unite in a single platform to fight against the anti-working class policies of the Government.

Convention Against Wage Freeze In Bihar

A 'State Convention of the Working People Against Wage Freeze' was held in Patna on September 29 under the auspices of the Bihar unit of United Council of Trade Unions. 500 delegates representing 99 unions and organisations of Central and State Government employees,

Railways, Loco Running Staff Association, Banks, LIC, Pharmaceuticals industry etc. besides representatives of the CITU and other constituent Central Trade unions attended the convention. The AITUC was invited to attend but refused to participate in the convention.

Hari Krishna (CITU), the Convener of the Bihar State UCTU, inaugurated the Convention. He sharply attacked the anti-people policies of the Government and called for the further strengthening of the unity to fight these policies.

The main resolution against wage freeze was moved by Hari Krishna and seconded by Yogeswar Gope, General Secretary Bihar State Non Gazetted Employees' Federation. The resolution condemned the wage-freeze measures and demanded takeover of wholesale trade in foodgrains, take-over of monopoly houses, both Indian and foreign, moratorium on foreign debt repayments, immediate abolition of landlordism and distribution of land to the agricultural workers and poor peasants, jobs for all or unemployment relief etc. to take the country out of the present crisis.

The resolution called upon the unions to organise district level conventions against wage freeze within November 10, to observe "Protest Day" all over the State through mass meetings and rallies, and wear demand badges and boycott pay-packets for November on pay day.

In another resolution, the Convention demanded immediate withdrawal of all victimisation measures pending against Railwaymen and Central and State Govt. employees in connection with their recent strike actions.

Eleven delegates representing various unions and associations participated in the discussions after which the resolutions were adopted.

Editorial

Contd. from page 3

legal help. This so called help will be routed through the stooge unions and made available only to their supporters. With the legal apparatus becoming more and more anti-working class, the offer of such legal help will no more enthuse the working class. With use of DIR and MISA in almost every industrial dispute the chances of legal fight are getting reduced day by day. Such measures are therefore dust in the eyes of the workers and trade unions will have to educate the workers on this aspect.

The conclusions of the State Labour Ministers Conference are thus meant to hoodwink the workers and not to concede any demand to them.

However, the new emerging unity of the working class in India will not take this attitude lying down. The trade unions will have to strive still harder to fight back these dilatory tactics so that they can protect their standard of life and T.U. and democratic rights.

CITU Andhra Pradesh Committee Meets

THE Andhra Pradesh Committee of the CITU met in Vijayawada on October 5-6 with Parasa Satyanarayana, President of the State CITU in the Chair. Members from all districts attended.

At the outset the meeting paid homage to the memory of Com. Hare Krishna Konar, V. K. Krishna Menon and others.

N. Prasada Rao, General Secretary of the State CITU submitted the report which dealt with the growing economic crisis and the attempts by the Government to shift the burden of the crisis on the workers and other toilers. It called upon all trade unions and employees' organisations to fight unitedly against this attack. It also appealed to all T.U. Centres to participate in the State Convention against Wage Freeze to be held in Hyderabad on November 3.

The Committee condemned the report of the Bonus Review Committee and demanded the acceptance of the legitimate

claims of the employees of Central, State and Local bodies', as also employees of industries and other establishments employing less than 20 workers, for bonus.

The Committee greeted the workers and employees in the State for their resolute fight against Wage Freeze Act. It

demanded immediate revision of wages and D. A. of Motor Transport Workers and increase in their commission and allowances.

The Committee also demanded reinstatement of 150 retrenched employees of Devasanam, stoppage of large-scale retrenchment by State P. W. D. in its Highways and Irrigation sections and reinstatement of retrenched PWD employees etc.

NEWSLETTER

Tamilnadu

1500 hosiery workers led by CITU are on strike at Thiruppur in Kovai District from 19th August demanding 50% increase in wages and 30 paise per point of increase in Consumer Price Index.

6500 workers of Radier Mills at Pondichery, led by CITU and others excluding INTUC, were on strike from 30th August demanding settlement of their ten-point charter of demands and withdrawal of termination order on 4 workers. Workers joined their duties on 1st October after a tripartite settlement was arrived.

LIC, Electricity, Cement, Textile, Bank and other industrial workers and employees throughout Tamil Nadu observed 1st October as pay-boycott day as a protest against anti-worker wage freeze law.

60,000 workers of 85 textile mills, led by CITU and others, were on token strike on 28th September demanding compensation for lay off period due to

power cut and rice and other essential commodities at reasonable prices.

4000 handloom and powerloom workers at Thalavaipuram in Ramnad District are on struggle from May 15th demanding settlement of their 7 point charter of demands including Family Ration Card and Education, Medical and Housing facilities. Workers observed hartal on September 27th.

CITU nominees won in the workers Co operative election at Hindustan Photo Film Factory at Ootakamand.

Hotel workers in Madras held a rally near Fort William, State Government headquarters, demanding reasonable pay and other facilities on 7th October.

The 27th annual Conference of Kanyakumari District Government Plantation workers was held at Kulasekaram on October 2-3. The Conference demanded, amongst other things, Bonus, Pay-scale and other facilities at par with their private-enterprise counter-parts.

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