

**8th Conference of CITU
Patna, March 3-7, 1994**



*Commission
Papers*

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Introduction

The nine Commission papers published in this book were the subject matters of discussion in the 8th Conference of the CITU, held at Patna from March 3-7, 1994. This was a special feature of the Conference this time that it was divided into nine such Commissions to have indepth discussions on the issues and take correct stand on them, in addition to the usual general discussion on the General Secretary's report.

The decision to have Commissions in the conference was taken in Guwahati Working Committee meeting of the CITU held on December 13-15, 1993. This was significant in view of the fact that the period from the 7th Conference held at Calcutta in 1991, was marked by most unprecedented developments and changes both in the international and national arenas, which adversely affected each and every section of the working people and the country in the wake of the "liberalisation and globalisation" of the economy under imperialist pressure, and posed new problems for the working class.

Each Commission was attended on an average by 200 to 250 delegates, who made indepth discussion on each subject.

The Conference after hearing the reports from the rapporteures authorised the Secretariat of the CITU to finalise the Commission papers in the light of the discussions and suggestions made by the delegates. The full Secretariat of the CITU met and finalised the papers accordingly.

*Secretariat of the
Centre of Indian Trade Unions*

Commission on New Imperialist Offensive and the Trade Unions

1. THE RISE AND FALL OF SOVIET UNION

Imperialism of our epoch is the direct consequence of uneven development of capitalism and the bourgeois society across the continents. Trade conflicts, colonial wars, military subjugation of alien nations and imperialist division of the globe were the inevitable consequences of predatory capitalism with its never ending search for an ever expanding market. Its political programme, its ideology, and its world view had their natural limitations that stood in the way of realising its own dream of a truly integrated global market.

The founding of the Soviet Union was the first serious challenge to imperialist hegemony over the world, indicating the revolutionary potential of the working class in liberating humanity. The working class, the common people and the intelligentsia all over the world who were fed up with the numerous imperialist wars of conquest and the miseries inflicted by the first ever world war looked at the Russian revolution with great hope and expectations. Their emotional support and open sympathy was of great value to the worker-peasant alliance government of Russia in resisting the economic blockades, manoeuvres and interventions by the imperialist powers and in sustaining the historic revolution.

The Russian revolution succeeded within a short span of time in transforming the feudalist landlord economy of the backward Russia through an industrial revolution of its own design. Foundations were laid for heavy machine building industry so that

agriculture and farming could be quickly modernised. The numerous small and big nationalities who were oppressed and exploited by Czarism were liberated and encouraged to join hands with Russia in order to quickly overcome their backwardness.

The tremendous success of socialist construction in the Soviet Union resulting in rapid improvements in the quality of life of the entire people and elimination of the scourge of massive unemployment inherent under capitalism had its appeal all over the world - both in the imperialist countries and in the nations exploited and oppressed by colonial rule. Fascist dictatorships and all round anti-Communist hysteria were the natural reaction of the imperialist bourgeoisie the world over to these breath taking developments.

Trade tensions and never ending economic crises in the imperialist block ultimately precipitated yet another global war with devastating effect on mankind. The end of the Second World War in which the Soviet Union played a decisive role in defeating fascism saw the liberation of many more nations from imperialist exploitation. The socialist block and the array of backward nations liberated from the colonial yoke became the natural allies during the postwar period.

Economic, political, ideological and military offensives were launched vigorously against the socialist camp and the Soviet Union and this was the essence of the cold war imposed on the socialist camp by the imperialists. Development of nuclear Bombs, military alliances like NATO, SEATO and initiating the SDI or the Star War Programme using the latest in technological developments were all targeted against the socialist forces in the name of defence against Communism. For more than six decades the barricades erected by the first working class state in human history could beat back these imperialist offensives.

The imperialist camp emboldened by the new opportunities offered by the dramatic advances in information technology during the eighties, the distortions that crept in the socialist

construction and socialist democracy, could successfully exploit these distortions and deviations within the socialist camp to its own advantage. By the end of eighties the socialist camp was demolished

and dismembered. And the world has entered yet another phase of history by the last decade of the present century. For the time being this drastically changed the balance of forces in favour of imperialism. They claim that socialism is dead. Capitalism is the only sustainable system and the imperialists are out to build a "new world order".

II - THE GUN BOAT DIPLOMACY INTENSIFIED

The imperialists who parade themselves as the true champions of free trade, democracy, human rights and global environment continue their good old game of gun boat diplomacy. In fact they preach these virtues from the high moral pedestal of the global policemen. Having stockpiled nuclear weapons sufficient to burn up and destroy the earth several times, US and its allies are insisting that every country, small or big, should sign the NPT on the dotted lines. They insist that developing rocket technology even for launching of communication satellite is an international crime for countries like India.

The crisis and the dangerous war in the Persian Gulf, South Africa, the civil war in erstwhile Yugoslavia, the crisis of Afghanistan, the intervention in Somalia, etc. and the transformation of the UN and other international organizations becoming the tools of the US, lack of interest on the plight of the developing world, have all demonstrated to the world the dangerous course imperialism will take in the future. Practically America is trying to dictate terms on every aspect of economic and political life of all the nations and people today - always with the sole motive of subserving its own naked commercial and military interests---in the name of "safeguarding US vital interests."

The US imperialists have set up a chain of over one hundred big and small military bases across the globe, several of them armed with the latest of nuclear or neutron bombs and missiles claiming to strengthen its defence against Soviet expansion. But even after the demolition of socialism in the erstwhile Soviet Union and the East European countries, not only no attempt has been made to dismantle these military bases but also new devices are being used for its

continuance and expansion. It has purchased or agreed to purchase the entire plutonium stock held by the member countries of the erstwhile Soviet Union for a bargain and has added these to its already enormous stock of this deadly material. Even after the end of cold war, the US and its ally imperialists continue to sit on this huge stock pile of nuclear warheads, their fingers always on the safety catch. They have no intention for a farewell to arms and are bent upon playing the global policemen interfering in the affairs of every under privileged country at the least provocation on the basis of concocted allegations. They have consistently refused to make a commitment to the world community that they will never go for a nuclear first strike option.

III. Information Technology and The New Offensives

Development of science and technology ultimately serves a basic social function: lightening the struggle for existence and survival of man and enriching his intellectual, cultural and spiritual life. But the bourgeoisie sees technology from a totally different perspective.

It sees technological development only as a means for enhancing profits and for reinforcing its hegemony over the society. Introduction of steam power and the new technologies during the last two centuries had led to the development of monopolies and domination by imperialists. The post war developments in electronics and the revolutionary changes in information technology (IT) are now causing a second imperialist offensive on a global scale.

Just as the use of steam and machine power had increased the productivity of man's physical labour, computer power has enhanced his intellectual capabilities several fold. These capabilities coupled with the rapid advances in satellite communications has created a new breed of technology often referred to as IT. Huge chunks of data and information can now be systematically stored, instantly transmitted across the globe and analysed with the help of the new IT.

The IT revolution has helped to intensify the production process, to substantially increase the production capacities, and to improve operational efficiency of business organisations by cutting down on

labour costs through better coordination and optimisation of the production system. A global production system under the hegemonic control of imperialist monopolies have now become a definite possibility. A stagnant market is seen as the only constraint for rapid growth today by the corporate strategists of transnational monopolists. National economic barriers are seen by them as the major hurdles in the path of globalising the production system under their hegemony.

The new trade tensions developing now among imperialist nations are reminiscent of the early years of this century. They are to be seen in the backdrop of the tremendously increased production capacities that has come into existence thanks to the IT revolution. The provisions of the earlier GATT had become grossly inadequate under the new circumstances. Everyone of the G-7 countries is bargaining for maximum market access to each other's territory. The three major centres of monopoly capital, the US, the EC and the Japan are vying with each other for setting up trading blocks under their exclusive control. They are united in demanding the under privileged nations to dismantle all trade barriers and open up their economies to these new market offensives in the name of free trade. The new GATT in essence is an attempt in order to formalise the neo-colonial relations that are rapidly developing between the third world countries and the imperialist countries.

Humanity has entered a new phase of its existence. For the first time in its history it has reached the level of science and technology that makes practicable a centralised all embracing control over the vital functions of the world community, purposeful ideological "programming" of whole people and nations, clever and insidious manipulation of "grand politics" on a global scale.

The contradiction between the enormously strengthened productive forces on the one hand and the obsolete relations of production on the other, have become even more visible, under the impact of the on going IT revolution. This is reflected in increasing unemployment, poverty and miseries and in the increasing might of monopoly capital and the increased imperialist offensive by forcing

unequal treaties like the new GATT on the under privileged nations and by insisting that the transnational corporations should have monopoly rights over all types of intellectual property.

IV - THE NATURE OF THE NEW OFFENSIVE

The imperialist block and the MNCs under their control are finding it difficult to find markets for their rapidly increasing production capacities and hence are facing serious economic crisis and industrial recession in their countries. The present offensive is aimed at shifting the burden of the crisis to the workers of the developed countries and the third world countries as a whole.

Unlike in the pre-war years, financial and stock markets of the imperialist countries are closely interconnected today. The IT revolution has helped in integrating a global capital market under the hegemony of imperialist monopolies. Trade and investment flows are regulated through the GATT and the new GATT is supposed to remove the frictions among imperialist countries on this account. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund are the major instruments in disciplining the economies of the under privileged nations at the behest of the imperialist camp.

With the demolition of the Soviet Union and the disintegration of the socialist camp, the United Nations system has altogether lost its democratic character. It is practically a prisoner of the imperialist camp. Several international bodies under the auspices of the UN system like the UNIDO, UNESCO, etc have become redundant and disfunctional. The IAEA and others have been hijacked by the imperialists and help the US and its allies to entrench their position as global policemen.

Perennial negative trade balances and perpetual indebtedness of the host countries were ensured by direct imperialist presence in order to extract cheap exports from the underprivileged nations. The total 3rd world debt at the end of 1993 stands at 177 billion dollars which was 166 billion dollars at the end of 1992 as per World Bank data.

In a changed world, with the on going IT revolution providing all support for total hegemony, imperialism is now waging a new

offensive under the banner of a New World Order.

In essence, the imperialists are trying to pull the World back to the pre-Soviet era when its ideology and philosophy held their sway over the entire humanity. Nevertheless the difference this time is that the participants on both sides of the struggle are a little more clear with regard to the objectives of the struggle and what sort of history they are making toward the fag end of the twentieth century. The resistance put up by China, North Korea, Cuba and several other countries to the new offensive is proof for the emerging situation.

V. THE EMERGING FACE OF CAPITALISM

The new IT has tremendous possibilities for enriching democracy. But the imperialists use it for extensive surveillance over the working people, for brain washing the masses and for selling decadent bourgeoisie's culture. The all prevailing bourgeois decadence is horrible which can even pale all descriptions of hell. Mr. Clinton in his state of the union address this year said among other things that "We cannot renew this country when within a decade more than half of the children will be born into families where there has been no marriage, when 13 year old boys get semi-automatic weapons to shoot nine year olds for kicks, when children are having children and the fathers walkaway as if kids do not amount to anything." This is the developing model in USA, the paradise of capitalism.

Democratic pretensions of bourgeois ideologies get exposed with smaller and smaller percentage of people participating in the electoral process in imperialist countries. Mr John Kenneth Galbraith said on 26th January this year in a public address that "the underclass (poor) is not generally active in the political process. in all centres some are excluded for lack of citizenship. In the USA many do not vote because in the past at least they have not seen a sufficient difference between the two parties. Both of these, quite naturally appeal to the more fortunate community, for that is where voice, money and political action are to be found. In the fortunate countries we speak much of democracy.....when the most needful and most vulnerable of

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people do not participate in the political process, do not have vote and influence."

The formal law and order system under the elected and representative governments in imperialist countries are giving way to private detective agencies armed with the latest in computerised data network and the underworld whose services are hired by the rich to protect and safeguard their sectarian interests. Even personal freedom of working people are violated with impunity by this formal and informal "law enforcing agencies."

The IT revolution has helped the imperialist bourgeoisie to construct and propagate their own brand of philosophies and world outlooks, all ostensibly supported by chunks of scientific data. Extensive studies on climatology, environment, ecology and demographic developments are cleverly used as tools for brain washing and intellectually terrorising the people of the under privileged nations. On the strength of pseudo-scientific arguments they raise slogans such as "last chance to save the earth" in order to force and browbeat the under privileged nations who are fighting for a fair and equitable share of the earth's resources and their right to human dignity and development. Such propaganda hides the fact that imperialism was responsible for damaging the global environment because of unbalanced and distorted development and third world countries are asked to pay for it.

At a time when humankind is on the threshold of momentous technological breakthroughs in several fields, the imperialists spread the message of technological pessimism and end of the world theories. They try to persuade humanity to believe that the fragile environment and ecosystem of the globe are over burdened with people and will be safe only in their hands and under their hegemonic possession. Such attempts by the imperialists camp especially the USA, to be the sole custodian of global environment, are perceived by the under privileged nations as a conspiracy against their long term interests and development.

The OECD is represented by 16% of the world's population; but are responsible for 45% of the world's carbon dioxide emission, 50%

of the nitrogen and 40% of the sulphur dioxide emission, besides 60% of the industrial waste and 90% of the dangerous waste. In 1994 the USA, EC, and Japan contributed 86% of the world production of chlorofluoro carbons. These 16% of the world population contribute 4 times higher than that of the remaining 84% for the world's green house effect.

The United States, which parades as the custodian of nuclear safety stands exposed now since they continue their nuclear radiation tests on human beings, children, pregnant women and jail inmates using strange methods. They are fed with radio active milk mixed with cereals, dosed with radio active iron and people are exposed to high radiation from X-rays and many are injected with high concentration of pentonium etc which is only reminiscent of Nazi methods. They are also exploding atomic bombs in the atmosphere of their own countries in order to examine the effects of radio-active fall offs. Here we find the dictonomy of what they preach and practice.

The imperialist countries of today or the "North" as they call themselves, were the early starters on the capitalist path. The rich in the North has by now become fabulously rich and the working people there, though under serious attack today enjoy far better living standards compared to their counterparts in the South, i.e. the developing countries. The gap between the North and the South keep on widening day by day. Three fourth of the population of the world, the people of the 3rd world countries, share only one seventh of the world's income, while the USA with 5% of the global population consumes 40% of the planet's resources. The North keeps on pushing the South into a deeper and deeper debt trap.

The North just cannot accept the South on equal terms, which means redeeming the South of its massive debts and transferring the enormous wealth amassed by the rich of the North. Extensive growth of capitalism not being possible any more and blocked by the North-South polarization of the world, the imperialist bourgeoisie is now fine-tuning the global production machine under its hegemony for intensifying exploitation in order to avoid a collapse of the system. Smaller and smaller groups of shareholders owning bigger and

bigger global corporations and strategic alliances among these few, in order to manoeuvre the international labour market, are the grand strategies now being finalized by the global managers of corporate capitalism.

What dominates the world's production and financial sector today is the strategic business considerations of the transnational corporations (about 24,000 in number) owning one third of the world's private sector assets with annual sales of 5.5 trillion dollars. In a world driven by ruthless competition intensified by the current recession in the developed capitalist world, these companies are forced to adopt multi-pronged strategies in their global or regional thrust, in their product diversification, in their organizational adjustment with competitors or in the location of the different functions of their business.

VI RESPONSIBILITY OF THE TRADE UNIONS

The new offensive of globalisation and liberalization being implemented through the pressure of World Bank and GATT is the instrument through which the TNCs want to ensure their sway over the national economies of the third world and other countries. Though large sections of the ruling classes are forced to take submissive attitude and agree for the infiltration of the TNCs, yet dissensions are developing in many countries. In India too, those who were all in praise of liberalization are slowly coming to realise the impact of the new policies which the TNCs want to impose on them. Even among the different imperialist countries too the differences are on the increase against the US attempts to dominate them.

The working class of the world are under severe attack by way of reduction of wages, curtailment of privileges enjoyed by them, besides security of employment. New slogans are being coined like "flexibility" of labour or abolishing "rigidity" for sending the workers out of jobs. The high technology which are being introduced also are continuously reducing the number of jobs which also is called "jobless growth". This is so in our case too which is detailed in other reports. Therefore, the duty of the trade union movement today is to

properly understand and assess the different forms of imperialist attack which finally amounts to the curtailment of our freedom and independence. India has an important place in the global strategy of imperialism. The imperialists are out to do everything to keep our country backward and under their hegemony. US imperialism today stands out as the enemy No.1 of humanity and in our fight to build up a just and equitable society.

The new economic policies and the structural adjustments now being pursued by the Govt under the dictates of World Bank and IMF are to be seen in the above background of the ongoing offensives of imperialism. The ruling classes of our country by supporting these programs are compromising our national sovereignty and economic independence which can turn out to be detrimental even to the national unity. Dismantling of the public sector which is the mainstay of our economic independence and national planning will have dangerous consequences. The imperialists are intervening in different ways to create communal, caste and ethnic dissensions among the people besides encouraging divisive forces in different areas like that of Punjab and Kashmir.

The developing unity of the trade unions should be further developed to fight back these offensive. The united platform mobilizing all the mass organisations should be further strengthened for further strengthening the resistance against these policies. The increasing crisis in different industrial sectors, private and public, will force the workers to unitedly resist these policies. Those trade unions who are hesitant to join this stream of mass resistance will be forced to join this action.

It is the responsibility of the Trade Unions to explain to the workers and the people of nature of the new imperialist offensives. A clear-cut direction has to be given in our fight against the new imperialist offensive and the ideological base of the fight has to be strengthened among the people by educating them through all possible means. Only then the fight will become effective and meaningful.

Commission on New Economic Policies and Our Tasks

1. Soon after assuming power at the Centre, Narasimha Rao Government announced its New Economic Policies in July 1991 in the name of structural adjustment programme. The policy framework was not evolved through a process of discussion and debate within the country but was imposed on India as a result of conditionalities stipulated by the World Bank and the IMF for giving loans to overcome India's balance of payments crisis.

2. A serious balance of payments crisis was created in the country and the foreign exchange reserves reached the rock bottom level. It was created due to reckless policy of so called import liberalisation which led to even importing goods which could be produced in the country. Import of luxurious items meant for consumption by a small section of the society during eighties added to the critical nature of the situation. The failure of the Govt. of India to increase the production of oil despite striking of oil in several basins in India has added to India's import bill leading to the deficit of over Rs.10,000 crores in balance of payments position. The foreign debt of the country increased from \$ 22 billion to \$ 80 billion during the decade. The Narasimha Rao Government instead of taking corrective measures relying on the strength of Indian economy, approached the IMF to bail out Indian economy.

3. For granting every loan, the IMF imposed conditionalities and it was only after fulfilling those commitments, new loans were sanctioned. IMF developed carefully worked out mechanism to monitor the implementation of the package proposed by it, including

the budgetary exercise of the Government of India. Every aspect of India's economic policy was available for scrutiny by the IMF and the World Bank who got the final say in dictating the policies. The national sovereignty, including the sovereignty of Parliament became a casualty in the process. Step by step, Indian economy was subjugated at the altar of the IMF and the World Bank.

4. In the name of globalisation, Indian economy was tied to the apron strings of multinational companies. Whatever little concept of economic growth with social justice was in operation in the country was given a go bye and profit was made the sole criterion of every economic activity. Market economy became the pass word at every stage of development.

5. What are the major steps taken by the Government of India since adoption of the New Economic Policies?

- a) Rupee was devalued in stages to the tune of over 22 per cent. It was further made partially convertible in respect of international trade by allowing it to float in the open market. Later on it was made fully convertible. As a result, exporters could sell goods at cheaper price abroad and make money by selling earned dollars in open market, while importers had to buy foreign exchange in open market to pay the import Bill. This substantially pushed up the cost of production of all goods within the country which depend on imported intermediary goods.
 - b) More than 65 tonnes of gold was sent to foreign banks to borrow interim advance of foreign exchange. The international credibility of India was so low that no one was prepared to lend money to the country.
 - c) The economy was deregulated and licensing system was abolished. Capitalists were free to open factory anywhere they liked. This hit hard balanced economic growth and increased uneven development of economy.
 - d) Core sector of the economy was opened up to the private sector and multinational companies.
 - e) MRTP was practically scrapped making the growth of
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monopolies easier. Big business houses were allowed to take equity of the small sector units and gobble it in the end.

- f) FERA was scrapped which particularly helped foreign banks to fritter away our foreign exchange resources.
- g) All restrictions on entry of multinational companies were withdrawn. They will now be allowed free hand in collaborating with Indian units or taking over them wholesale. Liberal concessions have been given to them to export profits from India.
- h) Liberal tax concessions to corporate sector and rich classes in the matter of Income Tax, Wealth Tax, Estate Duty, Gift Tax etc.
- i) Abolition of gold control and liberal permission to import gold and silver.
- j) Disinvestment of shares of profit making public sector undertakings upto 49% of the holdings in stages without making proper assessment of the current value of assets. According to Parliamentary Committee, the country lost over Rs.3400 crores so far.
- k) SICA was amended to refer sick PSU's to BIFR with ultimate objective of handing them over to private parties or closing them down.
- l) Stopping all budgetary support to public sector units throttling their working and making them more sick.
- m) Loosening of the control over stock exchanges leading to stock prices going high and facilitating the entry of the black money in the stock market.
- n) Privatisation as a policy adopted in all economic spheres including financial institutions, banks, insurance companies, etc.
- o) Stoppage of funds for several welfare measures on the plea of reducing the budgetary deficit.
- p) Reduction in import duties to facilitate foreign goods to be dumped in India to the disadvantage of Indian in-

dustries. The enhancement of excise duty on Indian products made them more vulnerable.

- q) Acceptance of an Exit Policy facilitating the closure of industrial units if the owner desires. All legal restrictions in the matter to be withdrawn. Introduction of National Renewal Fund, taking 500 million dollars from the World Bank to pay "compensation" to the workers thrown out of jobs, through a diabolical Voluntary Retirement Scheme.
- r) Reduction in subsidy on Food and Fertilizers making them costlier for the consumers. Ultimate objective of withdrawal of all subsidies.
- s) Acceptance of the Dunkel Proposals(GATT) to the disadvantage of Indian industries, agriculture and consumers.
- t) Attack of TU and democratic rights of the workers. Proposal to introduce a Bill in Parliament to suppress workers' right to strike, right to organise and collective bargaining to ensure "industrial peace" for the multinational companies.

6. All these proposals taken together make possible implementation of the grand designs of imperialism to introduce neo-colonialism on Indian soil. Indian economy with second largest population in the world, is opened as a captive market for the multinational companies who will be free to compete with each other to take as much as share of the market as each can grab. That is why despite stagnating performance of the Indian economy the foreign press is showering encomiums on the new path of Indian economy!

IMPACT OF ECONOMIC POLICIES

7. India's external debt has increased phenomenally in terms of rupee due to devaluation. It was Rs 130.28 thousand crores(\$75.90 billion) in 1989-90 which went up to Rs 163.31 thousand crores(\$ 83.96 billion) in 1990-91. During 1991-92 it further jumped to Rs 253.03 thousand crores(\$85.33 billion) while the year 1992-93 ended with the

total external debt of Rs 280.98 thousand crores(\$90.09 billion). The repayment liability per year now stood at \$8.17 billion which is 30.8 per cent of our total export earnings. The matter is so serious that our total external debt is 39.8 per cent of the GDP for the year 1992-93. If the trend continues India soon would be entering the debt trap.

8. When the World Bank is insisting that we should open up our economy for multinational penetration, the advanced countries are resorting to protectionist path. As noted in the Economic Survey (1993-94) "This slow down in world economic and trade growth reduces export opportunities and intensifies pressures for protectionism in developed economies which are major markets for our exports." (Page 89)

9 The internal debt of the Govt of India has now reached Rs. 2.09 thousand crores. The net interest payment burden of the Government of India on its liabilities has now reached a colossal figure of Rs 23 thousand crores. With Government of India's reliance on more and more borrowings is likely to make the situation more vulnerable.

10 The Economic Survey has given details of the widening gap in balance of payments in terms of dollars. The trade balance which stood at \$9679 came down to \$2135 in 1991-92 but again went up to \$4106 in 1992-93. During 1993-94 for the first 6 month trade balance was less, not because of better performance but as noted by the Economic Survey, it was due to lesser imports on account of recession in India.

11. Regarding the industrial sector, The Economic Survey lamented that "The industrial sector is yet to respond with full vigour to liberalisation measures. The position with regard to the capital goods industry is very bad due to easy entry of capital goods from foreign countries.

12. "The rate of investment in agriculture has declined in recent years" observes the recent Economic Survey. Thus both in industrial and agricultural sectors the official admission of failure is clearly seen in the Economic Survey.

13 The data available for the last two and a half years clearly indicates all round stagnation in the economy, at times even lower

than the growth of population in the country. Yet the government goes ahead with the same policies which have brought this stagnation. The Prime Minister talks loudly that the process is irreversible because he knows that World Bank would not allow him to change the course of direction of the economic policies.

14. Though the per capita consumption of several essential commodities is falling due to stagnation in economy, the government has been showing decline in poverty in the country. This manipulation is done by changing the definition of poverty and by method of calculation of the number of people below the poverty line. Yet according to latest available data 40 per cent of the people are below the poverty line.

15. The recent budget proposals which reduced import duty on several goods and increased excise duty on Indian products have helped multinational companies to dump their goods in Indian market making it difficult for Indian industries to sell their goods in domestic market. The Govt. of India expressed its determination to further disinvest public sector share despite the share scam pointed out by Parliamentary Committee. The increase in railway freights and fares, the pre-budget hike in prices of sugar, kerosene, oil, LPG and other essential commodities have made the life of common people more difficult. The failure of the Government to reduce deficit financing has given big push to inflation and price rise in the economy. Despite promise of golden days ahead, Indian economy is going deeper and deeper into the arena of stagnation.

16. On the whole, the new economic policies have brought about a severe declining trend in all the productive activities of the Indian economy, in all the sectors, creating ground for gradually converting the country's economy into a playfield of the foreign capital and multinational companies. Whatever claim the Prime Minister, Finance Minister and other proponents of the new economic policies may lodge, the fact remained that the new policies are going to close more industries than they open, kill more jobs than they generate.

17. Such situation has already been alarmingly manifested in the fast increasing sickness of many industrial units in the country.

Although industrial sickness in our country is not a new phenomenon after the introduction of NEP and it had been in existence since long, the moot point is that circumstances have been created by the new policies for even many healthy units becoming sick and unviable and possibility of revival of the sick units have practically been blocked by the Govt. The numbers of sick and closed industrial units have already crossed 4 lakhs and many of them are awaiting liquidation through the process of BIFR mechanism. Further, steps are being taken to speed up the process of either privatisation or closure and winding up of the sick industrial units. SICA is being sought to be further amended in line of Omkar Goswami Committee recommendation, to provide for a 'fast-track' mechanism not for revival, but for closure of the units.

18. If this situation is allowed to continue, poverty and destitution are likely to aggravate further. With growing inequality in the economy as a direct result of the new economic policies, the possibility of drawing more and more people in the vortex of struggle are immense in the forthcoming days.

19. A sustained struggle against the new economic policies is a stupendous task. Despite our concerted nationwide campaign to create awareness among the workers the following features have been observed in the movement.

- i) We have been able to reach the advanced sections of the working class who have understood the dangerous implications of these policies to some extent but yet large backward sections are there where we have not yet reached so far. We have to consider whether our propaganda goes over their heads or whether we should find more simpler forms of education so that the propaganda reaches their level of understanding.
- ii) Though recent state level campaign and rallies have spread our message, our total activity in the country is still confined to some pockets of influence. In order to spread this movement throughout the entire country, where joint message has not yet reached, we have to

consider measures to spread this movement still faster.

iii) The mass actions in rural areas, despite considerable improvement in the recent past, still have not assumed a character of the movement of the rural people. We should sit with the leadership of the AIKS and AIAWU and find ways and means of spreading our activities in rural sector. The trade unions at Central and State levels should take initiative and develop more coordination with the peasant movement. This coordination will enable us to build a powerful worker-peasant alliance which is extremely necessary to make our campaign successful.

iv) Increasing involvement of women, students and youth in the joint movement is very essential to make the movement spread in all directions. Closer interaction by our units with the mass organisations of these sections will help in chalking out joint programmes for their growing involvement in the joint movements.

v) We have not been able to produce sufficient publicity materials which can be understood by the common people and inspire them to join our national campaign. West Bengal State Committee of CITU has prepared a video cassette on the economic policies. Use of electronic media to popularise our ideas among the masses is very important in today's situation. We should develop more such programmes so that this powerful media can be fully used. Suitable circulation machinery necessary in order that such programmes reach all corners of the country.

vi) The Platform of Mass Organisations is a symbolic democratic unity in the country but all the constituents do not participate in the implementation of the decision of the Platform. This weakens the struggle under the leadership of the Platform and reduces the impact of the movement. How to overcome the weakness of such

organisations so that all the programmes of the Platform are implemented effectively by all the constituents, is an urgent task before us. Secondly, the appeal of the Platform is much wider than its constituents. How to effectively reach the strata outside the constituents of the platform is an important question to be considered by our movement so that the Platform's action programme can be more effective.

20. Govt. of india is making intensive propaganda that there is no alternative to the new economic policies. We should blow up this myth by concretely pointing out how on each and every aspect alternative was available. Therefore our propoganda campaign should highlight those issues. We should bring out literatures which can be understood by common people on such alternative policies so that people are convinced about the falacy in the approach of the ruling party. Unless we give necessary importance to this aspect our propaganda will not go down among the people. The CITU centre should therefore provide such literatures to our unions so that the level of our propaganda is qualitatively improved.

21. Our unions should take initiative in preparing viability reports in every sick unit and mobilise the workers in support of these proposals. We must point out what led to the sickness of the unit and how it can be overcome. The struggle against sickness cannot be conducted merely by formally blaming the management but by concretely pin pointing how the managerial policies have led to the sickness of the undertaking. In case of public sector in certain units the productivity is extremely low. We must suggest ways and means of enhancing it without causing undue hardships to the workers. We have to make special efforts to expose corruption and other malpractices prevalent in the undertakings. This would enable us to counteract the managements' propaganda of blaming the workers for all the ills of the public and the private sectors.

22. Some of our unions have produced good exposure materials about their industries and it has greatly helped in the struggle against the economic policies in those industries. But these unions should make those materials available to others so that a common approach is evolved. They should also educate their workers how the experience in other industries is similar to them. If the information is sent to the

CITU centre it would be possible to exchange informations among all workers. Series of booklets can be published on these subjects. The state committees can prepare statewise reports explaining how the new economic policies have affected their own state economies.

23. An under-current prevalent in the TU movement today is that the present economic policies of the Government of India have come to stay. They further state that though the general opposition to this policy should continue, the trade unions should try to find some compromise to minimise the damage to the workers. On this plea, they seek to accept the present policy as fait accompli and ask the working class to find out a solution within the frame work of this policy itself. This thinking of fighting the policy in words and accepting in practice will adversely affect our struggle and it is necessary to counteract this thinking within the movement so that militant unity of the working class is strengthened.

24. In order to create confidence among the workers that the policy can be defeated and country's interests can never be protected within the framework of these policies, it is necessary to systematically campaign against these policy measures. Instead of a stereo-type propaganda, we have to concretely expose the intricacies of the existing policies so that the working class and the people understand the dangerous implications of these policies.

25. Seeing the growing opposition to the economic policies among the trade unions, the Government of India sometimes adopt tactics to placate some trade unions and divide the united movement. In the Special Tripartite Committee the government gave certain assurances but did not implement them. However, they did not record the opposition of the TUs to the official policies. When CITU objected to this procedure and insisted our opposition should be noted, we did not get required support from other TUs.

26. The Government of India, knowing CITU's firm opposition to its policies at times tries to isolate CITU from other TUs and tries to be soft on some minor problems. If TUs take this as a big concession and compromise on other issues then it becomes difficult to fight these policies. We should have prior discussion with other friends in the TU movement noting the possibility of manoeuvres of the Government of India so that unity of the movement is preserved in the struggle against these policies.

27. The work in the Tripartite Committees should not be treated as substitute for struggle. Some feel that by mere fighting in Special Tripartite meetings we can achieve our objectives. This underestimates the importance of struggle. Therefore the limited role these Tripartite Committees are playing should be made known to the working class so that due emphasis is given on the necessity of struggle.

28. Moreover, we must also carry forward the struggle to get the decisions of the Tripartite Committees implemented in full. We have even to fight to commence regular meetings of the Tripartite Committees by the Union Government. Despite promise given in the last meeting to convene meetings of Tripartite once in 3 months, since 4th May 1993 no meeting has been convened so far. Hence there is a need to make this an as issue of struggle.

29. We have to specially address to the problems of sick industrial units. A notable development in this regard is that all the unions, irrespective of their affiliations, have been coming together in a bigger way. We must immediately undertake suitable effective steps to pull together this growing unity of trade unions and also officers' organisations, and shape a powerful mass action on the question of industrial sickness.

30. CITU has already decided to hold an all India convention exclusively on industrial sickness to chalk out concrete programme of action. We have to make sincere efforts to ensure our move on the issue as broad based as possible for maximum possible mobilisation. We have also to ensure that the workers of the still healthy industrial units extend active support in the fight of their brothers in sick units. This is most urgent to keep up the morale of the trade union movement in the sick industrial units.

31. The Government of India has been stepping up measures to quicken up the process of privatisation/closure/winding up of sick units both in public sector and private sector. They are also seeking to utilise the fora of Industrial Tripartite Committees in their evil design to make the trade unions a party to the move or atleast disrupt the trade union unity on these burning issues. Therefore CITU has to play vital role to guard against all these motivated step of the government.

32. In the given situation of wide spread industrial sickness and in the face of more and more industries, including in public sector,

being pushed towards gradual sickness owing to naked pro-monopoly, pro-multinational, policies of the Government of India, we have to work out suitable ways to develop a militant united mass struggle on the question of sickness and fight in defence of the workers in sick industrial units.

33. We have held several conventions at local, state and Central levels. Several demonstrations, dharnas, rallies, etc have been organised. Workers are now asking what next? It appears that they want some struggle which should be of a higher form of action.

34. The form of such struggles may vary from state to state, even region to region, depending on the level of consciousness and the state of organisation of workers. However, we should take precaution that no adventurism is resorted to by our unions. This would be counter productive and will only invite repression.

35. The need of the hour is to further strengthen our movement at the grass root level. In this connection we have to take into account the unevenness of our movement. Therefore this aspect should be reviewed in greater details so that our movement spreads in the urban and rural areas and qualitative improvement in our joint movement can be achieved. Without such a powerful movement our objective to reverse the policy cannot be achieved.

36. The objective conditions in the country are favourable for organising bigger and more powerful struggles in the forthcoming days. If we use this opportunity to the fullest extent and understand the mood of the masses who are in the thick of the struggle, it is possible to heighten the level of struggles to convert our present struggle, which has only slowed down the space of the so-called reform, into a struggle for reversing the new economic policies which are anti-national, anti-working class and anti-people.

Commission on Technology

1.0 Use of new technology and its impact on working class has been an issue for debate all through. The issue was discussed in the 7th All India Conference of CITU held in Calcutta and in the Nagpur Session of the General Council.

1.1 Recently, CITU held the first phase of the workshop on the Impact of New Technology on the Working Class at Haldia in cooperation with the Commonwealth Trade Union Council. The follow-up workshop is scheduled to be held after wards. We need to have a thorough discussion on our policy on new technology.

1.2 Keeping in view the ever increasing rate of unemployment, it is not merely a question of academic debate, but a serious problem not only for the working class, but also for the entire society, which requires a rational and realistic understanding before deciding future plans of action on this regard. Therefore, it is necessary to analyse all the pros and cons related to the issue for arriving at a realistic conclusion.

2.0 Technology and Social System

2.1 Irrespective of social system, progress and development of science and technology is a social phenomenon. The development of production capability is the true index of progress of the society. With the development of science and technology and its consequent use in the field of production, the society as a whole can be benefited, provided the relations of production are in conformity with the productive forces developed by the society. Technology development helps to improve the quality of life by serving the following social objectives:

- i) by reducing the social costs of producing goods and services.
- ii) by improving the quality of goods and services.
- iii) by introducing new types of goods and services.

2.2 It is the working class which functions as a catalytic agent for technological development. It is based on their experience and feedback, that technological development takes place. They are thus the main sources as well as users of modern technology.

No social system can sustain itself without continuously improving the means of production.

2.3 Even though the development of technology and its use are the fruits of labour of the working class, the nature of ownership of technology, means of production and finished products depend on the type of social and economic system. In a socialist system where the ownership lies with the society or the State, led by working class, use of new technology leads to an overall improvement in the standard of living of the entire people. In the absence of the problems like excess production or unlimited profits such a society does not have to face problems like lack of job opportunities or unemployment. Use of new technology on the other hand, reduces the workload on the working class. But in a society where the means of production, including technology, are private property, technology developments are used in the interest of the owners of the means of production. It is profit which motivates them to open new factories and employ workers. Creation of job opportunities or utilisation of human resources is hardly of any concern to them. Even more, those, who own and control the means of production, see new technology as a tool for reinforcing their hegemony over the working class and the society at large. For these reasons when the capitalist class uses new technology, its development and use are rightly seen and perceived with alarm. But the source of this alarm is not the modern technology, but the job loss that follows.

2.4 In the present world situation, advancements in technology particularly in electronics, computers, communications etc commonly known as Information Technology (IT), have hastened the

pace of development of productive forces and globalisation. It has helped to intensify the production process, to substantially increase the production capacities, and to improve operational efficiency of business organisations by cutting down labour costs through better coordination and optimisation of the production system. A global production system under the hegemony of imperialist monopolies have now become a definite possibility. A stagnant market is seen as the only constraint for rapid growth today by the corporate strategists of transactional monopolists. National economic barriers are seen by them as the major burdens in the path of globalising the production system under their hegemony.

2.5 The new trade tensions developing now among imperialist nations today are reminiscent of the early years of this century. They have to be seen in the backdrop of the tremendously increased production capacities that has come into existence, thanks to IT revolution. The provisions of the earlier GATT had become grossly inadequate under the new circumstances. Everyone of the G-7 countries is bargaining for maximum market access to each other's territory. They are also united in demanding from the under privileged nations to dismantle all trade barriers built by them in defence of their economic and political sovereignty and open up their economies to the new market offensives in the name of free trade. Working class in every country including those of the imperialist countries are resisting this globalisation process under the hegemony of the monopoly bourgeoisie.

2.6 The contradictions between the enormously strengthened productive forces on the one hand and the obsolete relations of production on the other have thus become even more visible today under the impact of the on going revolution in Information Technology. This is reflected in increasing unemployment, poverty and miseries of the common people, and the increasing might of monopoly capital and the increased imperialist offensives by forcing unequal treaties like the GATT on underprivileged nations and by insisting that the transnational corporations should have monopoly rights over all types of intellectual property.

2.7 In class divided capitalist societies the capitalist class are more eager to increase the productivity rather than the production by using the new technology. The objective is to produce more with less workforce and to earn more profit by utilising new technology. Reduction in labour cost is, therefore, the guiding factor to them. As a result, in a capitalist production system technology development brings along with it ills of lay-off, unemployment and other allied problems to the working class. As a natural and immediate consequence of this, the working class come forward to oppose any move for introducing new technologies.

3.0 Technology: Impact on Working Class and Society

3.1 It is imperative to analyse as to to what extent the overall interests of the working class and the society as a whole are being protected by such opposition. The effectiveness of such opposition is also to be analysed. When new plants and factories are built based on new technology and produce the same product or better substitutes than the older units based on old technology, the product of the old industries, face unequal competition in the market and they become sick and face closure. Though the technological gap may not be the only reason for industrial sickness, the fact cannot be ignored that technological upgradation becomes unavoidable where industrial sickness is attributable to old technology and machinery. The demands of trade unions for modernisation of older establishments are to be viewed in this light.

3.2 The introduction of new technology is also linked with the expectations of the common people who have their own urge to avail of the fruits of the new technologies which means getting a better quality of products at cheaper prices. Similarly in services like Railways, Power, Transport, Banking etc, people would opt for a prompt and better service through use of new technology. Unless there is a total protection, assured to the old technology and its products the same cannot survive on its own in a competitive market. The impact of new technology cannot therefore be studied in isolation without due consideration to the need of the society at large.

3.3 Even for achieving our goal of changing the social order from the prevailing capitalist system to a socialist system, technological developments are absolutely necessary. Technology development

is a necessary precondition for building socialism and communism. Unlike under capitalism technology developments under socialism will be used for improving the quality of life of the entire people. The technological advancements and achievements made by Soviet Union and other socialist countries were remarkable in this respect. It was only with the help of rapid technological advancements, these countries could modernise their agriculture, build up an industrial base and provide leisure and security to the working people.

4.0 Questions to be Addressed are:

4.1 Technology development and industrialisation in countries like India have their own special problems. The major question before the working class would be whether we are self-reliant vis-a-vis new technology, based on our own resources both natural and human, or we are dependent on others. If we set up industries in the country mainly based on technology imported from imperialist countries, the price to be paid will be exorbitant and exploitative. Along with the imported technology, machineries and spares are also to be imported, thus hindering the process of industrial development within the country. These goods would have been produced within the country through development of indigenous technologies and industries. Our country has tried to follow after independence a self-reliant path through a process of planned development though not very consistently. These inconsistencies have created a crisis in our country leading to economic and industrial stagnation.

4.2 Even under the existing capitalist system, the country could have been in a much better position had we followed a consistent self-reliant path. By giving emphasis on some basic core industries in public sector in the second 5-year Plan with due stress on co-related R&D, considerable development of industries and employment generation were possible within the capitalist system. Making use of modern technology through indigenous effort, self-reliant economy, free from the influence and control of imperialists and neo-imperialists, can be developed. By following a path of self-reliance within the existing socio-economic system, we can develop industries and create expertise, new skills and employment opportunities to a considerable extent. The significant contribution made by BHEL, ISRO, DAE, ONGC, HMT, SAIL, CIL, BEL and several

other national enterprises to the development of our backward economy are examples for this. These institutes are technology generators and have developed competitive expertise in their respective fields.

4.3 The policy now being pursued by GOI under WB/IMF dictates are targetted at the destruction of these capabilities built up during the post independence period. In the background of the New Economic Policy of the Govt of India and its disastrous impact on the Indian industry, defending of these institutions and of indigenous R&D apparatus have become an absolute necessity for protection of self-reliance. The CITU should popularise the demand for strengthening the indigenous R&D set up in all industries and also for statutory allocation of a portion of its profit for R&D activities.

4.4 The above does not imply that we would close all our doors to imported technology. But technology should be imported only as per our needs, without undermining our indigenous technologies and R&D, and to help national economic development. Capability to assimilate such technology is of vital importance; hence transfer of technology should be made a condition for import of technology. The CITU has therefore demanded that new technology should be introduced only with the consent of the trade unions.

4.5 In some industries as outlined above, modernisation is necessary for revival. But it would also have the inevitable impact of drastic reduction in workforce. For example, there has been no continuous process of technological upgradation in Indian industries barring a few exceptions, owing to which manufacturing and engineering sectors in particular have been facing problem of technological obsolescence accompanied by lack of efficiency, productivity, quality, cost effectiveness etc. In such modernisation efforts first choice have to be for use indigenous technologies, machineries and other inputs, so that social costs of such modernisation is minimum.

4.6 In India, introduction of new technology is not integrated with the collective bargaining process and the trade unions have to chase the impact of technology on workers' right and service conditions rather than bargaining in advance to ensure effective protection of the workers' interests. In many places, it is found that introduction of new technology has led to the shifting of job from the unionised

category to the non-unionised higher category of employees. An initial technological bargaining in such case would stall such development so that control and acquirement of new skills do not remain a monopoly to managerial workforce.'

4.7 There is scope of differentiating between different levels of technology for a particular industry to ensure minimum displacement of labour for a particular industry. It requires detailed and comprehensive study in the concerned area of technology for its judicious use in line with the actual needs of the industry and the country. This is possible only when trade unions have right to negotiate on introduction of technology right from the initial stage.

4.8 In general introduction of higher technology is also bringing about gradual change in the composition of workforce particularly in organised sector. Role of unskilled job has been getting marginalised and change in the skill-mix of the production process and requirement of higher skill and higher educational standard are becoming gradually predominant, with the attendant need to update the technique and strategies of organisation.

4.9 Introduction of high technology leads to de-skilling even among the highly skilled category of workers in certain sector of industries. Where four of five stages of operation are integrated in a singular process through automotive machines, skill of the workers in the intermediate stages so long being considered as high-skill job becomes redundant. In some industries such highly skilled workers are to be redeployed in comparatively low-skill jobs creating resistance among the concerned workers for such redeployment. Unions have to devise means to redress such problems. In the process of advancement of technology in the production line, demarcation between different kinds of skills and jobs in a particular process of production is becoming thinner. Multi-skill approach would develop in the said process. Sometimes multi-skill or multi-job system may help in proper redeployment in the event of de-skilling. But at the same time multi-job system may lead to cluster system of work- practices leading to reduction in man-power requirement and intensification of exploitation. How to tackle the problem of de-skilling and consequent changes in work organisation is also a vital problem to be addressed in the face of introduction of higher technology.

4.10 Introduction of new technologies in every specific case has to be seen by the TU movement from the following perspectives.

- a) Immediate threat to employment of the workers in the specific industry and their earnings.
- b) Survival of the industry in the given environment
- c) Larger and long-term interests of the country and the people at large.

4.11 There cannot be a general formula on strategy to confront the problems emanating from induction of new technology. It would vary from industry to industry, and unit to unit. What is required is to equip the TU organisation both at industry and national level to have a comprehensive understanding on technology to analyse the situation both at micro and macro level and address the situation. While doing so, the social responsibility of the working class has to be kept in mind. Our strategies at micro level should commensurate with the ground reality and also the responsibility of working class in leading the social movement.

4.12 Generally situation confronted by us in the matter of new technology can be categorised as under:

- * The situation where the higher technology is already inducted and the unions are left with the task of chasing its impact.
- * The situation particularly in public sector where in many places unions had to demand for modernisation for the survival/viability of the particular unit, and even these cases modernisation and higher technology will carry with it the attendant problems of redundancy, redeployment and even reduction of workforce, retraining, change in work practices leading to increase in workload.
- * The situation where the union possesses the capacity and/or gets the chance to interact and bargain with the employer/management in the matter of introduction of new technology, right from the take-off level.

4.12 What should be our approach and strategies in such different

situations as categorised above is the question that needs to be answered in clear terms. Particularly in the places, where our unions have the capacity to bargain effectively and even can say 'yes' or 'no' to particular move of the employer in the matter of technology, what are the issues and factors to be taken into consideration in taking stand in respect of particular level of technology upgradation in the concerned unit, in the background of most uneven character of organisational position all around, and how should we address such situations, are the basic questions relating to formulation of our policy on new technology in concrete terms.

5.0 Trade Union Intervention

5.1 The moot point is the right of the union to intervene in the matter of technology right from the initial stage. Such intervention and/or bargaining should/may take place keeping in view the following aspects:

- i) Reduction in job potential and manpower, particularly of unskilled, semi-skilled and women workers.
- ii) Type of technology--imported or indigeneous.
- iii) Wages and working hours vis-a-vis the higher profitability and turn-over on account of improved technology.
- iv) Retraining and redeployment of redundant workforce consequent upon introduction of new technology within the industry: its methodology and impact.
- v) Reduction in indirect employment potential and the social cost.
- vi) Impact on health, safety and environment.
- vii) Prior and proper information sharing with the trade unions regarding technology plan of the industry/company.

6.0 Steps to be taken

6.1 In order to equip the trade unions and the working class for effective intervention at micro and macro levels of policy formulation

the following steps are required to be taken.

- i) Skill audit by the trade union both at unit and industry level for effective intervention in man-power planning and in the collective bargaining process.
- ii) Plant/industry-wise study of evolution of technology application and attendant problems has to be undertaken by the union in cooperation with technicians and engineers of the industry under the guidance of state committee/industrywise federation with a view to evolve education/campaign materials.
- iii) Industry-wise workshops on the basis of said materials to identify the general problems.
- iv) Formation of Technology Cell to study industrywise problems of technology and evaluation of technology level and to keep data bank on skill and technology both at Centre and States.
- v) Periodical review of the situation at national level to evaluate the intervening changes and update the information and understanding on the matter.

7.0 The CITU should popularise the demand for strengthening and widening the infrastructure of technical training institutes by the Govt of India to provide technical training/education free of cost and/or at subsidised rate so that technical education does not become the monopoly of the privileged class, and course of such training should also be continuously updated to keep it relevant with the needs of the economy.

8.0 While dealing with the subject as detailed above the Trade Unions must not forget the fact that in the class divided society the attempt of the employer is to impose more and more burdens of various kinds on the working class. Therefore at every stage they must interact with the workers and they should be taken into confidence, before finalisation.

Commission on Workers of Unorganised Sector

WHAT IS UNORGANISED SECTOR?

1. According to government specifications, the unorganised sector of industries include those where there is no organised factory system of production. The Factories Act is not applied to these industries. According to Planning Commission (1990), the industry would be marked as small scale, where up to Rs 60 lakhs would be invested. A large section of this small scale industries are marked as unorganised sector of industries. The industry which do not consume electricity is also marked as unorganised sector of industry. The National Commission of

Labour (1969) included among the unorganised sector of industries, handloom, powerloom, beedi, building and construction, brick kiln, stone-quarries, fire works, tanneries, small chemicals, garments, carpet, cashew, bangle making, diamond and gem cutting, etc. The list is almost never ending according to the National Commission of Labour. According to the documents placed by the Labour Ministry at the 30th Session of the Standing Labour Committee in September 1986, almost 90% of the Indian workforce i.e. about 220 millions out of nearly 245 million workers belong to the unorganised sector of industries.

2. Apart from the industries, we can categorise the following workers also under the unorganised sector who are working in the organised industries both in the public and private sector and also in various govt departments, like casual workers, contract labour, daily wage earners, work charge employees, extra departmental employees, piece rated workers, security guards, etc.

3. A massive number of self employed working people are

attached with various trades and professions who can also be included in the unorganised sector, like rickshaw pullers and paddlers, auto rickshaw operators, railway hawkers, street hawkers, masonry workers, loading and unloading workers, head load workers etc.

4. There are a large section of workers working as Home based workers. Particularly in the restructuring process in pursuance of the new economic and industrial policies, the organised industries are getting a large number of their products manufactured in the Home based units. About 80% to 90% of these workers are women. This is a growing phenomenon in the unorganised sector with the reduction of the organised sector.

5. With the above assessment we can categorise the workers in the unorganised sector as:

- a) Workers of the unorganised sector of industries
- b) Workers and employees attached to various industries in the organised sector like casual, contract etc as stated above in Para 2 and
- c) Self-employed working people
- d) Home based workers

6. Besides the working people mentioned in the above categories of industries/trades/professions, any other industries where total number of workers are below 10(ten), they will also be included under unorganised sector of industries, since these workers too are not entitled to any benefit of Labour Laws.

7. If this vast section of workers in the unorganised sector can be organised within the trade union activities alongwith workers of the organised sector of industries, then the dimension of the trade union movement in its entirety can be changed. This is very important for changing the co-relation of class forces in favour of the working class.

GOVERNMENT PRONOUNCEMENTS

8. After independence the government pronounced that the industrial growth was one of the vital measures which could affect development. The then Planning Commission proposed to develop the small scale unorganised sector of industries for a balanced industrial and economic growth. For protection of the unorganised and small scale sector of industries from competition from the large scale industries and the monopolists, a policy of reservation of items for production in the

unorganised sector and small scale sector of industries was evolved. However, with the process of industrialisation that could not make a successful progress keeping the old socio-economic structure unaltered, the policy of the govt changed, the reservation policy was withdrawn and there has been a growing infiltration of the monopolists into the small scale and unorganised sector of industries. This put this sector of industries under great crisis.

DEPLORABLE CONDITION OF WORKERS - WAGES BELOW POVERTY LINE:

9. The wages of the entire lot of unorganised workers are below the poverty line which according to the Eighth Five Year Plan is about Rs 12,000 per annum i.e. Rs 1000 per month. They are left exposed to the ruthless exploitation by unscrupulous employers and landlords. With the pittance of earnings they cannot even have a square meal a day for the family. Their conditions get aggravated with the unabated price rise of all commodities.

ILO CONVENTIONS:

10. The Government of India has not even ratified several conventions of ILO which are related to workers in the unorganised sectors of industry. The most important is Convention No.131 of 1970 on Minimum Wage. Convention No.131 calls upon the member countries to decide a system or criteria for fixing minimum wages as per the needs in commensurate with the cost of living. It also calls for extension of the provision of Minimum Wage in all employments. It further calls upon the member countries to submit the list of employments which cannot be covered for minimum wage with concrete reasons therefor. A large number of employments are not covered for minimum wage at all. Convention No.26 calls for fixation of a machinery for determining minimum wage. The Government constituted one Central Minimum Wage Advisory Board to fix up the criteria for minimum wages. But the Board did not fix up any criteria at all. This has resulted in a total chaotic condition in the field of Minimum Wages in the country. It varies from state to state and industry to industry and in the same state and in the same industry. Women workers are also always discriminated in the matter of wages. ILO Convention on social security measures and applications of

labour laws are also violated. Apart from above, there is a series of other ILO conventions on Minimum Wage on the working and service conditions of the various sections of workers in the unorganised sector which the Government have either not ratified or refused to implement. These sections of workers include women, child labour, migrant workers, contract workers, agricultural workers, etc.

ABSENCE OF LABOUR LAWS, SOCIAL SECURITY MEASURES:

11. Despite repeated demands the Government has declined to enact the Central legislation for workers of the unorganised sector. It has even declined to incorporate the Minimum Wages Act in the 9th Schedule of the Constitution. This has resulted in total deprivation of these workers from the benefits of the labour laws. They do not have any statutory rights for protection of their jobs and other working and service conditions. Social security measures like ESI, EPF, pension, gratuity, etc are almost unknown to the vast unorganised sector.

12. Welfare fund has been made for some sections in the unorganised sector of industries like beedi, brick kiln, building and construction, etc, but these do not reach the workers properly.

13. Appointment letters are not issued to the workers in most of the cases. Statutory working hours are not maintained. The workers are forced to work for 12/14 hours a day without any extra benefit.

WOMEN WORKERS AND CHILD LABOUR:

14. Women workers are the most exploited section of the unorganised sector workers. They are paid lower wages as compared with their male counter parts for equal work. The Equal Remuneration Act is not implemented. They are the first to be dismissed by the employers. They are deprived of maternity benefits, creche or other specific facilities which are required by them. According to ILO's report India has the largest number of the world's working children. In different small and unorganised industries these children work with terribly low wages. Stipulation of Article 24 of the Indian Constitution has not been maintained. Child labourers are recklessly left exposed to ruthless exploitation by the employers.

CONTRACT LABOUR

15. The emergence of Contract Labour System and its unabated growth have provided a fertile ground for perpetuation of the deplorable working conditions for the unorganised sector workers. Despite the Contract Labour(Regulation and Abolition) Act, these workers failed to get any security of jobs and benefits under the Labour Laws and social security measures. Contract Work continues to grow phenomenally even in permanent and perennial nature of jobs including in the public sector and Govt departments. The unorganised sector is thus expanded rapidly even within the organised sector for exploitation of cheap labour.

16. A large number of workers are working as casual, daily-rated, temporary and other categories even in the organised sectors. In the Central Govt services several lakhs of employees are working as extra departmental staff employed for decades without being regularised.

17. The agricultural workers, which constitute the largest chunk of unorganised sector workers have to remain in a deplorable condition striving for their sheer survival.

SAFETY: OCCUPATIONAL HAZARDS:

18. Safety is a major problem in the unorganised sector of industries. Construction and Building industries are one of the worst affected in this respect. No safety rules are followed by the employers and the number of accidents in the building and construction industry in India is among the highest in the world. Occupational hazards are a problem in the industries of unorganised sector. Industry-wise separate safety legislations including protection of health and hygiene are to be promulgated.

IMPACT OF THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY:

19. Trade unions in the interest of crores of working people in this sector have to take a leading role to protect this sector of industries from being devoured by the private monopolists and the multinationals. Demands for availability of capital from the nationalised banks at moderate interest rate, availability of electricity, raw materials at fair prices and reintroduction of the reservation policies and to stop infiltration of the monopolists and the multinationals in this sector etc should be raised by the trade unions for protection of these industries.

MOVEMENT AND ORGANISATION:

20. With the objective of mobilising the workers of unorganised sector of industries, the CITU formed an all India Coordination Committee of Unorganised Sector of Workers in the Calcutta Conference of CITU in 1991. Several movements in different states were launched with the demand of minimum wages since the last three years. The Kanpur General Council held in 1990 formulated the Charter of Demands for the unorganised workers. The all India Convention held at Panihati, Calcutta from Nov 1 to 3 1992 decided to organise an all India strike in pursuance of the 22- point charter of demands. The strike was observed on 14th July 1993. In some states like West Bengal, Karnataka, Tamilnadu and Andhra Pradesh the strike was highly successful. It was also successful in Punjab and some parts of Bihar, UP, Rajasthan and Haryana. Kerala however did not observe the strike.

21. After this, several other action programmes were launched. About 2 lakh signatures were taken and a Petition was submitted to the Lok Sabha Speaker in 1993.

22. Considering the vast number of workers in the unorganised sector we must accept that we have so far been able to reach a very small section of the workers. We have to penetrate into this vast sector in a planned way, as well as strengthen the organisations that have also been formed.

23. Considering the characteristic features of the unorganised industries and the self-employed working people, new activists should be deployed to organise the scattered groups of workers with the guidance of CITU.

24. To raise the consciousness of the trade union workers, workshops and trade union classes have to be organised. The CITU Centre has also undertaken the programme of organising workshop of the Hindi speaking trade union workers in the unorganised sector being sponsored by the ILO in the month of April.

OUTLOOK OF THE MOVEMENT:

25. It is necessary to adopt action programmes and make scientific review of the industries in the unorganised sector. A section of the working people of the unorganised sector is related with agriculture. The influence of feudal ideology in the rural sector is

powerful. Communal and divisive forces have fertile base in this sector due to the retrograde socio-economic conditions and lack of trade union consciousness in this sector. All these factors have to be looked into while pursuing the struggle for their specific demands and struggle against the new economic policy.

EFFORTS FOR UNITED STRUGGLE:

26. During this period, the CITU made efforts for developing united struggle of the unorganised workers belonging to various central trade unions. On Sept 23 1989, a big joint convention was held at Delhi alongwith AITUC, HMS, BMS, UTUC, TUCC and UTUC(LS). But the convention could not finalise a countrywide strike decision since other trade unions were not prepared for it. Before the 14th July strike also the CITU made efforts to mobilise other TUs. Although the efforts did not succeed at the central level, yet many local TUs joined the strike action in some states.

27. We should note that unity of the working people is the main source of strength. Meaningful resistance can only be achieved on developing the unity amongst all the trade unions and working people irrespective of affiliations, in grass-root level. It can be achieved by strengthening our own unions and carrying forward the united struggle. Sincere and sustained efforts to forge unity and to build up joint struggle have to be undertaken.

FURTHER ACTION PROGRAMMES:

28. Recently a meeting of the All India Coordination Committee was held at Chandigarh on Feb 3. It reviewed the progress made by the CITU in this sector which indicated that the membership has increased in almost all the states. It was also observed that there was a growing participation of unorganised sector workers in the three strikes including the Bharat Bandh on 9th Sept against the economic policies.

29. The meeting decided to launch the following action programmes in pursuance of 22-point Charter of Demands:

- i) Mobilisation for 5th April March to Parliament.
- ii) Holding of joint State Conventions, rallies etc in April and May.
- iii) All India Joint Convention at Delhi at the end of June.
- iv) To consider in consultation with other TUs possibility of

an all India strike action in this sector.

30. The Charter of Demands formulated by the Panihati Convention are as follows:

- (1) Withdraw the IMF dictated economic and industrial policy.
- (2) Stop infiltration of Indian and foreign monopolies in unorganised and small scale sector of industries.
- (3) Minimum Wages Act shall have to be included in the 9th Schedule of the Indian Constitution.
- (4) (i) Need-based wages as per decision of the 15th Indian Labour Conference to be declared, pending which minimum basic wage of 1050.00 at the price index of 800(base 1960) to be declared.
(ii) Rate of neutralisation be fixed per point Rs 2.0 for payment of DA.
- (5) 30% wage increase for all piece rate workers pending regularisation.
- (6) Appointment letter to be issued to all workers.
- (7) i) Proper housing facilities to be provided to such workers.
ii) HRA to be introduced compulsorily.
- (8) Application of PF schemes, ESI, Gratuity, Retrenchment benefits, Maternity benefits and other statutory benefits for the workers of this sector.
- (9) Medical and Educational facilities.
- (10) Genuine welfare measures.
- (11) Stringent punishment to employers for violating statutory provisions.
- (12) Special protection to women workers and child labour in the matter of job and working condition.
- (13) Equal remuneration to women workers as par with male workers and creche facilities at their working place.
- (14) All labour disputes to be settled within three months and full wages in case of delay.
- (15) Provision of eight hours work a day and 48 hours weekly

- work, statutory leave, holidays with wages for all the workers of the unorganised sector and payment of double overtime charges for extra work.
- (16) Abolition of contract labour in permanent and perennial nature of jobs and regularisation of contract labour.
 - (17) Effective employment oriented scheme shall have to be initiated by the Govt for providing regular jobs and a comprehensive welfare scheme for all the workers of unorganised sector.
 - (18) Constitution of District level Tripartite Committees to monitor the implementation of Minimum Wages Act.
 - (19) Raw materials should be supplied by the Central Govt to the small scale industries at a fare price.
 - (20) Sanction of bank loan within short time to the unorganised sector at a low rate of interest, and issuance of licence for Railway Hawkers, Street Hawkers, Railway Porters, etc.
 - (21) Right to work in the Constitution.
 - (22) All casual, daily rated, work charged and temporary workers to be made permanent after 240 days of work including breaks imposed by employers in permanent and perennial nature of jobs.

Commission on Right To Work

1. The demand for Right to Work as fundamental right is being raised by the trade union movement since long. But despite popularity of the demand among all sections of people, it is yet to become a forceful country-wide movement, According to Com. BTR "it is the most important fundamental right among all democratic rights. The other rights like freedom of speech and organisation, right to vote and form government of people's choice, precious in themselves become formal rights in absence of right to work."

2. In April 1990, the holding of All India Convention on 'Right to Work' at the initiative of Steel Workers Federation of India and various other federations and confederations at Durgapur Steel township had been a good beginning, which was also participated by various mass organisations of student, youth, women and professionals, besides a large cross section of organised trade union movement all over the country. The Convention, finalised an Approach Paper, as being the direction of a powerful mass movement from a platform consisting of not only the trade unions but also organisations of youth, students, women and other sections of people. Com. B T Ranadive, the founder President of CITU, in his note categorically stated: "The trade Unions, which represent the organised strength of working class must take the lead in organising the campaign of the unemployed workers, rural mass, youth, students and women and take steps to see that a permanent organisation of unemployed embracing all sections from workers to middle class is created to carry on the battle".

3. Following the Durgapur Convention, initiative was taken by CITU to develop a broadbased united movement on the issue. But unfortunately the continuity of the said initiative could not be maintained during the subsequent periods.

4. But whatever may be the case the relevance of the problem of unemployment and demand for right to work and the urgency for a forceful mass movement on the issue has never relegated to the background. Rather after introduction of the New Economic and Industrial policy by the Govt of India at the dictate of IMF and World Bank, the problem of joblessness and unemployment has been manifesting itself with renewed alarm embracing all sections of the common people. Now the popular demand for jobs to unemployed and right to work have been confronting a situation where the pace of unemployment generation gathered momentum as a result of news policies and the right of handful of employers to hire and fire is being legalised as almost a fundamental right instead of the right to work to the millions of unemployed.

5. Urban registered unemployment during the period of three years of New Economic policy already has risen from 34 millions to 38 millions. The Planning Commission itself estimated that it may reach a colossal figure of 94 million between 1996-2002. The trend of growth of unemployment during last couple of years shows that on an average this figure grows at the rate of 15% every year. There are no employment exchanges in rural areas but the estimated unemployment in the rural areas is by no way less than 70 million. Thus 110 million people in the country are without jobs.

6. Out of 870 million population of the country, the people at the age group of 18-58 years are roughly estimated to be around 400 millions. Thus nearly 25% of the workforce is not having any work as on today and the number has been increasing everyday. One very significant emerging feature is the high rate of youth unemployment which is a matter of serious concern for the society. According to the World Labour Report, in India young unemployed account for 80% of the chronic male unemployment in rural and urban areas. This problem is obviously acute in the case of educated youth who constitute 12% of the Labour force in India.

7. Added to above figure of the millions of unemployed hanging around in the labour market in search of job, are the thousands of workers who have been losing their jobs and/or are in the process of being thrown out of job owing to increasing sickness and closure of industrial units. 8. During the three year period of the new economic policy, the number of sick Industrial units have already increased from

3 lakhs to 4 lakhs affecting several lakhs of workers. Several public sector companies have been made deliberately sick by the central govt and the management appointed by them only. Fifty eight public sector units have been targeted as the first group of casualties by the central govt and are being referred to BIFR. And the policy of the govt is such that those units referred to BIFR would have to face liquidation. Because the World Bank has asked for increasing "the number of benches at BIFR and granting BIFR powers of liquidation," it is natural that the 'Goswami Committee has recommended for' setting up 'Fast-track' tribunals for quickening the 'winding-up' process in respect of the sick companies." More than Seven lakh workers in those units are to lose their jobs. Another 40 PSUs are waiting in the queue for the same consequence. Even the public sector units which are still being considered as healthy or at least non-sick are also slated to be pushed into the same phenomenon of sickness. BHEL is one such example which inspite of its proven capacity and capability to cater the power sector at competitive price is being made to starve for orders, and gradually turn towards sickness due to severe under utilisation of its capacity. Again due to rackless import of final products, many ancillaries which are vertically integrated with the mother firms are becoming victims of acute lower capacity utilisation and thus growth of unemployment.

9. According to latest figures, out of 106 cases of sick PSUs pending with BIFR, only 12 cases have been disposed by BIFR, and out of those disposed cases, 10 PSUs out of 12, have been awarded winding up order by BIFR.

10. According a study conducted by National Institute of Public Finance, and Policy (NIPFP), by 1993-94 there will be an extra unemployment of 12 million people from the organised sector only. This joblessness will be due to outright closure of industrial units. On sickness of industry, the said study assessed that, about 2.96 million people will be affected during the same period of which about 2 millions will be in the small scale and tiny sectors.

11. On the whole, the new economic policies of the govt of India militates against the very concept of job creation in the economy besides severely undermining the economic self reliance and destroying the industrial structure of the country. All the measures and steps taken so far as a part of the new policy prescription, are

going to kill much more jobs than they creat; closures of industrial units would be much more than new openings, and job creating potential of every new economic and industrial venture is going to be much less. 12. The govt of India's active initiative in bringing about a sea-change in labour legislations aimed at disarming the working class from their right to strike on the one hand and heavily arming the employers to hire and fire at their sweet will are all measures to ensure that the massive job killing operation unleashed by the new economic policy does not face any hindrance. Exit policy and the so called National Renewal Fund Scheme are being designed in that direction with the same purpose. The recommendation of Omkar Goswami Committee and the unscrupulous move of Govt of India to do away with section 25(N) and 25 (O) of Industrial Disputes Act are specifically designed to give the employers unfettered right to lay off and retrench at their whims and fancy. Thus the issue of 'right to work' and unemployment has now to be addressed in a situation when the employers' absolute right to hire and fire is being legalised.

13. Whatever be the target of the new economic policies, it does not aim at bringing about a change in the existing feudal land relation in rural India, which, remains to be the root cause of impoverishment of the vast rural population, and is also having adverse impact on the industrial economy as well. Hence condition of the rural unemployeds has become even worse, and besides the rural unemployment, incidence of disguised unemployment and/or under employment are increasing, which in turn is creating severe downward pressure on already low rural wage level. Increase in joblessness in urban industrial sector has also blocked the way for the rural unemployeds to find job in the cities, leaving them to utter destitution.

14. On the whole, the process of the so-called structural reform programme being pursued by the govt of India at the dictate of World Bank and IMF has already been creating havoc in employment front, and the already existing widespread unemployment in both urban and rural India has been assuming menacing proportion. And it would be naive to assume that the much propogated deregulation and delicensing operation in the Indian economy would be able to unleash such entrepreneurial initiative in the country as may be able

to reverse the trend of increasing unemployment. Rather the new policies signalled the other way. The new policies which were basically aimed at destruction of indigenous industrial base of the country and hand it over to multinational capital in the process of so called globalisation would drastically reduce whatever job potential created during post independence period. Study report has revealed that in the era of liberalisation the growth rate of employment declined sharply in the public sector to 2.7 per cent per annum and in the private sector it just became negative.

15. "It is obligatory therefore for the entire working class, employed and unemployed, and for the destitute rural masses to join hands and throw the strength of millions in the struggle for right to work"-as Com. BTR pointed out in his last piece of writing sent to Durgapur Convention on Right to Work. "The trade unions which represent the organised strength of the working class must take lead in organising the campaign of the unemployed workers, rural masses, youth, students and women," Com. BTR reiterated in this context.

16. The eradication of unemployment is related to creation of such condition in the society and economy as would do away with class exploitation of all kinds. Without radical land reform and uplifting the vast number of impoverished rural masses, no one can even think about cognizable reduction of the evergrowing unemployment level in the country. All these involve the basic change in country's economic structure.

17. But understanding the need for a change in basic economic structure is not enough, unless actions are not purposefully designed and directed towards such understanding, and the working class plays its destined role in organising such actions.

18. Our task is already defined. To reiterate Com. BTR again, while propagating for the right to work, the entire working class movement must demand adequate changes in the present economic system, in property relations and also an overhauling of agrarian property relation through land reforms, without which the requisite sanction for right to work cannot be created. At the same time forceful agitation mobilising all sections of common people directly and indirectly affected by the menacing unemployment problem have to be developed demanding immediate measures to increase number of jobs, to curtail power of employers to hire and fire, introduction of

suitable schemes for employment generation and unemployment relief to those who are unable to secure work.

19. The awareness for long term measures i.e. a need for basic change in the economic structure etc. have to be created alongwith heightening the agitation for immediate measures, and working class must take the lead in organising such agitation alongwith the unemployed.

20. It has to be admitted that the trade union movement is yet to build up the consciousness regarding its urgent task of taking up the cause of unemployment at the factory level and hence the slogan for right to work and against unemployment still remains to be a formal slogan in our movement.

21. It also cannot be denied that the major part of trade union movement is still dominated by factory level consciousness, which is also standing in the way of developing a strong, wide and effective trade union action in support and defence of the workers of the sick industrial units threatened with immediate joblessness. The problem is cited to exemplify the level of consciousness and awareness in the trade union movement, the upliftment of which is an essential prerequisite for the working class to play its destined role in organising and leading the struggle of common masses.

22. Particularly in the new situation the struggle for right to work and against unemployment is organically linked with the trade union struggle against retrenchment and closures. In the background of new policies which are destined to kill thousands of jobs besides pruning job potential of the economy to a massive extent, a powerful movement of all sections of people against such job killing operation demanding productive employment for the unemployed, would build up natural support base for the workers' struggles in the factories, mines and offices for security of jobs, besides strengthening the resistance struggle against those disastrous policies.

23. On the other hand, the failure of the working class to take up the cause of unemployed and involve mass of unemployed in the struggle against govt policy, would make them easy prey to disruptive tactics of the ruling class to be utilised as tools against the organised trade union movement. Already a campaign

was afoot on the part of the ruling classes that the organised trade

union movement is using their strength at narrow selfish end without caring for other downtrodden in the society, and the design is to isolate the trade union movement from the mass of the people.

24. The issue of 'right to work' and unemployment happens to be the focal point of the struggle against exploitation and struggle on this issue would also be directed against the policy of recolonisation of Indian economy designed by World Bank/IMF. And struggle on the issue of Right to Work would be able to attract all sections of common people right from the rural poor to urban middle class, students, youth, women, peasantry all in the same platform. Hence a powerful movement of Right to Work embracing all sections of people can become a most important component of the struggle against new policies, which, if nourished properly by the working class movement can create condition for raising our protest movement to the level of sustained resistance struggle with the active involvement of all sections of common people.

25. Our task stands defined. To prepare the trade union movement for being able to organise and lead the movement. Already trade union movement has made notable efforts to develop a broadbased platform of all mass organisations embracing students, youth, women, professionals, peasants etc. and observed Bharath Bandh on 9th September '93 on a charter of demands including the right to work. What is required is to further consolidate the united platform and percolate similar unity at the grassroots level between the trade union movement and other mass organisations.

26. The trade unions at the factory level has to take initiative to bring together mass organisations of all section of people in the locality to carry on intensive campaign on the issue of right to work. Special efforts should be made to draw the students and youth organisations representing most vibrant section of the society to activate in this joint struggle. Trade unions should also make sincere efforts to build up joint struggles with the peasantry, agricultural workers and rural unemployed in the adjoining village areas, on the issue of right to work and land reforms. Consolidation and activation of the joint activities with the other mass organisations of

students, youth, and others on the issue of unemployment and right to work would help in creating awareness within the mass of the workers as well as among the people on the urgent need of united struggle against govt policies and would go a long way in changing the complexion of the entire movement.

27. At the apex level also the trade union movement has to make serious efforts to develop a permanent platform of struggle on unemployment covering all unemployed from workers to new entrants in the labour market in the process of countrywide campaign against unemployment and also against the policies which have been further aggravating the situation. Efforts should also be made to unleash intensive countrywide movement of all unemployed - both joblosers and fresh-job seekers on the issue of Right to Work demanding reversal of job-killing policies and concrete economic measures for ensuring jobs for all. The programme of District wise/State wise rallies of students, youth and job losers culminating into central rally of unemployed may be planned as a beginning.

28. To reiterate again, the unemployed represent almost 25% of the workforce of the country and majority of them are still unorganised. If the number of joblosers and prospective joblosers are added to it, the whole problem gets a much bigger dimension. Trade Union movement has to find ways and means to reach this vast unorganised force of unemployed to organise them into struggle for right to work and against the policies generating unemployment. This would unleash a tremendous strength in the struggle against exploitation and the design for recolonisation of Indian economy in a big way. And this may be possible if the working class movement can develop an effective and sustained movement drawing other sections of people into it on the issue of right to work and increasing joblessness, thereby establishing its credential as the leading force of the democratic movement of the whole people.

29. How effectively we can fulfil this task has to be decided by us. This paper is for initiating the discussion in this commission on right to work to enable this 8th conference of CITU to take a view on the most vital agenda for action of the day.

30. As situation stands today, holding of another national convention of trade unions alongwith other mass organisation can be thought of, wherefrom concrete programme of nationwide campaign and agitation may be chalked out.

31. Campaigns and agitations may be organised at different levels. Districtwise conventions, rallies, dharnas before the district administrations may be organised in a phased manner which may culminate into rallies/dharnas at state capitals.

32. Industrial townships/centres may be specially targetted to mount joint agitation of the workers and the unemployed on the question of right to work. Specially in the areas where workers' job security have already been put under threat due to sickness, closure and new policies, efforts should be made to have joint programme of campaign by workers and students/youth and other organisations highlighting both the issues of unemployment and sickness of industries arising out of the same govt policies. We may also think about holding separate conventions of the joblosers and job seekers together centering round different industrial centres to give the campaign programme a different dimension.

33. After a phased campaign programme at district, state and also industry levels, a central rally of all mass organisations in the national capital on the issue of right to work and unemployment may also be planned.

34. The above are certain ideas about the programme that may be concretised by the commission through deliberation for placement before the conference for finalisation.

35. Further, the Commission may also give serious thought over the idea of developing an organisation and/or platform of the unemployed, embracing both the job seekers and joblosers, as noted by Comrade BTR in his last piece of writing on right to work, to address the issue of unemployment in the present day situation.

Commission on Communalism

1. The Seventh Conference of CITU, as we may usefully recall, expressed "deep concern at the unprecedented communal violence that engulfed the country" in the preceding months. The resolution adopted in the Conference noted that never before, since independence, such sweep and intensity of communal passion and violence was witnessed in the country. The resolution particularly noted the serious threat to the working class unity in the wake of the riots which took place in major industrial centres. It further pointed to the threat to national unity and integrity and secular character of the state.

2. The resolution further noted that the unprecedented communal violence was the result of the effort made by the combine known as Sangh Parivar to wake up communal feelings under the wave of Hindutva in the minds of the majority community with a view to reaching the seat of power. The resolution also pointed out that the activities of these communal forces were helping to create a breeding ground for the imperialists to destabilise the country.

3. The Conference also deplored that the Cong(I) was continuing its opportunistic game by compromising with the communal forces.

4. Finally, the resolution declared that effective participation of the working class and the trade unions is the essential condition for the success of sustained struggle against communalism and for the safeguard of the unity and integrity of the country and its secular character.

5. A call was given to the working class and trade unions to directly intervene, where the situation demands, and help restore communal harmony.

6. There has been little change in the scenario during the three years since our last conference. The RSS-BJP-VHP combine succeeded in gaining political mileage from their campaign, increased their strength in parliament and captured power in four states in the Hindi belt. Encouraged by their achievement they launched fresh spate of campaign, engineered fresh violence and perpetrated worst communal crime of recent history by demolishing Babri Masjid in a fascist way which has been followed by further communal holocaust in different parts of the country.

7. Demolition of the Babri Masjid was not due to any sudden outburst of communal passion but was the culmination of a long process of campaign of Hindutva, flouting all legal and democratic basis and the Constitution of the country. It was also a practical demonstration of the compromise with and appeasement of the communal forces by the Cong(I) government at the Centre.

8. It is only natural that the Muslim fundamentalists will take the fullest possible advantage of this situation and they have been doing their job.

9. In the recent elections to State Assemblies the Sangh Parivar has sustained political losses. But it cannot be said that there has really been any substantial erosion of psychic base of majority communalism created and capitalised by the RSS- BJP-VHP combine. As the General Secretary has put it in his report: "The communal ideology is deep rooted in the minds of a section of the people. The RSS is determined to carry forward its design....."

Role played by Trade Unions(General)

10. The General Secretary has in his Report also referred to the role played by trade unions, by the working class during the past years in facing the communal challenge. The report draws our attention to an important fact: "It is a matter for concern to us that a section of the working class has fallen victim to their(RSS-BJP-VHP) propaganda adversely affecting the unity of our class.

11. Regarding the activities of the trade unions the report says, "Though the trade union movement in India has stood firmly against

communal and divisive forces still more could have been done to meet the challenging situation." As example, it has cited the case of the call given by the Rastriya Ekta Abhiyan for signature campaign which was an important occasion to approach broader masses in the campaign against communalism. However, we did not carry forward the task properly, since we collected less signature than our membership. When the INTUC supported the call it was a great opportunity to approach larger section of the people but we did not utilise it to the fullest extent. Our role was therefore symbolic, considering the magnitude of the problem posed by the communal forces."

12. These self-critical analysis in the report on the performance of trade union movement in fighting against communal danger is highly justified because the object of our exercise in the commission is to find ways and means to ensure most effective participation of the working class in the sustained struggle against communalism.

13. Along with these remarks there is another statement which is extremely relevant to our discussion: "It is the working class and the democratic movement which alone can create confidence amongst the minorities because they are the real secular forces in the country." The special class position of the working class giving it potentially the most secular character is an important point to take note of during discussion of trade unions role in fight against communalism.

Why Short Comings:

14. a) There may be several reasons for the shortcomings. The important reason probably is the lack of adequate realisation about the nature of communalism, its genesis and the danger. It is just not communal riots between two groups, religious fanatics of Hindus and Muslims. The genesis is at the campaign of Hindutva being unleashed in a systematic manner since long by the RSS, etc, which of late is being carried forward in an aggressive manner with a hate campaign against the minority community by the Sangh Parivar. The objective is to distort the concept

- of secularism and impose a Hindu Rashtra on the people.
- b) The role of imperialism in instigating and boosting these divisive forces also needs to be highlighted.
 - c) Another reason is inadequate realisation about the class position of the working class which makes it potentially the firmest secular force.

15. These statements however requires qualification. Notwithstanding these inadequacies, a lot of our comrades have seriously fought against communal forces in various forms, many of them having attained martyrdom in the course of fighting in different places. These examples will ever inspire our comrades everywhere in the struggle against communal forces. But nevertheless these are local struggles, and not the all out offensive of the working class against this scourge.

16. And finally to add another qualification, what goes without saying is that the limited strength of CITU is a serious constraint on our more effective role in this struggle.

Specific Nature of Our Local Role

17. Our participation in anti-communal activities at local level generally takes place in three different situations.

- i) When tension has already been created, violence may break out any moment.
- ii) When violence has already broken out, i.e. during the course of the riots.
- iii). After the riot has been brought under control, generally through administrative action.

18. In the first situation campaign against riot for maintenance of peace is undertaken in various forms such as peace meetings, processions etc with the participation of both communities, group meetings, propaganda squads, etc. Some times it is possible to raise volunteers for round the clock vigil so that miscreants do not get chance spark the fire of riot. Intervention at this stage is extremely important. In many cases throughout the country outburst of communal violence and consequent loss of life and property have

been averted.

19. Intervention during the course of the riot is relatively rare. There are some difficulties inherent in such a situation arising out of administrative steps like curfew, etc

20. Intervention after riot has been brought to control is also very important. Activity in this situation quickens the pace of normalisation, helps preventing repetition etc. Relief and rehabilitation is an important aspect of these phases of work.

At All India Level:

21. At all India level only campaigns were organised through convention, etc. The CITU took initiative to unite all major trade union centres for joint campaign throughout the country. In some places lower level conventions were also held. But no permanent functioning forum could be set up and sustained campaign carried on. Usually, these activities also took place in response to heightened tension created by communal elements. Such programmes too have perceptible favourable impact on the situation..

The Basic of Questions

22. Important though these forms of anti-communal activities are, they cannot in themselves make any remarkable dent into the communal problem in the country. Much more is necessary.

23. At the outset it should be noted that our struggle is against communalism, and not against religion. Care therefore must be taken not to hurt genuine religious feelings of the people while fighting communalism. The Sangh Parivar and other fundamentalist forces utilise the genuine religious sentiments of the people for political purpose and channelise them to create hatred against other communities. They further distort history and the concept of secularism to fan up communal passion in the name of religion. They even distort the role of popular heroes like Shivaji to flare up communal passion. Religion and history are thus diverted and distorted to promote pseudo-secularism and communalism. On the surface the situation may look normal. But due to such sustained and

planned communal and pseudo-secular propaganda equating Indian Nation with the majority Hindu Nation, seeds of potential communalism lay spread under the surface, awaiting favourable conditions for germination as communal hatred and finally outburst as communal riots.

24. It is very important to intervene when the outburst of violence is about to take place or when it has already taken place. But that does not take us far towards wiping out the communal virus. This has to be the immediate task. Therefore our basic strategy for the long-term objective of wiping out communal virus should be sustained political and ideological ideological campaign in all possible forms like trade union education, cultural programmes, etc.

25. This basic task is not easy to accomplish. The primary communal consciousness has its roots in the social condition and the corresponding ideology that is prevailing. It has its roots in history and tradition. In the Indian context, the remnants of feudalism and persistence of feudal-land relations and obscurantist ideas and customs embracing the major section of Indian population provide fertile ground for communalism to thrive. Briefly speaking, ideological education and propaganda will gradually have more impact if such programme is linked with the concept of class struggle class struggle. The broadening of the base of struggle for land reform against feudal land- relation, alongwith the struggle of urban working class can play a vital role in weakening communal forces and raising the level of consciousness against communalism as well. Total eradication is possible only when social conditions are changed. For this change however class and democratic unity is essential with all secular and patriotic forces. So the objective of trade unions will be to contain communalism to the maximum possible extent to develop class and democratic unity to its highest attainable point.

26. In some developed states some ideological activity may have possibly been carried out. But it has to be centrally organised. Effective printed materials have to be produced, arrangement have to be made for training cadres, cultural programmes have to be extensively utilised. Central and state organs should be intensively

used. It has to be remembered that anti-communal work is all time work and not work to be done only when communal tension is created or riots break out.

Special Role of Working Class

27. In the context of our present discussion the question of special role of the working class is important. It will be worthwhile to quote a passage on the subject from an article written by Com.BTR. "The Working Class and its unity has a special responsibility in saving the country's unity. It is the experience of history that the only class, which by its unity and consciousness, can save the unity of a newly liberated country, is the working class. This is so because, in all newly liberated and backward countries complete national unification in thought and deed is not fully achieved. The economic backwardness of these countries maintain old parochial, communal and religious consciousness and separatism and after the forcible exit of imperialism and foreign domination, these inner differences often take precedence over national unity. The working class living in modern conditions, united in thousands in the factory can easily overcome the sense of religious, communal considerations, and set an example. That is why in all newly liberated countries either the working class plays this role or the country gets ruined---a ready prey to imperialist domination. The working class of India has to play this role of defending popular and national unity overcoming religious and communal differences. If sections of the working class themselves become affected by communal virus, then the working class is doomed. Unfortunately, in India the workers themselves are often swayed or neutralised by religious and communal considerations and stand paralysed before the attack of disruptive forces when they should be in the streets to fight them back. This often happens in communal or linguistic riots where the linguistic or communal majority sits silent and does not fight those who attack its class brothers. The working class and the trade union movement must fight against this paralysis and train itself to a secular class army out to defend its unity and the unity of the people. It must realise that the

unity forged by it in its prolonged battles can be reduced to nothing if it fails to act as a class force and influence the people.

Champion the Cause of Minorities

28. In this connection the trade unions must quickly overcome some of their weaknesses in functioning which hamper the process of class unity. The working class and the trade union membership is composed of workers from all castes and religions. The workers coming from oppressed castes and minority community have grievances in addition to the grievances common to all workers. Sometimes these are of greater importance to them in their daily life than the common trade union demands. They do not feel enthusiastic about the common movement if the trade unions do not champion their special demands. This is one of the reasons for low trade union membership from these sections. The trade unions must remove this weakness and ventilate the special grievances of these sections.

29. Consolidation and developing of working class unity is the starting point for struggle against communalism.

30. To sum up, these are the components of the strategy:

- a) To concentrate on political, ideological education campaign with special emphasis on ideological aspect in all possible forms. The work has to be centrally initiated but committees at all levels will have to be evolved. Centre will have to take special responsibility of printed materials and training of cadres, etc.
- b) This campaign has to be properly linked with class struggle.
- c) This campaign has to be planned as a part of day to day trade union activity and not put off till communal tension has arisen or violence broken out. Weapon of culture should be extensively used.
- d) Ensure more and more intervention of the three types mentioned above or in any other form. The question of intervention during riots should be decided according to local conditions. But in such situation capacity for mas-

sive mobilisation is most essential.

- e) Carry forward the efforts the CITU has been making over the years for uniting other trade unions as well as organisations of all sections democratic, secular and patriotic populations and individuals in broadbased unity at local and all India level.

Commission on Social Security Schemes In India

1. As a result of the struggles conducted by the trade unions in various countries the governments of several capitalist countries had to take some social security measures and different labour laws were enacted at different stages of the development of the industries. The workers had to fight for these statutory benefits at every stage and ensure their implementation.

In the developed capitalist countries, some importance was given to the social security measures for workers. But today, in the face of intense economic crisis, the ruling classes have started offensive of reducing the social security measures.

2. After the formation of ILO, the first convention on social security was adopted in 1921. Thereafter many conventions have been adopted and recommendations have been made by ILO for different industries and professions. Notable among these is the Convention No.69 adopted at the 26th Conference of the ILO held in Philadelphia in 1944. In this convention some recommendations were made regarding sickness, maternity, physical disability, old age, unemployment, death benefits for the family of the workers.

The Constitution of India was adopted in 1950 after the independence. The framers of the Constitution declared Indian Union as a welfare State (Art.38). Some of the provisions enshrined in the Constitution were:

- a) Securing the right to work, to education, and public assistance in cases of employment, old age, sickness,

disablement and in other cases of undeserved want (Art.42).

- b) Securing by suitable legislation or economic organization or in any other way to all workers agricultural, industrial or otherwise, work, a living wage, conditions of work ensuring a decent standard of life and full enjoyment of leisure and social and cultural opportunities (Art.43).

3. Even after 47 years of independence, these provisions have remained a pious wish. Although a section of the workers in the organized industries have realized some benefits due to pressure of the trade union movement, vast majority of the workers in the unorganized sector who have no fixed income and who live below the poverty line, are having no social security scheme - but hunger, poverty and unemployment. They are denied even the primary medical facilities.

4. Even where social security legislations have been enacted for workers in the organized sector, their scope, applicability and benefits are quite limited.

5. The social security legislations enacted at different periods are mentioned below:

1. Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923.
2. Employees State Insurance Act, 1948.
3. Employees Provident Fund and Misc.Provisions Act, 1952.
4. Maternity Benefit Act, 1961.
5. Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT

6. Barring some minor amendments from time to time, the main structure of this legislation has remained the same since the days of British rule. In this Act, provisions have been made for payment of compensation to workers for injury or death due to accident while at work. Besides, there is also provision for payment of compensation for occupational disease. The rates of compensation fixed for permanent or temporary disablement or death have remained almost

unaltered ever since the enactment of this Act. Another major defect is that casual and clerical employees have been denied even these meagre benefits under the Act.

7. Although the Act provides for determination of the quantum of compensation on the basis of the earnings of the worker, the actual compensation is calculated on the basis of a ceiling of income of Rs.1000/-, irrespective of whatever the actual earning of the worker .

8. If a worker is injured while at work, it is not compulsory for the employer to provide medical treatment for accident. On the other hand, if the employer has extended any monetary assistance to the worker during the period of disablement, after determination of the rate of compensation the employer may deduct it from the amount of compensation payable to the workman.

MATERNITY BENEFIT ACT

9. During the British regime, some Provisional Governments enacted some legislations regarding Maternity Benefit. The Central Govt passed the Maternity Benefit Act only in 1961 which was applicable to the whole of India. It applies to every establishment being a factory, mine and plantation including any such establishment belonging to the Government. In this Act, the rates of maternity benefit have been fixed at average daily wages for the period of her actual absence for six weeks immediately preceding the day of delivery and six weeks following the day of delivery. It may be noted that the Workmen's Compensation Act and Maternity Benefit Act are not applicable to those enjoying ESI benefits.

EMPLOYEES STATE INSURANCE ACT

10. This legislation was enacted in 1948 but it was given effect only in 1952. At first, it was implemented in Kanpur and Delhi on an experimental basis. Later on, it was gradually extended to 618 centres of different States and Union Territories.

11. All workers and employees drawing salary upto Rs.3000 per month are covered by this Act. Factories and establishments belonging to or under the control of the Govt, whose employees are otherwise in receipt of benefits substantially similar or superior to benefits provided under this Act, are exempted.

The ESI Scheme prepared under this Act provides for the following benefits for the workers and their family:

- i) Temporary and permanent Disablement Benefit.
- ii) Dependent Benefit in case of death of worker due to accident.
- iii) Rehabilitation Benefit.
- iv) Funeral Benefit
- v) Maternity Benefit
- vi) Sickness Benefit

MEDICAL TREATMENT provides for:

- a) Outdoor and Indoor treatment
- b) Treatment by Specialists
- c) Maternity
- d) Supply of drugs and medicines, X-Ray, ECG and other clinical pathological tests free of charges for workers and their family.
- e) Ambulance Service.
- f) Vaccination and Family Planning.

12. It may be mentioned that the accident benefits provided under the ESI Scheme are comparatively much better than those provided under the Workmen's Compensation Act. Besides this, a retired worker and his spouse is also entitled to Medical facilities on payment of Rs.120/- per annum.

For the administration of the Scheme, the workers have to pay 1.5% of their earnings and the employers have to pay 4% of workers earnings. The State Govt bears 1/8th share of the Medical Expenses.

13. Although the administration of the Medical Scheme is mainly the responsibility of the State Government, the ESI Corporation determines the ceiling of Medical Expenses. It is interesting to note that the contribution for the ESI Scheme are paid by the workers and the employers and the State Govt also bears share of the expenses. But the Central Govt which controls the entire scheme, does not contribute a single paisa for the scheme. As a result of the centralization of powers in the hands of ESI Corporation and its overall control over expenses, the Corporation have amassed a reserve fund to the tune of 1651.56 crores.

14. Apparently the scheme has some good features, but the way it is being administered and due to chaotic conditions prevailing in

the Medical arrangements in different hospitals the workers have to face harassments in various ways. As a result, the workers are very much disgusted with the scheme.

15. Incidentally it may also be mentioned that under the Factories Act a worker is entitled to Annual leave with wages @ 1 day for every 20 days work provided he has actually worked for 240 days in a calendar year. If a worker remains absent from work due to employment injury or sickness, he will not be entitled to any leave for the period he remains absent.

EMPLOYEES PROVIDENT FUND AND MISC PROVISIONS ACT

16. This Act is applicable to (a) every factory engaged in any specified industry employing 20 or more workers, and (b) any other establishment employing 20 or more workers or the Class of establishments which the Central Govt may notify.

Workers and employees drawing a salary upto Rs.3500/- are covered by this Act. The ESI Act is applicable to specified areas, whereas this Act is applicable in specified industries.

17. When this Act was first introduced, the rate of P F contributions by both employer and employee was 6.1/4%. Initially it was introduced in 6 industries, but now it has been extended to 174 industries and class of establishments. The rate of contribution has also been raised from 6.1/4% to 8.33% and now it has been raised to 10% in respect of 98 industries employing 50 or more workers. At the same time, the enhanced rate of 10% is not applicable in respect of factories and establishments which are declared sick under the SICA.

18. It is also to be noted that Govt of India excluded Jute and Cotton Textile industry from implementation of enhanced rate of contribution. The other schemes under the Act are as follows:

1. Family Pension Scheme
2. Life Assurance Benefit
3. Retirement-cum-withdrawal Benefit.
4. Deposit Link Insurance
5. Death Relief Fund.

19. The family Pension Fund is constituted with 1.1/6 per cent of

the P F contributions of both employers and employees and 1.1/6 per cent payable by the Central Government. Workers are not required to contribute to the ESI Fund. Employers have to contribute 0.5% of the workers wages and the Central GOvt has to contribute half of the employers share. The Family Pension Fund was constituted in 1971. At that time the CITU very justifiably opposed it on the ground that a worker on his retirement or death will receive a much lesser amount than what he has contributed to the Family Pension Fund by deduction from his P F contributions. Those who were members of Provident Fund before the enforcement of this Scheme of 1971, were given an option. But for those who became members of the Scheme after 1971, the Scheme was made compulsory. It is now proved beyond doubt how justified was the CITU's opposition to the Scheme. The amount of money accumulated in this Fund is to the tune of Rs.5051.80 crores upto 1992 and this has been possible by depriving the workers of their just dues.

21. Recently, the Central Govt has proposed to transfer the entire contribution payable by the employers to the Pension Fund on the plea of paying Old Age Pension and Family Pension at enhanced rate. On the other hand, the Govt of India cleverly withdrew the provision of their contribution to the Family Pension Fund. The CITU opposed the proposed Scheme and the workers in general raised their voice of protest against this Scheme. As a result, the Central Govt has been forced to b back track, although they have not withdrawn the proposal. There is also separate Provident Fund Scheme for workers of Coal industry and Seamen. The rate of contribution for coal workers is 10% and for seamen 10.5%.

22. In this connection, it may be noted that consequent upon the pressure of trade union movement in public sector, agreements/understanding could be concluded in a number of PSUs on pension as a third retirement benefit. In the last wage settlement in coal, steel and few other industries, it was agreed to draw a pension scheme on the basis of pension fund constituted by contribution of workers @ 2% of wages and a matching contribution by the management. In many such industries deduction @ 2% had already

been effected. But owing to the Central Govt's negative approach, the concerned PSU managements have not yet paid the contribution to pension fund and such pension scheme has not been finalised and implemented.

TERMINAL BENEFITS

23. In our country workers cannot even dream of unemployment benefit. Pressurised by the workers united movement, the Govt of India has been forced to amend the Industrial Dispute Act conceding some demands to the workers regarding benefits for retrenchment, lay-off and closures. L It provides for lay-off compensation @ 15 days wages for each completed year of service and one month's notice or notice pay.

PAYMENT OF GRATUITY ACT

24. Under the Payment of Gratuity Act, a worker is entitled to 15 days wages for each completed year of service as gratuity, subject to a ceiling of Rs. 1 lakh, if he has been retrenched, retired or resigned after completion of minimum 5 years service.

This Act applies to (a) every factory, mine, oil field, plantation, port and Railway establishment and (b) every establishment and shop employing 10 or more workers. Persons getting wages/salary upto Rs.3500/- p. m are covered by this Act.

The existing labour laws, specially the P F Act and the Gratuity Act, do not contain any provision for old age Pension. There is also no scheme for Unemployment Insurance or Wage Guarantee.

25. According to Labour Statistics, 1993 published by the Govt of India, employments in different sectors in 1990 are as follows:

Factories	81.71	lakhs
Mines	7.18	"
Plantation	10.99	"
Shops & Establish-ments	41.53	"
Total	141.41	"

26. From the same source we find that, in 1992 the number of PF subscribers was 166.15 lakh and in the same year the number of Insured Persons under the ESI Scheme was 61.09 lakh and total number of beneficiaries i e family members was 2 crore. In 1990, in the factories total no of claims submitted under the Maternity Benefit Act was 1321 of which 1087 claims were settled and in the Plantations the number of claims was 23,503 of which only 19,478 persons received their claims.

27. The above statistics will amply demonstrate how much benefit workers and employees receive under the Social Security Schemes.

It is true that some workers and their family members get some benefits under the ESI Scheme, but in Coal Mines and Plantations the workers have hardly get any such benefit for medical treatment.

28. Under the Plantation Labour Act, the responsibility of Medical treatment for workers and their families has been left to the sweet will of the employers. Some standards for medical treatment have been set in the Rules but in reality the standards fixed are not observed by the employers, let alone make arrangement for modern medical treatment. Since this is left to the sweet will of the employers and the employers consider this to be unproductive expenditure, they are not prepared to spend anything on this account. Infra-structural disadvantages are also there.

PROBLEMS OF IMPLEMENTATION

29. Whatever little benefits are there, it should be ensured that the benefits reach to the workers and employees in appropriate time. But, various regulations, restrictions and impediments in the way of getting these benefits and red-tapism of the bureaucracy are big hurdles. Specially in the case of ESI and PF, the vicious circle of corruption which has grown among a section of officers and employees makes it difficult for workers to get the due benefits. Moreover, they have to face a lot of difficulty and harassments in the process. Added to this is the corrupt practice of a class of employers, who deduct contributions from the workers wages, but do not deposit either their own share or the workers contributions with the ESI and

PF authorities. Upto 1992, the default in ESI contributions by the employers is Rs.161.14 crores and in PF default amounts to Rs.109.14 crores. As a result, thousands of workers are not getting any benefit. The present provisions of law are not strong enough to take a deterrent action against these corrupt employers.

30. Under the Gratuity Act also, the workers have to depend on the sweet will of employer. In most cases, the employees are unwilling to pay gratuity. One has to wait a long time after retirement to get this benefit. Although the Act provides for Gratuity Insurance Fund, this provision has not yet been given effect to.

31. It is also found that employers often keep their factories under lock out for years together just to deprive the workers of their gratuity and retrenchment compensation. It is also a fact that many workers and their families do not know as to what benefits they are entitled to under the law. They do not know how to prefer a claim. The organized trade union movement has an important role to play in ensuring proper implementation of these laws.

32. We must also consider another factor. The ESI and PF schemes are at present over centralized and these should be decentralized. Since labour is a concurrent subject, the State Govts must have the major roles in their implementation. However, one cannot definitely say that matters will improve if these are left to the administration of the State Govts for it will depend much on the class outlook of the concerned State Govt. Hence what more is needed is to associate representatives of Trade Unions with administration of these Schemes and give them ample powers for this purpose.

33. The menacing Exit Policy should not also escape our attention. There was no concealing of the fact by the policy makers that consequent to the implementation of new Industrial Policy and Economic Policy, more and more factories will be closed and few lakhs of workers will be jobless. To provide so-called "Social Safety Net" to the victims the World Bank has given 500 million dollars to the Govt of India to set up N R F. While we are to build up a strong and effective resistance to these policies, it is also imperative to build up a campaign for improved social security schemes. This campaign

should be on the following demands:

- i) Existing Acts on Social security should be amended to cover all sections of the working people and the present rates of benefits should be revised upwards without any restrictions.
- ii) Old Age pension schemes to be introduced.
- iii) Unemployment Benefit Scheme to be introduced.
- iv) For the unorganized sector workers, a scheme of medical facilities to be introduced. There should be no contribution from the workers.
- v) Plantation, coal and mining workers be covered by separate medical benefit schemes. There should be no contribution by the workers.
- vi) -No worker should be deprived of any benefit of ESI and PF scheme for non-payment of contribution by the employer.
- vii) The ESI scheme should be funded by the government of India also, and the workers should not be made to contribute.
- viii) IPC and ESI and PF Acts be so amended that penal action u/s 406/409 can also be taken against the defaulting employers for non-payment of employers share also.
- ix) The present procedures of getting the benefits should be simplified and red-tapism and bureaucratic regulatory control be eliminated by changing the Rules and Regulations.
- x) The workers' representatives be associated with the administration of the social security schemes with more powers.

Commission on Working Women

1. The All India Coordination Committee of Working Women(CITU) was formed at the all India convention of Working women at Madras in April 9-10, 1979. The objective of the Committee was given by Com.B T Ranadive in his presidential address: "The CITU had to take the decision to call a special conference because it was found that the grievances of working women were unattended. The Govt was indifferent, the employers were hostile, and even the trade unions were not very enthusiastic about their demands." Secondly, it was observed that women, even in industries and occupations where they constituted a sizeable section, were hardly represented in the leading bodies of the unions. These disabilities, injustice towards working women, which is a part of the total working class have to be fought by the trade unions.

2. The Indian trade union movement including CITU suffers from the effects of the present bourgeois-landlord society. The struggle to emancipate the working class including women has to be fought by the trade unions. In all the capitalist countries, including ours working women and women in general are particularly subjected to ruthless exploitation and social oppression and face discrimination, inequality, unequal pay, etc. After the formation of the AICCCWW at the Centre, coordination committees at the state level and sub committees at the union level in many states and in the unions and federations, there is some improvement in taking up the specific problems of working women by the unions.

3. But considering the seriousness of the situation, we cannot remain satisfied with the results achieved during the years. The Report on the Organisation states on Page 33-34, "Despite repeated

criticism in the CITU conferences and all India meetings, the working women's front shows utter callousness on the part of our leaders, unions and various committees. Since 1979, when we held our 1st All India Convention of Working Women, it has almost become a ritual to criticise our neglect in this regard and comrades put up with the criticism without making serious improvement in our approach towards working women." It has been stated in the Report that Committees have been formed, but not yet met, the committees do not keep the work among working women on their agenda. The major reason is the lack of seriousness among our unions to develop work among working women.

4. The Report has quoted Com BTR what he said in the Bombay CITU Conference in 1987. "The major part of CITU committees either ignored the problems or made some cosmetic changes in their practices....The problem of working women is a part of the struggle of the working class against the capitalist society, and not just a question which concern women alone...what is the basis of this incorrect attitude. It is nothing but underestimation of women and their work..." The Report further pointed out that Com.BTR's criticism is still valid today and comrades should correct their attitude.

5. What are the problems facing working women? There are many legislations, concerning working women like Equal Remuneration Act, Maternity Benefit Act, Factory Act, Plantation Labour Act, Beedi and Cigar Act, etc, under which there is provision of creche. But there are lacunae in the legislations, and the provisions are not implemented also. Equal remuneration is not available in many industries, particularly in the unorganised sector, and even in organised sector too. Secondly there is no security of jobs. In most of the factories where women are employed, they are retrenched first. The new economic policies will affect women working in the offices and industries. According to the 1991 census, total work force in the country is 314.9 million, 1/3 of the total, i.e. 91.4 million are working women. This force, of which many have been thrown out in the unorganised industries, is the part of the working class. Without their participation, and their unionisation, the trade union movement will remain weak, and working class unity remain incomplete.

6. Unless the CITU takes note of this matter no further progress is possible. Then there are a number of issues of discrimination, sexual harassment, inequality, promotion, transfer, etc which the CITU and AICCWW have to deal with, with the concerned authorities. But the issues are bypassed. Unless the issues of working women are taken up as one of the primary issues of the unions, the working women will remain aloof and the unions will remain male dominated organisations. This situation is also applicable to the women in the unorganised sector.

7. The trade unions in general treat the above mentioned issues as "women's issues" and to be dealt with by women only. This wrong understanding alienates the women workers from the trade union movement and class struggle and gives advantage to the feminist movement. Due to this, the trade union membership fails to increase, trade union consciousness remains low, class consciousness is not created, with the result that total TU movement suffers.

8. Another important aspect, the CITU dealt in Bombay conference and later, is the promotion of working women to the leadership, in the executives of the unions, and as office bearers. As pointed out by Com.BTR in the first convention at Madras, the women are generally not elected as office bearers or members of Managing Committees even where they constitute the majority of the workers. Plantation and beedi women constitute 70-80% of the total workforce, but no woman is seen in the higher committees. The same case was about the working women in federations or associations of middle class employees till sometime back, which now is improving after taking up at union level and from the Centre.

9. The question of cadre is dealt within the Report on Organisation in detail. While discussing the cadre question among working women some special efforts have to be made to bring the women workers forward. The trade unions have to consider the dual responsibilities women are carrying on, as workers and housewives. The attempt to bring them forward for participation in meetings and discussions is to be done consciously by the unions, otherwise they generally may not come forward of their own. Of late it is being seen that the middle

class women employees are coming forward as leaders of the unions in Kerala, Bengal, Tamilnadu, Andhra Pradesh, etc.

10. Membership of working women in CITU has shown gradual increase. In 1985, the women membership was 1.70 lakhs when the total membership was 15,50,000. In 1987, out of 16,69,684; 2,06,482 were women. In 1988, out of 19,16,095; 2,64,195 were women. In 1989, out of 20,07,357; 2,39,704 were women. In 1991-92 membership of women to total was about 12%. As per the report the women's membership was better in Karnataka, Kerala and West Bengal. But this is not a happy picture of membership of women in CITU. Women members are much less as compared to the actual workforce in many unions. The women workers also have to take lead in enrolling the women membership. It is the work of both men and women unionists, and should not be taken as men's job only.

AICCWW AND AIDWA

11. It is being observed that there is still some confusion regarding the roles of AICCWW and AIDWA. It is to be noted that AICCWW is not an organisation in itself. It is a wing of the CITU coordinating the activities of the women workers in various industries and establishments to bring them in common trade union movement alongwith their male counter parts in the industries, units or establishments and dealing with the specific problems faced by them as workers in the industries. AIDWA as an organisation has been dealing with women as a whole as a downtrodden and socially oppressed weaker section of the society, and mobilising them in the broad democratic movement of the country. However, as Com.BTR pointed out, woman has got three aspects---she is a woman, so she has problems in a semi-federal and semi-bourgeois social system; secondly, she is a citizen so she has to fight for her democratic rights; and thirdly as a worker she has problems in her work place. Under these circumstances, the roles of AICCWW and AIDWA have to be complementary to each other.

12. The task to organise workers in the unorganised sector has been sufficiently stressed in the Report on Organisation. It is a huge.

task and the CITU is taking up their demands by organising a committee for unorganised sector workers. A large part of this section consists of women. Most of these sections do not come under any legislations, no social security measures, and work under very miserable conditions of wages.

13. There is a large section of working women in the home based industries. In the restructuring process under the new economic and industrial policies, the organised industries are getting their products manufactured in the home-based units. The women workers, who constitute about 90 per cent in these industries are thus ruthlessly exploited, while the monopolists garner huge profits for their products. The CITU and the AICCWW have to make planned actions for mobilising this section in trade union movement.

14. Another section is of ICDS women, called Anganwadi women. These sections are very militant and have come forward to fight for their demands under our banner, Anganwadi federation. The Anganwadi women in every state have come forward to fight including joining the strike on 9th September 1993. Due to our efforts and formation of a joint committee of trade unions, some honorarium was increased. The CITU has to take up the work seriously and build organisation among them.

15. Working women under CITU and under our influence are also to be educated to take up the work of TUs and other mass organisations. Women also have the feudal outlook and backwardness. They decline to take up responsibility. Having dual responsibilities, the house hold duties, many times they are not inclined to take up the work, or to come forward as leaders. Here the role of CITU leadership should be to encourage them to come forward despite their heavy work. Experience of the movement is, wherever they launch struggles, they participate fully.

Education

16. The trade union and political classes are being held by our leadership. They are attended mainly by male trade union workers. The experience of the TU class specially for working women in the month of July 1993 at Hyderabad shows, that the women should like to come forward and attend. The seriousness with which they heard, questioned, taking down the notes and educating their own cadres

in their states in local language, shows their enthusiasm to participate in such classes. In Hindi speaking areas particularly, there is need for such classes if we want to develop the work in such areas. This point is important and CITU has decided to take up one class in Hindi. A special syllabus has to be prepared to meet the requirement of training of working women.

17. Com.BTR spoke at the 1st convention of working women,"It is no wonder that India with one foot in the capitalist age, and another in the preceding age, should deny equal treatment to women at every stage. The TU movement should fight it as part of the working class struggle. Our leaders and cadres must see that the union leadership does not become a male preserve, that women are trained and quickly promoted to leading positions. The TU movement cannot attain its full stature unless the women's contingent plays its role in organising and leading the unions. Thousands of women are participating in strike struggles, face jail and repressions, go through privations along with male workers and employees. But they are far from occupying the position in the union that is their due. They fought for working women's demands, for the demands of factory workers, teachers, employees, etc. All women's organisations should lend their support and actively help the TU movement in this struggle."

18. Issues for consideration before the Commission on Working Women.

- i) To form subcommittees and wings under CITU or federation to take up working women's specific problems.
- ii) To enrol membership in the unions by giving responsibilities both to men and to working women.
- iii) To ensure their participation in trade union movement.
- iv) To make special efforts to encourage women as speakers and organisers.
- v) To promote women on the committees, and as office bearers.
- vi) To fight against the social oppression by taking up the problems of working women on the agenda of CITU Committees.

Commission on Organisation

1. The Commission on Organisation set up by the plenary session of 8th Conference of CITU commends the Report on organisation adopted by the Working Committee of CITU as a guide for our immediate tasks on Organisation. The Report says "several shortcomings have crept in our functioning which have created many bottlenecks in our advancement. Due to this weakness, many tasks go by default and we were unable to tackle them in the interest of the workers". The Report adds further, "we have reached a plateau of our strength and stagnation is facing our organisational development".

2. Our organisational strength was trailing behind over years its growing influence and new challenges. Symptoms of stagnations were visible since some time past. The organisational weaknesses have been coming to prominence when it was called upon to play the role of uniting the masses against the dangers of communalism and all divisive forces. So, it has been found that in order to carry forward the stupendous task arising out of the introduction of NEP effectively, these weaknesses in our organisation have to be overcome.

3. The Report on Organisation while pinpointing the tasks, emphasises the need of heightening the organisational and ideological capabilities at all levels as the basic condition for effectively discharging its responsibility towards uniting the working class and raising its consciousness.

4. Since the Report on Organisation was adopted a year ago, there is no doubt that some advance could be made in the functioning of the State Committees and CITU Centre. Most encouraging is the fact

that a kind of new awareness about organisation is developing at all levels. But this alone will not fructify into a change which could see the implementation of the Report on Organisation. For this a change is required in the attitude and approach towards organisation to bring a break in our way of functioning.

5. We are to begin from the point of introducing the practice of collective functioning, information sharing and check up and creating an atmosphere of self-criticism and free discussion so that the Trade Union Committees can in real sense carry forward the Trade Union Democracy, as envisaged in the Report. This change in the approach towards organisation can come only through consistent and sustained struggle against alien tendencies of individualism and bureaucratism which play the most devastating role. This has to be conducted strictly under the guidance of CITU Constitution and organisational principles laid down in the Report.

6. The organisational discussion has brought a vital issue to the fore. That the CITU must be able to activate the workers engaged in strategic section of industries, whose action will influence the rest of the masses and various sections of the people. These workers are heavily under attack by the so-called restructuring schemes and all of them are being drawn into joint movement of various kinds to resist it. The CITU should pay utmost attention to effectively develop this and see that the Organisation is strengthened.

7. In order to do it effectively two things are to be done by the Trade Unions. One is to study the industry properly including its technological and commercial viability. An independent study need be made if required by mobilising competent expertise, and concrete proposals should be worked out, which can be brought forth to the workers, so that they can be mobilised around it, and people's support can also be mobilised around these proposals.

8. Secondly, we have to efficiently and systematically explain to the work-force not only the serious nature of the attack against them and its consequences but also the true nature of the capitalist crisis. Today the developed capitalist countries are facing serious recessionary condition on a global basis and an imperialist offensive

is on to put the burden of the crisis on the people of the third world countries. Care should be taken to do it systematically, marshalling facts, in order to carry conviction among the workers. This in turn will ideologically educate them in a big way. In sum, the trade union work today will not be effective without properly understanding the intricacies of industry as well as a broad understanding of economy at work nationally and globally. This should be part of the trade union education.

9. Democratic functioning of the trade unions assumes importance not only for developing the cadres but also for ensuring mass participation of workers in the day-to-day trade union activities. For us democratic functioning has a wider connotation and objective. Trade unions are considered to be the centres of learning for workers i.e. where everything connected with the industry and economy is discussed on a day-to-day basis through the interaction between the workers and their leaders. This can be effective only in case the Trade Union leaders are able to find time to sit with the different committees of the workers and interact with them in gate meetings, shift meetings and the departmental committees, besides the executive and general bodies of the workers. So democracy for us is not the formal functioning of the elected bodies of the unions alone, which of course is important. Wrong practices like not holding the annual conference in time, or if held, being finished in a short time by electing the new leadership for the next term without giving chances to the members to express their views, no effort in promoting the worker cadres and women etc., need to be done away with forthwith.

10. It is necessary that our trade unions should address the whole of the workers when dealing with the workers' issues. Temporarily, the workers may be divided and organised into several unions. However, it is our endeavour to bring them into one union by overcoming the prevailing backwardness among them. Our style of work as a whole if changed as detailed in the previous paragraph will definitely increase our influence among the workers and they can be rallied behind our unions. The present attack against the workers by the employers and the government lead them to various kinds of

movements. We have to utilise the situation properly to reduce rivalry among the trade unions. We must try to expand our base and strengthen the unions by putting forth the idea of one union in one industry on the basis of democratic functioning in the interest of the entire working class. We should keep in mind the increasing influence of the CITU bodies--the State Committees and District Committees, which should oversee the job with utmost care and zeal. No proposal should be made without proper discussions by appropriate bodies.

11. It is found that many unions are not taking sufficient care to bring to the fold of organisation, the casual, temporary and contract workers. Also in certain other unions, the work of enlisting the support of permanent employees is neglected. Both these tendencies are harmful. Mostly the young workers are kept as temporary or casual, and if mobilised, they can be a militant section among the union membership. So also without support of the permanent workers the bargaining capacity of unions cannot be strengthened. Therefore care should be taken to address these workers in our trade union activity.

12. The document has attributed the low level of unionisation of workforce as the basic reason behind the weakness. At present organised and unorganised sector together employ 100 millions of which only 20 million are organised in trade unions, of which the CITU represents only 2.5 million. Activisation of such a vast magnitude of un-unionised workforce cannot be effectively undertaken without pooling all the resources which we can muster including our established strength in the TU movement.

13. The organisational report stressed the importance of expanding the trade unions among the unorganised sector which comprises the largest contingent of the Indian workforce. They are the most exploited lot and large sections of them are women. They are under the influence of many feudal and other backward social customs, which also are being exploited by employers for keeping them away from the trade unions. Their wages are nominal. The trade union movement cannot become a social force without bringing them into the fold of organisation and this cannot be successfully done

unless our cadres are made to undertake this work with missionary zeal. The CITU State Committees should see that all the required steps are taken and treat it as a priority job. The unions working in these sectors should allot specially trained cadres to be deployed in different areas to work among these sections. Required finances for this work is to be mobilised by them. This work if taken up seriously, can ensure definite progress within a short span of time.

14. It is found that there is absence of consistent efforts on organisation in States where substantial progress has been made in the matter of industrialisation like Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and industrial areas like Bangalore, Hyderabad etc., and the CITU is yet to make a break-through and consequently has given the benefit to the reactionary forces to take advantage of the situation. There should be well thought out time bound action plan. The major trade unions in these areas should play a decisive role in evolving the plan and its execution. Since the workers are on the move to resist attack of the employers and the government, and the CITU is playing a role in the same, therefore with a definite plan if we make sustained efforts under the guidance of CITU state committees, we can attain substantial progress.

15. The problem of slow pace of growth in the vast Hindi speaking belt has also been raised in the organisational report. The present efforts which are being made are found to be inadequate. Therefore no time should be lost on this score and steps should be taken with utmost urgency. The concerned State Committees should take immediate steps to examine each industry and industrial area to find out what exactly is standing in the way of attracting the workers towards the CITU. Simple generalisations and half-baked ideas are of no use. The requirement is that a specific study of each case and if necessary, some sub-committees can also be formed to have a factual analysis of the situation and suggest remedies. However, the point to be stressed is that the State committees should take the initiative to find out the ways and means for a break through. The CITU Centre should devote more attention in these areas as noted in the organisational Report. Training of cadres should be taken up in

hand immediately and also organising schools for specific branch of industry for important state-wise cadres. The independent federations and unions which are having a base in these backward areas should devote more attention for bringing the unorganised sector workers into the trade unions. The CITU Centre should take steps to produce special literature required for helping the efforts for organising the backward sections of workers in these areas.

16. Today in the backward areas communal and caste forces are intensively trying to break the class unity of workers in different ways. Trade unions are also sought to be divided and organised on caste basis and the general unions of workers are broken on caste lines. This is a serious threat. Also in certain areas goonda gangs are mobilised against the trade unions which are independently functioning to protect the interests of the working class. In order to deal with these kinds of dangers, the trade unions should take appropriate measures including massive educative campaign.

17. Special care is needed in the matter of bringing women into the fold of organisation and promoting them to leadership positions which we were emphasising for long. However the progress made in this matter is not substantial. The organisation of co-ordination committee of working women under our initiative was a step in the right direction for getting proper attention to the issues of working women, who are not only deprived of proper treatment by the private employers but by the government too. The conditions of Anganwadi workers and helpers are a case in point. The government is exploiting the serious unemployment among the women to make them agree to work for nominal wages. Such things should not be allowed to continue in a democratic set up and the trade union should take the lead for protecting the rights of working women for equal wages and equal rights and special protection required for them as mothers.

18. Many of our trade unions are confining themselves in economism which is a correct criticism being made. They do not reach to the issues of the people in general and especially problems being faced by the peasants and the agricultural workers. The peasants and the agricultural workers' organisations are spreading

in many areas. The Trade unions should render a helping hand in whatever way possible. They are subjected to brutal police and goonda attacks in many areas. Many among the cadres working in this front face serious financial difficulties. The workers must be roused to give a helping hand for the development of the peasant movement. The financial help being provided by the Tamilnadu CITU for the Kisan organisations is a welcome measure.

19. "The Working Class" has proved its efficiency as an organiser. Similarly, CITU Mazdoor, Voice of Working Women, Kamkaji Mahila also have played important roles in organising CITU. Number of State Committees are also publishing many journals. The standard of these publications can be improved substantially and for these purpose we will have to strengthen the infra-structure to the required level. But, it has to be appreciated that unless the circulation is increased and regular remittance of sales proceeds are guaranteed, it would not be able to deliver the goods as required, and it would be difficult to sustain them as well.

20. The propaganda barrage unleashed in defence of new economic policy by the Government and the attack against the working class through press, radio, television and by thousands of other ways, just cannot be countered with the present facilities we are having and with our agitational literatures and campaigns. This is why the CITU was all along insisting on the importance of the production of propaganda literatures of various nature. The CITU is slowly assuming the leadership role in the fight against the new offensive, and therefore we have to take up this job seriously. With our increasing influence among the intellectuals and educated employees, this can be taken up in a better way if a proper mechanism is created. The CITU centre must take appropriate measures to develop the machinery for the same. We have to organise workshops and discussions on special subjects, and also make use of Audio Visual apparatus too.

21. This has become all the more necessary in the light of the set back suffered by socialism in the erstwhile Soviet Union and the East European countries. Tall claims are being made by the leaders of

capitalism that they are out to build a sustainable capitalist society and a new world order claiming that socialism has no future. All these claims are shattered to pieces within a short span of 3 years from 1991. The developed capitalist societies today are in the grip of continuing recession, unprecedented increase in unemployment. Shut downs and closures of industrial establishments are almost becoming the order of the day. Wage cuts and reduction of welfare amenities are being imposed on the working class. Further, introduction of new technology, sought to stem the crisis, again further reduces the job potential. Therefore Europe, Japan, America, etc, are facing the problem of job losses and unemployment and consequent miseries for the people. The youngsters in Europe are being frustrated due to the phenomenon of decrease in job opportunities. The fascist gangs are raising their heads and they are also developing their organisational net work. Increasing trade wars, ethnic conflicts and local wars are being used by US imperialism for their infiltration and domination. Religious fundamentalism and obscurantism are raising ugly heads everywhere. The American imperialists are frantically trying to impose their hegemony all over the world including the third world. Without effectively exposing this, the vigilance against imperialism cannot be developed.

22. The CITU was taking the lead to mobilise the trade unions in the fight against the new economic policies and its impact on different sectors of industry. The National Campaign Committee has been widened to the Sponsoring Committee of Trade Unions. Besides all india action of workers, many united fights of different sections of workers have successfully been organised. This has given dividends in many areas. In the process the unity of the workers has also been developed in a big way than earlier. The experience of Fertilisers, insurance, Banking, Steel, Coal Textiles and many others has been the same. The all India strike of the Steel workers on 7th of September 1993 against the privatisation of the Indian Iron and Steel Company, was an important land mark. Another unique experience was the strike of Coal workers on 31st of January 1994. The experience goes to show that if proper initiatives are taken, the unity of the workers

can be further strengthened. The government is going ahead with its policy of privatisation of the public sector and that too in the vital sectors where we have developed spoeific advantage over many others. It must also be noted that the objectives of the imperialist powers is that these vital areas must be brought under their domination, so that our independent challenge to them is scuttled. Needless to say that these policies go counter to our national interests. The sickness is spreading to many industries reaching alarming proportions. Therefore the fight against these policies assumes increasing importance, and therefore the organisational coherence of the Trade Unions becomes an immediate task. To succeed in these efforts, improvement in our own independent strength is a must.

23. It is found that many unions are functioning with the sign board of CITU but do not get themselves affiliated to the CITU fulfilling all the required formalities including paying all the levies. Some unions make the plea that 5% or a little more percentage of the membership is opposed to the affiliation. This is no correct plea. In any democratic set up the large majority must have its say and in the Trade Unions too it cannot be otherwise. In these cases we give maximum importance for the unity of the workers. That should not be allowed to the extent of a miniscule minority denying the democratic right of the large majority. Therefore it is essential to put the issue before the workers and decision being taken. In the case of affiliated unions too, auditing the accounts and sending the affiliation fees in time on the basis of the Constitution is found lacking in many cases. This should not be allowed.

24. The CITU from its very inception was emphasising the need for unity of the Trade Unbions and united actions. The experience of the last 3 years have been very rich. During this period we have witnessed many industry wise, factory wise and nationwide united actions of workers irrespective of organisational and political differences. In varying degrees it forced the authorities to make temporary retreats conceding some of the demands raised by them. In all India general strikes such extensive unity could not be achieved

due different positions taken by the INTUC and BMS leaders. But inspite of their official non-cooperation, many of their followers joined these actions. This shows that the urge for unity is developing in a big way and therefore it is the duty of the CITU to take more initiatives for the achievement of TU unity.

25. The idea of a Confederation of Trade Unions is one which will allow the TU centres to keep their separate identities while working in the Confederation on the basis of agreed norms and objectives. On the basis of experiences gained in due course further steps can be taken on mutually agreed lines. Unity and amalgamations of industrywise federation can be taken up for consideration case by case without much delay. Union wise differences can also be sorted out for achieving the goal of one union for one industry. The vital element should be that the trade union leaders of different political and ideological mould should begin to consider that the unity of the working class will be an asset and a prelude for the building of a new prosperous India, a task the Trade Union leaders should address with the required seriousness.