

WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING

MADRAS, NOVEMBER 10-12 1975

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A meeting of the Working Committee of the CITU was held in Dharmaprakash, Madras on 10 - 12 November 1975. The following members attended the meeting.

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Signature

1. Suhrid Mullick Chowdhury
2. M.K. Pandhe
3. P. Ramamurti
4. Md. Ismail
5. Nrisingha Chakraborty
6. A. Nallasivan
7. Karmegam (*Karmegham*)
8. Ganashyam Saran Sinha
9. Rabin ~~Chatterjee~~ *Mukherjee*
10. C. Kannan
11. P. Ramachandra Rao
12. Gopal Basu
13. Niren Ghosh
14. V.P. Chintan
15. Harisadhan Mitra
16. Monoranjan Roy
17. Parimal Mitra
18. Samar Mukherjee
19. Jiban Behari Ray
20. Sunil Basu Roy
21. Viswanatha Menon
22. Dinen Bhattachariya
23. C. Colindarajan
24. P.K. Kurane
25. A. Balasubramaniam
26. R. Umanath
27. Jyoti Basu

The meeting started at 16hrs on 10.11.1975 with Com. Jyoti Basu, Vice President in the Chair.

Com. P. Ramamurti moved the resolution on Com. Bhairav Bharatiya and a condolence resolution on Com. Shamsul Huda, which were passed by the meeting standing one minute in silence.

Com. P.R. stated that we have a short time at our disposal and hence I suggest that after Com. Jyoti Basu delivers his speech, I would submit a report. Then we should devote our time to discuss the tasks during the present situation. Some resolutions ~~are~~ also should be taken up. Some have been drafted and some may have to be drafted again. For this purpose a small Committee be set up with the following Comrades.

Com. Samar Mukherjee Com. R. Umanath Com. P.K. Kurane, Com. Viswanathan ^{*Menon*} & Com. Suhrid M. Chowdhury Com. Samar Mukherjee would be the Convenor of the Resolution Sub Committee,

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This suggestion was accepted unanimously.

Com. Jyoti Basu, then delivered his speech which was circulated earlker. He further clarified that; we should not jumble up, J.P. and all others. In fact after 72 election J.P. did give a call for an impartial enquiry about the West Bengal elections, so there should be clear understanding about the term reactionary parties.

Com. P.R. stated that he does not want to read the entire report, in which various methods adopted by the Govt. under emergency, the economic reasons therefor and the attacks on democratic and trade union rights., have been discussed in details.

At the first instance/^{he}wanted to emphasise that in the 3rd Conference we adopted a resolution on recession though the Govt. denied its existence. In the resolution, we called upon our unions to enlighten^{ing} the working class about the nature of the recession and the attacks that ~~were~~ to follow. Just within a month emergency was declared and we had not been able to carry ~~forward~~ the message in this time. In his report therefore he had pointed out the attacks which have been made. About bonus he said that reduction to 4% is not much compared to the fact that from the next year more than 50% workers will be denied bonus. Then the provision of deduction of all excess payment during the last two years, will cause ruination of workers. Deputy Labour Minister Stated that profit sharing bonus should go and bonus should be linked with productivity. Though Labour Minister later denied this but the fact remains that such a pattern would come in future. The ~~in~~ slogan of linking wages with production, National Wage Policy etc mean downgrading the wages in the organised sector for ^{achieving} ~~activating~~ a party with agricultural labour. Hence all wage claims will be rejected outright. The example of seamen clearly shows how the attacks are being developed. The situation in railways explain how false the slogan of linking wage eith productivity is. He requested all comrades to give a picture of increase in work load and other attacks on the working class. He also took up the question of equal wages for men and women. He explained the significance of Apex body. The Govt. has been ^{refusing} ~~repising~~ to recognise CITU. There has been no verification after 1968. But we were being invited to some meetings. But now they are not prepared to listen to any dissent that is why the Apex body has been formed. Workers participation in management is going to be a ruse to attack workers through class collaboration. The unemployment problem is enormous now. The Govt. is now pressing for modernisation. The last six months have shown a deepening of the recession. In a chain reaction industry after industry has been affected. Unless we are able to tell and educate the Working Class the present position,

the reason for the recession and the solution thereof, there would be no use by movement against bonus. All the present stock pile has taken place when there is idle capacity to the extent of 50%. People have been denuded of the purchasing power and hence this crisis. Regarding claim of falling prices, govt. figures show only 0.5 percent fall in whole sale price which ^{has} not reached the common man. There ~~has~~ been a massive external assistance. The report of the World Bank Team advocates export-Oriented industry as against basic industries. They made a fun of the import substitution. RBI is now talking about lifting of credit-squeeze in selective industries and reflation.

We must understand that there has been no immediate protest action by the Working Class through out in the Country. Barring Kerala and stray action ⁱⁿ Maharashtra, ~~the~~ whole of country did not register protest. Even in Tamilnadu, where some form of legal activity exist, we could only bring about a strike against bonus Ordinance on Oct. 24. We must analyse the short-comings in our Organisational work and take effective steps to overcome the deficiencies. He requested all comrades to think seriously over the matter and ^{exchange} ~~exchange~~ opinions.

The meeting was adjourned at 7 P.M.

Meeting started at 9 A.M. on 11.11.75. Com. Jyoti Basu was in the Chair, He asked the comrades to submit reports on the ~~basis~~ basis of the General Secretary's report.

Com. A. Nallasivam, ~~he~~ narrated their experience about one day's Strike on 24th October '74. Just after promulgation of emergency there was a demonstration jointly with Cong (O) and DMK. After the Bonus Ordinance, in the Coimbatore area, almost all unions except HMP and INTUC agreed for a joint action. The HMP leaders agreed to a state-wide Convention. Pressure from ranks inside INTUC was built up and the state leadership was forced to join the combined efforts and also ^{to} ~~the~~ notify the central leadership of INTUC to fight against the bonus ordinance. There was pressure from the ranks in Coimbatore area for a token strike in Coimbatore region alone. We suggested ^{to} ~~that~~ the State leadership of other trade unions for a token strike on 24th October '75 in the State. But they agreed for token strike in Coimbatore region. We, however, published the news in such a manner as if all agreed for a state-wide token strike on Oct. '24. We thought that seeing the tempo, none would be able to contradict the same. The AITUC leadership tried to

sabotage this decision in various manner but the pressure from workers forced them to participate in strike. Karunanidhi supported the strike call in a close-door meeting of DMK. But they did not want a strike in the Electricity and State Transport. On 21st AITUC, ADMK and Kuchelar group held a meeting and decided to join the strike. But the DMK Electricity Union withdrew from the strike on 22nd. There was a meeting called by State Labour Minister in which he appealed to Trade Union leaders to desist from strike. The DMK Union leadership issued a formal statement on 23rd Night with-drawing from strike. This was only a face-saving tactics with the Central Govt. Our experience is that there was anger amongst the workers and if we could utilise the same and reach the workers action could be brought about.

Since semi-fascist attack in ~~XX~~ West Bengal we tried to explain the situation but did not succeed. After emergency the middle class have now realised the policy of Indira Gandhi. After bonus ordinance, the Working class of Tamilnadu have understood the policy. The instance of Madras Rubber Factory Workers is an example. Even after 24th October, the movement for bonus is going on. In Salem area, some ^{factories} ~~factions~~ have gone on strike although we advised against it.

Com. Ghanashyam Sharan Sinha: After emergency the situation in Delhi was grave, because the Govt. had taken security measure. All industrial Centres, Union offices or Hotels were surrounded by police or Intelligence people. In Faridabad, houses of our comrades were surrounded and the police picked up who ever were available. Most of our comrades escaped and now after two months they joined work. In Ghaziabad, workers replied to lock-out and lay-offs by strike action, as if the emergency was not there. Some go-slow movement was there. In September only the entire leadership of CITU at Gaziabad have been arrested, some of the unions changed their flags and joined INTUC. But most of them are keeping contact with us. One of them has again come back to CITU. In Delhi area, no organised move against bonus ordinance could be taken. Though I tried to take some measure in textile but the AITUC/INTUC opposed this. But there were stray one-day protest strikes at some Centres. At Ghaziabad there is slow-down movement. He also referred to the strike in Kanpur J.K. Jute Mill., J.K. Cotton ~~Mill~~ Mill. About 15000 workers are out of employment in that area. Our Comrades won election in J.K. Jute Mill despite ~~textile~~ terrible repression.

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Com. Monoraj Roy : Stated that he has already circulated a short report and he would not repeat the same. He suggested that in Com. Jyoti Basu's speech it has been stated that HMS is a participant in the Apex body. This may create some misunderstanding. Only the Congress faction has joined the Apex body.

According to the Labour Minister 70% of the workers in West Bengal have refused to accept 4% bonus. He has also circulated a separate report showing the position after the bonus ordinance. The position in Hind Motors is serious where 14000 workers are continuing boycott braving all ~~farx~~ terrors. 11 have been arrested. In CLW the situation is grave due to semi-fascist terror. We have met with HMS, TUCC and decided to ^{*} further action will be taken. We have held a meeting of CITU unions and planned a demonstration on 9th October jointly with others which was banned. We have information that one officer has been placed in every factory to give weekly report to the Centre. Our feeling is that one-day strike will be ^a flop and the losses would be much more than the gains. Today while CITU is not being granted any permission to hold meetings, AITUC and INTUC ~~and~~ are going on with various meetings. Govt. does not invite CITU in meetings but at plant level, ^a Our Unions ~~are~~ are being asked to join Committees for production. So far as we are concerned legal functioning has almost come to a stop. We must devise means of functioning in this condition of illegality.

Com. Jyoti Basu, narrated the situation amongst the State Govt. employees.

Com. Jiban Behari Roy - Steel production from April '75 has gone up and we have added about 2 lakh tonnes, which have been despatched from plant. The authorities are now asking for full utilisation of installed capacity and they are interested in bringing about discipline. Administrative building is locked up. The plant is full of intelligence people from various agencies. As far as labour relations are concerned, we feel that we are being encircled. He related the experience in negotiating committee. Although they were able to ^{the} attempt of agreed withdrawal of ~~xxx~~ T.U. rights, the authorities are now forcing such curtailments by force gradually. During negotiations we could mobilise the workers. It continued upto August '75. Now the situation is growing worse, victimisation is continuing. On the bonus question we had the feeling that it could not be fought by one factory or by one state. So when the Company took the stand of paying 4% though TESCO paid ~~8.13%~~ 8 ¹/₃ % after ordinance, that time we are organised a demonstration at 3 places jointly with AITUC. Only half an

Observe a week from 24th to 30th Nov '75 after which

[frustrate]

hour before the demonstration ~~the~~ Personnel Manager threatened and asked us to stop the demonstration. But we refused to ~~xxx~~ call off demonstration. There was a huge demonstration but 24 charge sheets have been issued. One thing is about long term programme, and other is short term programme. We must have a perspective to work on short term programme.

Com. Viswanatha Menon:- After emergency ^{some} ~~since~~ protest was levelled from political plane. From CITU we participated in the demonstration on 9th. On 9th and 10th there were arrests of 300 workers including Com. A.K.G. and Com. E.M.S. On 11th there was a general strike which was a success every where except in organised sector area (Kalamassery area). After bonus ordinance we have not been able to do any thing. While we were planning the same, there has been state wide arrest of 103 leading CITU cadres, many are underground. We have come to understand that open work like before will not be possible and a changed pattern of work is being set up. We have covered Iddiki, Transport, NGO's etc and organising those in other areas as well.

Com. P.K. Kurney : - After the emergency HMP people came to us and we decided to ~~give~~ a strike call and issued a statement. This statement was not published and as a result only 40 small factories came on strike. It was our unions only. The HMP did not join the strike. ~~There~~ have been arrested, 8 underground. In Bombay however there is no arrest or warrant of CITU leadership. We have been having meetings with HMB, HMP BMS and formed a co-ordination Committee. We held a meeting of our own. We also convened a joint meeting but the hall was surrounded by Police and the workers had to be dispersed. We have not been able to do much about Bonus movement. ~~Danger~~ wanted the authorities to give bonus as last year. After the ordinance, the Mill owners unilaterally announced 4% bonus. The AITUC announced that they would fight this in Court and Parliament. INTUC also gave a slogan of Boycott on the ground that they want bonus to be linked with productivity. We have issued a leaflet calling upon the workers to boycott this bonus. Although there was no boycott, our leaflet created good impression. In many of our unions, we have been able to get bonus in other forms, but in J.K. industries the authorities refused to give anything more than 4% bonus. They bye-passed our union and entered into an agreement with R.G. Mehta's union about 4% bonus and ~~3%xxx~~ 350/- as advance. This was rejected by all workers and the struggle is going on. A new legislation ensuring monopoly recognition of some unions is going to come. There was an ^{attempt} ~~attempt~~ to bring

together INTUC AITUC, HMS, Shibsena and Lal Nishan Party. But it was a non-starter. Now a new Apex body has been formed ~~which~~ in which 5 AITUC, 5 INTUC and 2 HMS representatives have been included there is a demand for our literature amongst the cadres of other parties who are in jails. BMS is very keen to have joint action. He welcomed the idea of an all India Convention against bonus ordinance.

Com. Samar Mukherjee moved the resolution on Railway workers. Com. Nrisingha Chakraborty seconded it and the same was passed unanimously.

Com. P. Ramachandra Rao : - Just before the emergency we had a well attended meeting at Bangalore addressed by Com. Samar Mukherjee. We are in a bad position in public Sector undertakings around Bangalore. Most of our workers are working in AITUC and other Unions. Just after emergency, there was a panic as security men were deputed to watch our men. But after some time when Com. A.K.G. came there, we held secret workers meetings after which the situation improved. Our comrades are now collecting money distributing leaflets etc. There was an immature call for strike in Karnataka by political parties. Our workers participated in Bangalore and some other centre. Repression was let loose by Plantation owners. One HMS union betrayed the plantation workers in wage settlement as a result of which the workers are coming towards us. In Bidi there was a settlement but the Govt. wanted to impound the wages. There was agitation and the Govt. granted relaxation and the workers also got 8 1/3% bonus. In HEL only 4% bonus was paid.

In bidi we have advanced to a great extent. After emergency the Govt. is trying to break our unions at four centres. At Bagalkot, our Cement Union is being pressurised. In South Kanara also such pressure is being exerted. In Tumpur, we have bidi union having 4000 members. Goondas are being used to break our organisation.

The State Committee of CITU is not functioning. But 7 General Council members are functioning as a body. We have already acted according to the instructions received from the Central office.

One of our Comrades was arrested under DIR while we were bringing out a leaflet in Kanara on the speech of Com. A.K.G.

We have to do something about breaking the AITUC monopoly at Bangalore. LIC comrades were helping earlier, which they are not able to do now. Help from Centre will be necessary.

Com. Rabin Mukherjee:- In light engineering industry feeling of retrenchment etc is looking large. After emergency the force is also wearing off. Before the bonus ordinance came into force, more than 70% industry had settled the issues at plant level. Some negotiations were going on and when the ordinance came into force the management retraced their steps and granted 4% bonus and liberal advances. One does not know whether the advances will be deducted. But if they want to recover the money, some agitation will surely be there. It may take the form of go-slow movement or any higher movement.

Com. Parimal Mitra:- We have a co-ordination in the plantation industry and there has been some improvement @ Rs. 0.45 per year for two years. It was 3.25 before 1st July. The difference of wages between men and women are there. The workload on women was less. There is a task review committee and all complications are there. When bonus ordinance was issued, there was furore amongst the Tea Workers. In the beginning the big houses issued instructions to calculate bonus @ 8.1/3% or 80/- which was higher. Later on they revised instructions to 4% or Rs. 40/- whichever is higher. There was a boycott. Now instructions have been issued to change it to 4% or Rs. 100/- whichever is higher. This formula benefitted 90% workers who are receiving ~~more than~~ more than Rs. 80/- which was paid last year. Due to these some of the workers had taken the bonus.

The Congress attacked our Union Office and a terrible repression was let loose. 45 workers were arrested and 700 cases are there. We lost one garden and some gardens partially. Today except three, all of our executive members are either behind the bars or are wanted by Police. In spite of this we are moving about and organising the workers. In Darjeeling all of our leaders are either arrested or are wanted. As a result of this, the management came into bipartite agreement with other Unions in absence of our comrades.

We have collected fund about 31 thousand after bonus. But membership collection has been affected. We would be able to increase the membership to 5000.

Com. P.K. Kurane:- moved the resolution on victimisation and repression on Central and State Govt employees.

(Com. Ramachandra Rao pointed out that in some states some increase in D.A. was granted. This point should be verified before finalising the resolutions.)

Com. A. Nallasivam Supported the resolution and passed unanimously.

Com. Niren Ghosh, moved the resolution on emergency. In the discussion following suggestions were made.

- 1) The strike of Kerala should be mentioned.

- 2) Instead of Western Countries, third countries
- 3) Unity from below - approach to Unions.

Com. Ghansyam Saran Sinha supported this resolution and it was passed unanimously.

Com. Dinen Bhattacharya moved the resolution on the struggle of IDPL worker. Com. M.K. Pandhe supported the resolution and it has passed unanimously.

Com. M.K. Pandhe moved the resolution on equal pay for equal work. Com. R. Umanath supported the resolution. It was passed unanimously. Com. P.K. Kurne moved the resolution on Bonus Ordinance. Com. Monoranjan Roy supported this. It was passed unanimously. Com. Suhrid Mullick Chowdhury moved the resolution on Bonded Labour. Com. Viswanathas ~~Menon~~ Menon supported the resolution. It was passed unanimously. Com. Samar Mukherjee moved the resolution on Execution of Spanish revolutionaries. Com. Rabin Mukherjee supported the resolution. It was passed unanimously. Com. Monoranjan Roy moved the resolution on workers participation in management.

Com. V.P. Chintan stated that we should reject the scheme. Actually an elusion is being created that from this scheme workers will go to ~~Central~~ the industry. Our participation on certain conditions will strengthen this elusion. As com. P.R. has stated that this is an instrument of class collaboration, we should outright reject this.

Com. Dinen Bhattacharya stated that he is also of the same view as Com. Chintan.

Com. P.R. explained the ideas from which the resolution has been drafted. It would have been good if we could convince the entire working class about our line. It is not so. For example in Jute Industry in West Bengal if our comrades can take the line of boycott and the workers accept this line, it is very good. But we cannot do this at all Centres. There are backward workers as well to whom the whole scheme has to be exposed. Certain methods of ^{exposure} ~~exposure~~ has been laid down. Com. Viswanatha Menon stated the experience in Kerala.

Com. V.P. Chintan, stated that this is an ideological offensive which we should fight ideologically.

Com. Monoranjan Roy related the experience in West Bengal.

It was decided that further discussion will be held on this resolution tomorrow. Com. Gavind Rajan related a ~~factional~~ ^{factual} position of ~~lay~~ lay off in different industries. Peculiarly in sugar industry, which is seasonal, there was a group of

permanent workers who worked althrough the year. But this time they have been laid off. Under the I.D. Act lay-off compensation cannot be claimed in this industry. Now the management is offering 50% wages as relief. In another factory workers were charge-sheeted for ~~including~~^{inducing} workers to go into a strike in 1972. DMK and other workers submitted letters of regret. Our workers have not done so. Enquiry was ~~made~~^{induced} in which there was no evidence that these workers had ~~included~~^{induced} others to strike. There has been a show cause notice now.

Com. Govindarajan was asked ^{to} prepare a factual report and submit the same.

The meeting was ~~adjourned~~^{adjourned} at 6.30 P.M. for the rally.

12.11.75

Meeting started at 9 A.M.

Com. Sunil Basu Roy stated that the management started ~~in~~^{plan} implementing the '74 agreement in coal industry which was arrived at between the management, AITUC and INTUC. It was started before emergency. But they found ~~xxxx~~ certain difficulties. In 1965 in highly mechanised collieries, 7 day week and 4 hour overlapping shifts were introduced and it increased the work load. This led to absenteeism, although the production has increased. After the emergency the workers have no choice.

Now category-wise unions are ~~springing~~^{springing} up. Earlier the workers had to face goondas hired by management. Now the authorities organised these elements as ~~Security~~ security force financed by CMAL and managed by the Govt. This force are now raiding villages too, and it has become difficult for us to operate from villages even. Just after emergency many ordinary workers were arrested including some of our leading workers. In a bid to increase production, workers are being chargesheeted, penalised and the number of accidents have increased. Women workers who are engaged in loading operations are being slowly eliminated. Concilliation was not available and we decided to go to court against transfer, chargesheets etc. We got some injunctions in the beginning but in later cases such protection is being denied. You are aware that we have expelled Rabin Chatterjee, which has created organisational difficulties. But in major collieries our organisation is intact. We are re-organising our forces in this area.

The HMS organisation has become divided and kanority of them have gone over to Congress who are being favoured by the management. The minority group of HMS are coming to us for help and we are working unitedly with them wherever possible. The authorities are planning ^a system of payment through the banks which would create difficulties for the illiterate workers and the literate staff would ~~trive~~^{thrive}.

Just after emergency 7 day week was introduced in Sreepur-Nimah group of collieries and the workers, though under the influence of INTUC, went on strike. We have decided to ^{contact} ~~contract~~ them and build up our organisation. // Com. M.K. Pandhe - We were taken completely aback by the declaration of emergency. Though the situation was discussed in Third Conference we were not prepared organisationally. After 4 months of emergency when we are meeting to-day, there is no awareness that more attacks are coming in the future. So today we must decide what steps are necessary organisationally so that we could function. For example to day there is no channel available with the centre to communicate messages to any State Committee. This must be provided. Secondly, we have no reports from the state committees. We come to know many things when we meet in Working Committee or other meetings. If a system of sending reports is established, experiences at one centre will become the experience of the organisation at all levels.

We have also the responsibility to keep in contact with all forces who joined under National Campaign Committee, so that unity is maintained.

We are also not receiving Co-operation from State Committees. For example the circular on reports of repression and gangster attacks on CITU was not replied to by any State Committee.

Our functioning industry-wise basis should also be reviewed. Coal, Port and Dock etc are examples. In coal in one area 400 chargesheets were issued. Nothing was done. In Port and Dock a memorandum to the Wage Committee has not been submitted. In the Coal area, all the workers by and large are with CITU but because of our inactivity organisation is suffering. The balance of the Union which was Rs.22,000, only ^a few days back is now Rs.40/- . If we ~~revive~~ ^{revive} receive our activity we will be able to consolidate our strength in such a vital industry like Coal. Mechanisation in Coal industry is coming and this will cause retrenchment of 1 lakh workers.

Another offensive is coming in the shape of verification. In Goa, when we are ^{given} highest membership, the Govt. ordered verification within six months and we were removed from this position. Verification is already on ⁱⁿ Port and Dock, Tensa mine and Durgapur. It is felt that these are being done only to derecognise our unions.

Regarding "Working Class" we are facing difficulties. Firstly as some Agents have been arrested, the agencies are stopped. Circulation have been dropped and unless we ~~revive~~ ^{revive} these agencies, we will not be able keep the working class.

For affiliation fees also we may face some difficulties in future because it may not come ^{for} to some time. This has to be looked by the state Committees as well.

There are some nonfunctioning unions and state committees must take steps and finalise the unions which are to be disaffiliated. Com. Karmegham:- The pattern of organisations which we have to develop to keep contact with the ~~masses~~ ^{masses} is the most important thing. In Bombay Conference the political aspect was stressed and also the intensification of attack and the problem was posed. Neither the delegates discussed the question nor the leadership could give ~~concrete~~ ^{concrete} guidance. Even in this meeting the problem was not discussed properly. The pattern of functioning in legalistic form continues. In Tamilnadu ^{where} the impact of emergency is not felt very much, even we are now thinking of the situation. In General Secretary's report we are asked to develop organisation on locality basis. ~~He~~ ^{He} ~~therefore~~ ^{therefore}, we developed organisation on factory basis. To develop locality basis organisation will be difficult because workers of various organisations reside together. So he suggested that the present factory based organisation ~~should~~ ^{should} remain and they would ^{meet} ~~not~~ in different localities.

Com. Jiban Roy suggested that concrete guidance and short-term programme also should be given to enable us to prepare properly.

Before summing up the discussion, the question of workers participation in management was discussed. Com. Jiban Roy narrated the experience in Durgapur. They are in the wage negotiating committee which helped us to build organisation in other steel plants. Now they are asked to participate in this scheme. If they refuse they may lose their place in the wage Negotiating Committee. On the otherhand by joining the scheme they may expose the same.

Com. P.R. stated that after discussion yesterday ^{more} thought was given. The scheme named as participate in management by the Govt. There is no difference amongst us that this is an instrument of class collaboration. This scheme is aimed at satisfying the workers sentiment while under this facade to increase the work load on the workers. This is a ~~manoeuvre~~ ^{manoeuvre} by the Govt. We have to make counter ~~manoeuvre~~ ^{manoeuvre} in this regard. No principle is involved there. We have therefore made this as a counter ~~manoeuvre~~ ^{manoeuvre}. For example we have demanded election, which neither the Govt nor the AITUC/INTUC is likely to accept. For example we have to think about, ~~If~~ ^{If} ~~if~~ CITU is asked to send some representative ~~that~~ ^{what} should we do. In the situation of growing illegality we have the necessity to utilise every platform. Com Lenin also suggested this. In CLW when workers get elected in majority even after semifascist terror this creates a sense of confidence amongst the workers. So in a ~~fixed~~ ^{fixed} period of growing illegality that is ~~developing~~ ^{developing} in this country, we should avail of this situation. Besides in our

presente the AITUC/INTUC especially the former, will not be able to take a position of outright collaborator. In situations wheere the conseiousness of the worker is very high we can well afford to refuse to participate. Otherwise we should utilise the opportunity to draw backward masses and expose the whole scheme before them which they would realise through their own experience.

He then read out the ammended resolution which makes the situation more clear.

Com Rabin Mukherjee stated that we should not pass this resolution hastily to day. He would have no hesitation if a statement critising the scheme is given by the CITU. He only pleaded for time for consultation. In West Bengal we are functioning in difficult circumstances. There should be no directive for participation to day.

Com. R. Umanath, stated that the resolution gives a clear directive to our cadres.

Com. Manoranjan Roy:- stated that Com. Kamal Sarkar informed him about a circular issued by him refusing participation. There is a sharp difference of opinion amongst us on the subject though it is ^{true} ~~true~~ that in same cases where we are unable to function at all, this forum may help us to function.

Com. Jiban Roy - stated that we must have a directive to join if the local comrades so decide according to the situation.

Com. Parimal Mitra - narrated his experience in which he was termed as Dalal during his term of function as Chairman where he had to quit under pressure of workers and call for a general strike.

Com. Suhrid Mullick Choudhury - suggested that the resolution may be referred to the state committees while authorising the Secretariat to finalise the resolution with in a ~~fortnight~~ fortnight or a month. ~~Com. Niren Ghosh stated~~

Com. Niren Ghosh - stated that ~~he~~ has reservations ^{reservation} ~~about the resolution~~ about the resolution. If fascism had come, participation might be necessary. But in this case, the committee is solely entrusted about increased productivity. How could we associate with this particularly because decision will be taken by consensus only. Durgapur comrades participated in the committee on their own decision, the state Committee was not associated with this decision.

Com. R. Umanath - stated that the recognised unions will be put to difficulties if the question is left open. The resolution provides a line for them so that they could expose the scheme.

Com. C. Kannan stated that Kerala Govt. has already decided to call recognised unions in Transport industry to participate in the management. Unless we decide our line we will be put to difficulties.

Com. P.R. stated that the sectt. was authorised to finalise the resolution by the end of this month taking into consideration the views of State Committees, ^{Comrades} comes from West Bengal should discuss this ^{and} send their views by 20th of this month.

This suggestion was accepted unanimously.

Com. Samar Mukherjee moved the resolution on IndoUS Commission.

Com. A. Bala Subrahmaniam suggested that the resolution should be recast.

Com. P.R. also explained the issues involved and the implications of the Commission. The dangers should be high-lighted and resolution made sharp. ^{Com. Samar Mukherjee} The ~~sectt.~~ was authorised to ~~finalise~~ finalise this resolution.

Com. M.K. Pandhe, moved the resolution on retrenchment, closure and lay-off.

Com. P.R. summed up the discussion. With the growing illegalisation the growing ~~attacks~~ attacks etc we do not know how long we will be able to function openly. A time may come when the CITU itself will be attacked. The questions of organisation, politicalisation of workers, continuous dialouge with the following of other parties have assumed greater importance. Unions and State Committees should send affiliation fees without waiting for the conference to come. These are tasks which every one should fulfill.

Com. Pandhe informed the committee ^{that} there are 20 applications for new affiliation. But none of them are complete.

It was decided that the state committees would be furnished with the names of the union so that when the necessary conditions are fulfilled, the sectt. will grant them affiliation.

POLITICAL PRISONERS

Along with these monstrous attacks, the political prisoners are being treated in jails and are denied the minimum rights. Official falsification and vindictiveness.

CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS

WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING, MADRAS, 10 - 12, NOVEMBER 1975

OPENING SPEECH BY COM. JYOTI BASU, VICE-PRESIDENT, CITU

Comrades,

We are meeting after an interval of six months since our conference in Bombay. Within a month of our conference, the Congress Government declared yet another emergency, the so-called internal emergency which can be described as a genocide of liberties and fundamental rights. Naturally, the rights of the trade union movement were wantonly assailed and the workers were deprived at one stroke of the pen, of all their rights as citizens and thrown five decades back.

This emergency is a new political watershed and things are never going to be the same again. It is the biggest challenge faced by the Indian people since the routing of the British rule and the content of the challenge is : will the working class and the people of India continue to enjoy rights - which they have been enjoying, remain free citizens with democratic rights, right to vote, elect government under the parliamentary system? or, having lost even the existing rights, they will be the meek subjects of an authoritarian party and State, enslaved to capitalism and land-lordism? The issue is whether the working class and the people succeed in upsetting the ambitious designs of an authoritarian one-party rule. The way to People's Democracy and Socialism will not remain open unless this is achieved. The rights of the people are expanded and the internal balance of forces is decisively shifted against the vested interests, and the ruling party, It is therefore necessary to understand the happenings of June last in their true perspective.

ABROGATION OF DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS

With the declaration of the June emergency, the ruling party has virtually instituted a one-party dictatorship. The attack on the rights of the people is unprecedented. The government has effectively suppressed the democratic rights and civil liberties -- the fundamental rights enshrined in the Constitution. Freedom of the Press has been totally stifled by press censorship. Posing to fight against the reactionary monopolist press, the Government has effectively suppressed the left and democratic press which always fought the vested interests and all reactionary parties. The so-called self-censorship is the fraud of an authority which has lost its image with the world democratic opinion.

The press is denied the right to criticize and expose the Government's policies; it is not allowed to publish the news of arrests. Publication of speeches by members of Parliament have been banned. Freedom of speech, assembly and organisation and the right to strike have been suppressed throughout the country. The right to demonstrate and protest has been abrogated. In many States, states, students' unions have been abolished. Personal and individual liberty of the citizen is placed at the mercy of officials who have been given the unfettered right to arrest people under the MISA, DIR and other legislation. Workers, employees, agricultural labourers, peasants and common people are sought to be prevented from fighting oppression and exploitation under threat of detention under the MISA, the DIR and torture in police stations and jails. A police raj prevails.

POLITICAL PRISONERS

Consistently with these monstrous attacks, the political prisoners are singled out for cruel treatment in jails and are denied the minutest protection against official falsification and vindictiveness.

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Hundreds of persons belonging to opposition parties, several belonging to Bur CITU, have been detained without trial. But they have no right to know the reasons that led to their arrest. And by the latest ordinance even the High Courts have been prevented from demanding the reason. Only a Government with a guilty conscience which and/is afraid of the people can enact such provisions.

Many of the political prisoners are kept under atrocious conditions. They are refused usual interviews many are transferred to far away prisons they are given the worst treatment in jail and not treated as politicals. Many of them are the bread-earners of their families and their dependents are starving but no family allowance is given. And when the Government agrees to give allowance it adds insults to injury. The Rajasthan Government has sanctioned a insufficient allowance of Rs. 50 to Rs. 100 per month. Many have to undergo torture in police lockups and jails - - torture which is common now as a police method to gain confession in criminal cases also. The practice has become so scandalous that that the Union Home Minister had to issue a circular mildly disapproving the method. (This was perhaps necessary because discussions are going on in international gatherings against the use of torture.)

PARLIAMENT BROUGHT TO RIDICULE

Never was the Constitution, the Parliament and the judicial organs brought into such utter contempt as during the emergency, under the mask of working for progressive causes. The Constitution amending power of the elected Parliament was brought into ridicule by validating the Prime Minister's election and debarring courts from entertaining any suit challenging it in future.

A regular campaign for the curtailment of the powers of the judiciary has been launched, not to break the class limitations of the class judiciary and advance the right of the underdog, but to claim untrammelled powers for the executive to wage war against people's rights, free from any limitations of the law. The old constitutional principle of the rule of law has vanished in these years. Now in the name of the sovereignty of the Parliament an absolute right to destroy the democratic rights under the Constitution, to give it a totalitran characteris being claimed by the ruling party. It seeks to use its present majority to perpetuate itself in power, to create a cast iron framework for its retention of power. The present outpourings against the judiciary, though presented as a crusade on behalf of the underdog or progressive cause, have nothing progressive about them. There is misleading propaganda as if some judicial reform in the interest of the people is being contemplated.

The ruling party and its spokesmen demagogically use instance where propertied elements have exploited the courts' powers to delay and postpone implementation of certain legislations. The remedy against this is not to claim all power for the executive but to change the very content of the law, with its bias in favour of the vested interests. This the ruling party does not want to do. Its own record of implementation of legislation is full of bias for the landlords and is extremely scandalous. Under the guise of protecting certain legislations, it demands complete freedom to attack fundamental rights and change the Constitution. That is the secret of its reforms campaign of the judiciary-- a secret revealed in the several laws it passed recently.

Following the slaughter of the Constitution, the speeches of Parliament members have been banned from publication. Rules and procedures of Parliament have been waived or changed to prevent members from raising the issues affecting the people and executive misdeeds thus rendering the members utterly helpless in discharging their

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duties and responsibilities. Members of Parliament have been treated with scant respect, and several leading members of the opposition have been thrown into prison without trial. Parliament has become a decorative body to be summoned and dispersed at the will of the Prime Minister, when required to rubber-stamp her decisions.

The emergency has further made a mockery of all state legislatures and ministries, making them the rubber stamps of the Centre. Instead of more autonomy, the most arbitrary type of centralisation has been introduced, reducing the Chief Ministers to the status of district officials of the Centre.

Such is the new situation. The people and the workers are deprived of all rights, stand enslaved and without breaking through the shackles of this enslavement they cannot advance, cannot carry on the battle against poverty, can nowhere be near their aim of socialism, of freedom from exploitation.

THE LEADING CAUSES

How did the situation suddenly develop into this all-round attack against us? At our Bombay conference we had already stated that the ruling party was out for establishing a one-party dictatorship. We had also noted that Mujibur Rahman in Bangladesh has already ended. Parliamentary norms and established one-party dictatorship and remarked that it showed that the ruling bourgeoisie of the newly-liberated countries were not capable of maintaining parliamentary democracy for long. Historical experience shows that after winning independence the leading bourgeoisie which is unable to complete the democratic revolution, tends to compromise with imperialism and allies with land-lord reaction. The economic base for bourgeois development is, therefore, extremely weak. Hence the most developed bourgeoisie among the under-developed countries as that of India is unable to continue with parliamentary democracy for long, for maintaining the continuity of its class rule. The recent events with the proclamation of emergency on June 26 demonstrates this.

This historic truth and tendency should not be allowed to be obscured by the spate of propaganda launched by the ruling party and its claims to fight reaction and reactionary parties; nor the immediate causes that led to this should be substituted for this basic truth.

The Government and the ruling party propagate that they have instited the emergency to fight the reactionary parties led by J.P. and the challenge posed by them. They parade it as a democratic measure in the interests of the masses. This facade of fighting reaction is essentially to maintain the prestige of the Government in democratic countries and to mislead the world working class and public opinion. It is obvious that the mass slaughter of all democratic rights of the people, the countrywide banning of strikes and public meetings, was not at all necessary to meet any challenge of reaction.

CONFRONTATION WITH THE RIGHT

There is no doubt, however, that the immediate cause for instituting the emergency was the serious threat of ouster held against Indira Gandhi by the opposition parties in combination with dissident leaders and sections in the Congress. It was known that hundred Members of Parliament (of the Congress) had already decided to demand her resignation after the Allahabad judgement and it was feared that the majority might swing over to this view. There was no other way to prevent this development, except to terrorise the Congress MPs and jail the opposition MPs. It was further necessary to suppress the gathering discontent against the Congress rule to secure a guarantee for its continued existence.

The bourgeois opposition parties led by Shri J.P. had neither the desire nor the capacity to go to the basic masses and rouse them in a big way by taking up their issues. They were using pressurising tactics by raising certain arresting slogans like anti-corruption,

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defence of democracy, free & fair elections . For their own reasons the big bourgeois press lent a helping hand and thus they succeeded in heading the anti-Congress discontent in some States, notably in Gujarat and Bihar. But their main tactics was parliamentary challenge to the ruling party. The lessons from the sub-version of parliamentary democracy in West Bengal, the imposition of semi-fascist terror were not grasped by the right opposition parties. They thought that the attack was only against the CPI(M) and had earlier acquiesced in it or even supported it although J.P. did call for an impartial enquiry into the 1972 general election in west Bengal. They could not imagine that parliamentary forms and democratic norms will not be observed by the ruling party in dealing with them also.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CAUSES

But the provisions and continuance of the emergency, its sweeping character, and its widening extent traversed far beyond the bounds of checking the danger of parliamentary shifts. The attack against democratic rights comes in the background of deep social, economic and political causes. The ruling party was growingly unable to deal with the rapidly advancing crisis and recession. Notwithstanding the repeated denial of recession by official quarters and ministers, it was spreading havoc with layoffs, ruination of small peasants through steep fall in prices of commercial crops, accompanied by official failure to bring down the prices of necessities of life. The mounting discontent which was being unleashed required draconian measures to smash the resistance of the masses so that the Government succeeds in transferring the burdens of the crisis to the common man.

The real meaning of the emergency is thus to thrust new burdens on the masses, to smash their fight against economic slavery. They must bend to this fate of slavery or go to jail. This is the grim warning and meaning of the emergency whose declared aim is to fight and eliminate the challenge of reaction.

Thus though the immediate cause of the emergency was the threat of ouster of the Prime Minister by a combination of Right Opposition Members of Parliament and the dissident Congress Members of Parliament, its drive is against the people, the working class.

ATTACK AGAINST THE TRADE UNIONS

The emergency directs its fire specifically against the trade union movement. No wonder the big bourgeoisie have welcomed particularly this aspect and are in full praise for it. And why would they not? The emergency bans strikes, meetings, agitations, militant organisations and abrogates all rights and freedoms for the mass of workers, peasants, agricultural workers. It freezes wages, bans the papers from publishing about strikes; it strengthens the hands of the capitalists to increase workload, retrench people and do havoc with people's livelihood. The industrial class peace that they always demanded is now ensured.

It is clear that unless the working class and its trade union movement throws their full weight in the fight for ensuring the democratic rights of the people for defeating and ending the draconian measures, the country's future is dark. If the working class does not succeed, does not take the initiative in fighting this onslaught, it is destined to be a slave of the capitalists -- to be exploited to the utmost by them. It should be its privilege with its organised strength to take a lead in defending the entire people, the rights of the peasant, the agricultural labourer, the employee and the common man. Without such a struggle, there will be no democracy for the people. Without such a struggle, there will be no trade union movement either.

WHAT THE CITU SHOULD DO

Our trade unions, our organisations, must therefore systematically

endeavour to join hands with other democratic forces interested in preserving the democratic rights of the people. Today the opportunity has opened up for approaching the ranks of all political parties. A large number of them see the necessity of combatting the common danger. A still larger number under the baneful influence of the reformists and compromisers is likely to see the danger as they accumulate experience. The CITU should be ever willing to join with these ranks for defending democracy.

The CITU unions must carry its political understanding of emergency among the working class masses. It must educate its own ranks and simultaneously approach the mass following of other organisations to explain the character of the political attack. Without a major section of the working class understanding it, advance will not be possible.

The CITU must not forget that this wanton attack against the people brings grist to the mill of the imperialists, the nations enemies, especially the US imperialism. The CITU has repeatedly called upon our unions, our working class, to be vigilant against US imperialist machinations in our country. Driven from Vietnam by the heroism of Vietnam's working class and people, American imperialism is out for seeking soft spots in this part of Asia. It would like to lay its hand or secure a big influence on Indian affairs to the detriment of our national freedom and democracy. Experience shows that the USA is most successful when the people are enslaved and gagged, and when the Government is isolated from them because of such enslavement. The experience of Bangla Desh, the easy overthrow of Mujibur Rahaman reveal this same incontestable truth. The emergency requires us to be all the more watchful against anti-national imperialist conspiracies, and safeguard the just anti-emergency democratic struggle from being exploited by such elements who specifically direct their fire against the Indo-Soviet Treaty, to explain the emergency and the steps taken by the Government.

THE ROLE OF THE AITUC

It was to be expected that at this crucial juncture in the life of our people and our country, the working class and the trade union movement, the leaders of the AITUC would join hands with the ruling party. The emergency under which people's rights are smashed, press is controlled to broadcast only official propaganda, rights of members of Parliament abrogated, strikes of working class are banned, wages are cut and unemployment and workload are thrust on the workers, is advertised by this leadership as a progressive weapon to fight reaction and the monopolists. In pursuance of this treacherous analysis they do their best to mislead the working class abroad and you find a number of working class organisations in other countries supporting the Indira Government.

Not satisfied with mere advertising, they join the machinery set by the Government to dupe the working class and the people and help it in its drive against the trade union movement. The Government hostile to the CITU have been by-passing it in all - India negotiations and now it has given the monopoly of trade union representation to the INTUC, AITUC and the HMS. The AITUC leaders have shamelessly accepted this measure, though they know the strength of the CITU. In the Apex and other bodies, they meekly accept growing attacks on the workers, sometimes bleating only humble protests. While praising emergency measures they have been compelled to admit that the capitalists are reaping the full benefit, retrenching thousands of workers. But their class collaboration, they will not give up. They certify new measures of attack, policing of wages, linking them with productivity, increased workload and call on the workers to do more work, produce more; they bless the new collaboration machinery calling it workers' participation in management, divide the ranks of the workers, oppose joint action.

Against all norms of democracy they accept the monopoly right along with the INTUC leaders to represent the workers.

The INTUC leaders follow the line of their party -- the ruling Congress--and act as its labour lieutenants in the trade union movement working for the success of the official policies.

Comrades, the stand taken by the AITUC and INTUC leaders has betrayed the interests of the working class and the democratic people. Thanks to it, the trade union movement has been unable to launch a united protest and resistance to the monstrous attack. Division in the ranks of the workers at this critical hour has caused immense damage to the struggle.

THE STRUGGLE FOR UNITY

It is therefore all the more necessary to pursue with vigour and steadfastness the struggle for uniting the workers on immediate demands -- the workers of all organisations, those organisations that rallied under the banner of the anti-wage freeze conference.

The workers following the INTUC and the AITUC leaders who are being tied to the chariot of the Congress emergency are slowly realising the meaning of the emergency through their own experience. The bonus ordinance especially has come as a rude shock to them. The ground is thus being prepared for common action with them due to the growing attacks. Experience shows that where the pressure of independent action is strong, not only the workers belonging to these organisations join common protests but they compel their local leaders also to join. Kerala, Tamilnadu, West Bengal, show instances of action or joint protests on the bonus question. This is just the beginning. Our anger at the misdeeds of the revisionist and reformist leadership should not blind us to the fact that their ranks are starting in an opposite direction. The drive for united action, for trade union unity must be pursued with greater vigour in the factories, departments and industries--a persistent effort for united front from below should be made. In this drive naturally we do not ignore the union or union leadership whenever necessary or give up approaches from above wherever necessary and possible.

As regards the followers of the unions united in UCTU, the HMP and UTUC, etc., we must re-invigorate our previous unity efforts. These efforts will be the basis of our wider efforts. The united struggle for immediate and partial demands must be deemed to be an important part of the struggle against emergency.

REPRESSION IN STATES

Comrades, under the emergency, various State Governments have unleashed repression and a number of our prominent leaders and activists are behind the bars. Our Secretary, Com. Mohan Punamia, Com. Bharathan, Com. O.J. Joseph, members of the Working Committee from Kerala, Com. Ahalya Rangnekar, Com. Kashyap, members of the Maharashtra State CITU -- the latter a member of our General Council-- besides hundreds of our factory workers, leaders and CITU activists in Rajasthan have been arrested. Warrants have been issued against a large number of our comrades in Uttar Pradesh. Terroristic attacks and arrests continue in West Bengal. We must honour the memory of Com. Bhairav Bharatiya who died in Madhya Pradesh jail; the Madhya Pradesh Government has arrested almost all our prominent leaders; Com. Motilal Sharma, member of our General Council and several others are in jail since 26th June. The Kerala Government, led by a Right Communist Chief Minister, has surpassed many and arrested a large number of our CITU leaders and cadres. The total arrest of democratic elements number 101. This does not prevent the AITUC and Right Communist party leaders from advertising that the emergency is directed against the reactionary elements and parties.

The authorities have shown utter callousness towards Com. Punamia who is a heart patient but was denied hospital treatment when he had a heart attack. Com. Motilal Sharma is shown equal callousness. He was undergoing treatment in a Gwalior hospital for tubercular infection of both lungs and to this day, he has been denied hospital treatment.

SADISTIC TREATMENT

I cannot but denounce the sadistic treatment given to our fighting worker cadres from Rajasthan. Not only hundreds were arrested; many of them had to undergo all kinds of torture. Some were given electric shocks; others were the victims of burning cigarette ends. Our Com. Samar Mukherjee lodged a strong protest with the Home Minister. We demand the release of our arrested comrades. We denounce their arrests and we denounce the tortures inflicted on them and the ill-treatment meted out to them. We demand all arrested must be given adequate and decent family allowances to prevent outright starvation of their family members.

PARTISAN PROPAGANDA

Comrades, the ruling party does not use only the anti-democratic law to sustain the emergency. It uses the weapon of partisan propaganda for presenting the emergency as a weapon of fighting reaction, making exaggerated claims for its programme and its achievements. It seeks to create illusions among the people, especially among the unorganised neglected rural masses. The 20 point programme of the Prime Minister constitutes an important weapon of propaganda. In fact, it has become the central point of Congress agitation to mislead its following among the workers and the people. I deal with it separately, exposing its farcical and limited character and its total refusal to countenance any demand of the workers. It is based on and is intended to divide the rural masses from the working class and rally the former behind the Congress in the coming elections. The working class, the CITU, has again to take note of its failure to actively champion the rural masses and realise the danger flowing from it for the common movement. Is it any wonder, therefore, that sections of the rural masses should develop illusions when the ruling party proposes to promise them redress of some of their grievances ?

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CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS

WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING

MADRAS, 10 - 12, NOVEMBER 1975

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RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE MEETING

1. ON. COM. BHAIKAV BHARATIYA :

This Working Committee meeting of the CITU records its shock and indignation at the sad demise of Com. Bhairav Bharatiya, a prominent CITU leader of Nagda at Indore Hospital on the 18th September 1975. Com. Bharatiya joined the democratic movement at an early age and became a prominent leader of the Kisan Sabha in Ujjain district. He participated in the State people's movement and later in the trade union movement of rayon workers in Nagda. He was once elected to the Legislative Assembly from Nagda Constituency. The Madhya Pradesh Government detained him under MISA on 26th June 1975. Though he developed jaundice in jail, no proper medical care was taken for a long time. When his condition became serious only he was taken to the Government hospital at Indore. But it was too late. The Government showed utter callousness in not allowing his family members to meet him.

This meeting is firmly of the opinion that no word of condemnation of the Government is enough and demands immediate judicial enquiry into the circumstances and cause of death and to find out the name(s) of the person(s) responsible for such inhuman treatment to Com. Bharatiya.

This meeting keeps on record the long and unselfish service of Com. Bharatiya towards the people. The CITU dips its red banner in the memory of Com. Bharatiya who has attained martyrdom and conveys its condolence to the members of the bereaved family.

2. CONDOLENCE RESOLUTION ON COM. SHAMSUL HUDA :

The Working Committee meeting of the CITU expresses its deep sense of sorrow at the sad demise of Com. Shamsul Huda, one of the earliest leaders in the trade union movement in Bengal.

While paying homage to his memory, the Working Committee pledges to carry forward the task left unfinished by him during his life time.

3. ON REPRESSION ON RAILWAY WORKERS :

This meeting of the Working Committee of the CITU notes with grave concern the intensification of repression on railway workers after the proclamation of internal emergency. Warrant of arrest has been issued against Com. George Fernandes, President, All India Railwaymen's Federation and eleven leaders of railway trade union movement have been detained under MISA while another 17 under D.I.R. though released on bail later. Instead of taking back 1100 permanent and 9000 temporary and casual workers victimised during May 1974 strike, fresh summary removals and forced retirements have been resorted to. Some amongst them were reinstated only a few days back either through review as in North-Eastern Railway or through High Court judgement as in South-Eastern Railway.

Contrary to the assurances of the Railway Minister of normalising relations, the authorities have mounted a new offensive through retrenchment, increased workload, suspension, penal transfer, fines and charge-sheets. In the name of maintenance of discipline and improvement of efficiency, a veritable reign of terror has been let loose and normal trade union functioning has been made impossible.

Simultaneously, attempts to confuse the people have been made by depicting the May 1974 strike as a politically motivated one, though the railwaymen fought for their just and legitimate demands. Slanderous allegations about foreign money were made through Press and Radio in order to undermine the heroic struggle of railwaymen against the colonial wage structure. It is heartening to note that the All India Railwaymen's Federation stoutly exposed the falsehood and the democratic masses could not be fooled.

The situation at Chittaranjan Locomotive Works needs special mention. Being forced to take all workers back to service under High Court judgement, semi-fascist terror was let loose and Com. Mihir Dey, Vice-President of CLW Labour Union was murdered, the houses of union leaders and the union jeep were gutted by anti-social elements brought from the neighbouring area. Fiftysix active workers of the Labour Union were arrested of whom 16 including President, General Secretary, etc. have been detained under MISA. As the undaunted workers still returned the nominees of the Labour Union with a large majority in Staff Benefit Fund elections, a section of the Congress rigged the Colony Committee election by forcing many candidates to withdraw and preventing a large number of voters from casting their votes. The police arrested 16 nominees of the Labour Union just before the election to help these elements.

This meeting greets the workers of Chittaranjan Locomotive works, who braving this terror exercised their franchise wherever possible and elected Labour Union nominees who now constitute the single major group amongst the committee members.

The Loco Running Staff have also been made targets of a special attack. The Committee set up for implementation of August 1973 agreement has been disbanded without settling the major demands including channel of negotiations. Hard-earned privileges have been withdrawn and workers are being subjected to various punishments and harassment. They are also being forced to work in violation of safety rules and beyond 14 hours at a stretch under threat of punishment, which, according to the Commissioner on Railway Safety, is the main reason for accidents.

This meeting strongly condemns the new attacks on trade union rights and specially the attempt of the Government and the Railway Administration to put pressure on the All India Railwaymen's Federation to remove George Fernandes from the post of President.

This meeting also condemns the repressive policy of the Government and demands that the arrested leaders should be released, victimised railwaymen reinstated and the legitimate demands of railwaymen conceded.

While welcoming the resistance by the railway workers braving all repressions, this meeting appeals to railwaymen to maintain their fighting unity and resist all attacks against their trade union and democratic rights. The CITU pledges full support to the struggle of railwaymen against oppression and for just demands.

4. ON ARRESTS AND VICTIMISATION OF CENTRAL AND STATE GOVT. EMPLOYEES:

This meeting of the Working Committee of the CITU condemns the policy of victimisation followed by the Central and State Governments against their employees. The Governments have not only refused to withdraw the punishments meted out to the employees in 1974 but also has come down on them with a heavy hand after proclamation of internal emergency.

In West Bengal, nine top ranking leaders of Central Government employees' movement and 15 leaders of State Government employees' Coordination Committee, including the President have been detained under the MISA. All the fifteen leaders of the State Government employees who were office-bearers of recognised unions have been summarily dismissed from service under Governor's special powers. Lakhs of employees have been subjected to penal measures like stoppage of yearly increment and promotion, denial of confirmation, pension, gratuity, etc. for participation in strike and prohibitive orders have been issued so that normal trade union functioning has been made virtually impossible.

In Tripura, 29 State Government employees including several detenues have been summarily dismissed. ^{/The}detained State Government employees' leaders have been sent to Vellore Jail in Tamilnadu, over a thousand miles away from their hearth and home, so that they cannot even have interviews with their family members.

In Kashmir, the most representative organisation of the State Government employees has been virtually declared illegal, its bank account frozen and several leaders have been arrested. Properties of several leaders have been seized while 14 detained leaders have been summarily dismissed from service. Though the Kashmir Government have promised to release all the arrested leaders after negotiation and have actually released a major section, yet these victimised workers have not been put back to their jobs.

In Uttar Pradesh, Com. P.N. Sukul, President of the All India State Government Employees' Federation, has been detained under MISA and sent three hundred miles away to be lodged in Jail. In Kerala, the President of the State NGO's organisation who is also Secretary of the all-India Federation has been detained under MISA.

In the background of the continuous struggle for all these years for central rates of pay and dearness allowance pending grant of need-based minimum wage by the State Governments employees especially after the one-day countrywide strike on 9th April 1974, these attacks are intended to strike terror into the ranks and to stifle the growth of the movement. It is noted that the State Government employees in most of the States have not been granted any increase in dearness allowance though the Central Government employees got increase of eight slabs of dearness allowance in the meanwhile. As far as the Central Government employees are concerned, their arrear dues on account of dearness allowance have been frozen, the rates of increase have been lowered and although one more instalment of increase is due to them the Government has refused to pay it. Thus, the real wage of both the Central and State Government employees has been reduced considerably. Besides, their holidays have been reduced, hours of work increased and the intensity of work increased and trade union rights curtailed.

This meeting demands reversal of this policy of victimisation,

release of the arrested leaders, reinstatement of the dismissed workers, withdrawal of penal measures, restoration of the privileges and trade union rights and a settlement on the question of wages and dearness allowance. This meeting warns the Government that the working class and the democratic masses cannot remain as silent spectators while the Government continues such brutal repression on its employees.

The CITU appeals to the Central and State Government employees to close up their ranks and forge a mighty unity to fight back this repression and win their just demands. This meeting appeals to the working class and the democratic masses of the country to raise their voice in support of the struggle of the Central and State Government employees.

5. ON EXECUTION OF SPANISH REVOLUTIONARIES :

This meeting of the Working Committee of the CITU joins the international working class in condemning the fascist regime in Spain for execution of Spanish revolutionaries, Comrades Ramon Gonclasanz, Jose Luiz Sanchez, Bravo Sollas, Jose Humberto, Baena Alonso, Juan Pa edes Manet and Angel Otaegul Echeverria and pays its homage to the memory of these myrtyrs.

The fascist regime in Spain passed a new "Anti-Terrorist Law" on August 22 last, which abolished the "Habeus Corpus" and inviolability of home, which came into effect from August 27. Trial of the patriots was started from the next day and eleven, including two women (one of them pregnant), were sentenced to death. The working class and the democratic forces of the whole world protested against this barbarous sentence and called on the Franco regime to spare their lives. Ignoring this massive protest, the fascist junta executed these revolutionaries on September 27. This was intended to strike terror in the Spanish people, who are fighting for democracy and against fascism.

The Spanish people lodged a heroic protest strike against this butchery and the holy wrath of the people all over the world was roused against this. Many Governments withdrew their Ambassadors and broke their diplomatic ties. The U.S. imperialists continue to support the fascist regime in Spain. It is unfortunate that the Government of India has not raised any voice of protest against these barbarous executions.

This meeting demands that the Government of India should immediately lodge its protest against the Franco regime.

The CITU pledges full support to the working class and the people of Spain in their fight against the fascist regime and calls upon the working class and the democratic people of the country to raise their powerful voice to force the Government of India to act in the interest of the people of Spain.

6. ON EMERGENCY AND THE WORKING CLASS :

The declaration of emergency of June 26, 1975 is the culmination of a process about which CITU gave warning, leading to imposition of one party dictatorship, thus putting an end to bourgeois parliamentary democracy, in whatever restricted form it existed before June 26. The experience of the past four months has blown up the claim of the Government that it was directed against right reaction and shown that the working class, employees, other democratic sections of people have become the main target.

Whatever gains and trade union rights the workers and employees achieved after decades of protracted and bitter struggles involving countless sacrifices including martyrdom of many lives have all been taken away within a few months of emergency.

The fundamental right of freedom of association, the right to hold meetings and the right to strike stand abrogated. All the ordinary rights of workers relating to conditions and security of service have been nullified. Summary removal from service without assigning any reason, countless dismissals, mass retrenchments, mass layoffs, heavy increase of workload beyond physical endurance rendering surplus thousands of workers, 7 day week, etc. have become the order of the day. Even the rights enjoyed by working class during British colonial regime do not exist today. Workers are not allowed to open their lips inside the factory or to protest against any injustice. It is reported that special central police officers are being appointed to each establishment, equipped with sophisticated gadgets, to report directly to the specialised intelligence agency of the Central Government. In fact, mills, factories and all establishments are being rapidly turned into prison houses.

To cap it all has come the Bonus Ordinance, scrapping the right to bonus, which the Supreme Court has held to be deferred wages.

Simultaneously, alongside these most savage attacks against the workers, concessions have been bestowed on the monopolies, surpassing all previous records on this count, since the proclamation of emergency. The list of concessions is long enough. It will suffice to catalogue a few of them, viz., assurance of no nationalisation, liberalisation of credit, exemption from Excise Duty, liberalisation of licensing procedures, legalisation of illegally installed excess capacity, entry of big business and multinational corporations in priority sectors reserved for state, vastly liberalised import entitlement, exemption from export duty (export subsidy), open invitation to foreign multi-nationals for joint private sectors (especially Indo-U.S.), proposed private joint sectors in other countries with U.S., etc.

It is crystal clear now that the declaration of emergency and imposition of dictatorship is nothing but a crude attempt to solve the ever-deepening bourgeois crisis at the expense of the working people by sheer brute force. The working class is more and more realising this through its experience.

It was, therefore, natural that the representatives of big business houses marched in procession to the Prime Minister's residence to affirm their support to emergency just after its declaration.

The Working Committee of CITU pays its tribute to the working class that even these draconian measures have not been able to kill the voice of the working class. Boycott of 4% bonus on an extensive scale and a state-wide general strike in Tamilnadu against the Bonus Ordinance will bear out this fact. Even AITUC and INTUC workers have also participated in this boycott movement. Workers in Kerala, West Bengal and other States have also resisted the attacks launched against them by the Government.

The CITU cannot but note with grave concern that all trade unions, including central trade union organisations, which are not prepared to bind the working class and people to the line of the Central Government, are being systematically sought to be squeezed out of existence. They are being damned as reactionary organisations, when they themselves cannot make

their voice heard because of emergency and press censorship. Apex bodies at central and state levels have been formed with INTUC, AITUC and a section of HMS, which are ever ready to betray the working class, people and democracy to serve as docile instruments to rubber-stamp the reactionary measures of the Government and emasculate the working class. The so-called workers' participation at floor level, approved by this apex body which included trade unions supporting the Government is nothing but a blatant attempt to pave the way for more exploitation of the workers and attacks on them and so stifle all protest.

The CITU appeals to the workers and employees to realise that ahead of them lies a long period of more fierce attacks and consequently long, arduous and persistent united struggles under extremely complicated and grave conditions. The CITU calls upon them to fight and defeat this criminal game of the Central Government, for retention of the right and gains of the workers and consequently fight for revocation of emergency and restoration of democracy and the fundamental rights of the working people.

In order to carry on this fight, unity of all workers and employees, irrespective of trade union and political affiliations, must be forged. The CITU appeals to the working class to unite and organise in order to wage this struggle adopting tactics and forms of struggle suitable for different conditions in different centres in the country.

CITU is confident that such policies of the Government can never succeed and the working class and people will ultimately emerge victorious, however serious the set-back seems to be at present.

7. ON THE STRUGGLE OF THE IDPL EMPLOYEES, HYDERABAD :

This meeting of the Working Committee of the CITU condemns the Government of Andhra Pradesh and the authorities of the Synthetic Drugs Plant (IDPL) Hyderabad, for resorting to brutal lathi charge on the 5th October 1975 on the employees who were peacefully squatting before the office demanding bonus. The Plant having made a profit of Rs. 4.7 crores last year, the workers were fully justified in demanding more bonus than that was paid earlier. The failure of the leadership of the recognised union to take up this demand firmly and also because of signing an agreement behind the back of the workers which lowered down the bonus, the workers had no alternative but to record their protest by peacefully squatting before the office without affecting the production. The management instead of settling the dispute with the real representatives of the workers, virtually handed over the plant to the police. A thousand strong armed police force, which comes to one for every four workers, pounced upon the peaceful workers and resorted to brutal lathi charge and teargassing without even any warning. The police further implicated 65 workers in concocted criminal cases and detained 9 workers under MISA. The authorities too came down with a heavy hand by suspending 134 employees and removing 20 badli workers.

The CITU pledges full support to the just struggle of the workers of the Synthetic Drugs Plant and demands that the arrested workers should be released, court cases withdrawn, all victimisation measures annulled and the just demands settled through negotiations with the real representatives of the workers.

This meeting appeals to working class and democratic masses of the country to raise their powerful voice of solidarity support to the struggle of the IDPL workers so as to force the Government to accept these demands.

8. ON EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK :

The Working Committee meeting of the CITU considers the ordinance promulgated by the President of India on equal pay for equal work as a belated measures which though outwardly claims to abolish wage disparity between men and women does not go much in ensuring the implementation of the measure and fails to protect the women workers from the threat of retrenchment following its introduction.

Though the Government of India ratified the I.L.O. Convention relating to equal pay for equal work as early as in 1958, it failed to implement it so far. Only when the CITU launched a complaint with the I.L.O. last year for the non-implementation of the convention and investigations were made by the ILO, the Government announced its intention to introduce legislation incorporating the provisions of the convention. The decision of the UNO to observe 1975 as the International Women's Year was utilised by the Government to make this announcement. Though the Union Labour Minister announced that it would introduce the legislation before 1st May 1975, the deliberate delay in bringing forward a legislation before the stipulated date resulted in promulgation of the ordinance before the end of the year.

The application of the ordinance will not lead to automatic introduction of the equal wage for equal work for men and women. It depends on the notification of the industry by the Government within a period of three years and so far the Government has issued notification for plantation industry only. The planters have already represented to the Government to give them six months time to study the implication of the ordinance with the result that women workers in this industry also continue to be deprived of equal wage rates.

The ordinance is applicable to establishments employing ten or more workers, and thus excluded large number of women workers in smaller establishments. It further keeps vague the definition of the clause "same work or work of similar nature" so as to allow the employees to find out ways and means of evading the provisions of the ordinance. It also gives powers to the Government to declare that in a particular establishment, the difference in wage rates between men and women is based on a factor other than sex which is likely to be used against the women workers.

The ordinance does not ban retrenchment of women workers and thus refuses to protect them when they face threat to their job security in the wake of implementation of the ordinance. Past experience shows that whenever protective legislation for women is passed, the employment of women has dropped substantially. There is every possibility that instead of implementing the ordinance, the employers would prefer to throw out these women workers on streets on some pretext. The provision of nominated advisory committees with 50% women representatives will alone not be able to stop these malpractices.

The maximum penalty provided by the ordinance is only Rs. 5,000 which hardly affects employers who have blatantly refused to implement the earlier provisions despite heavier penalties.

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The inspection machinery provided by the ordinance is just symbolic and will not deter the employers from not implementing the ordinance. The machinery to redress the grievances is dilatory which will further benefit the employers. Since no case can go to the Court unless it is sanctioned by an official appointed by the Government, it gives wide powers to the officials to obstruct genuine complaints of the workers.

The CITU therefore demands that the ordinance should be further amended on the following lines before it is enacted as a law so that interest of women workers are fully protected.

1. There should be ban on retrenchment of women workers with effect from the date of promulgation of ordinance.
2. The three-year clause for the implementation of the ordinance should be substituted by a clause providing for its immediate implementation by all establishments irrespective of their size with effect from the date of promulgation of ordinance.
3. Imposition of heavier punishment to the employers for violation of the Law which must include imprisonment in every case.
4. The trade unions should have the right to directly approach the Court without the approval of the officer appointed by the Government.
5. Withdrawal of the power of the Government to declare unequal wages in certain occupations due to a factor other than sex.
6. The ambiguity in the present definition of "equal work" should be removed.
7. The implementation of the Act should be supervised by committees consisting of representatives of trade unions elected through secret ballot and not nominated by the Government.

If these provisions are incorporated in the ordinance then alone it would ensure implementation of the concept of equal pay for equal work.

The Working Committee of the CITU calls upon all the trade union organisations to fight for improvement in the ordinance so that the Government is forced to incorporate these suggestions and the use of women as cheap source of labour by the capitalists is ended forthwith.

9. ON BONUS ORDINANCE :

This meeting of the Working Committee of the CITU strongly condemns the Bonus Ordinance recently promulgated by the President of India. This ordinance is a direct attack on the workers' right to bonus and takes away all the gains the workers have won through hard struggles, and naked defence of capitalist class. It has deprived the working class of over 200 crores of rupees in favour of the employers.

The ordinance has reduced the minimum bonus from 8.33 per cent to 4 per cent and has blatantly rejected the concept of bonus

as a deferred wage which was even accepted by the Supreme Court. The Bonus Commission awarded minimum bonus to workers irrespective of profit & loss. But this ordinance, by rejecting this concept, deprives lakhs of workers of any bonus on the plea that the companies have incurred losses.

The new element introduced by the ordinance, by which minimum bonus is worked out on the basis of average profitability over a four-year period, will virtually result in the majority of companies declaring nil bonus. This ordinance further seeks to link bonus to productivity which simply means that unless the workers further add to the already high profitability of the companies, they will not be paid additional bonus. This position was unitedly opposed by all central trade unions earlier. This new measure will give a handle to the employers to increase the workload on workers and intensify exploitation. The ordinance has also restricted the maximum ex-gratia payment to employees in banks, insurance, ports and docks and other establishments to 10 per cent and has curtailed the present right of bonus to these employees.

The Government has asked public sector managements not to enter into negotiations with the unions on the question of bonus and has usurped the right to determine the quantum of bonus for these employees, thus throwing to the winds all norms of collective bargaining. Therefore, this meeting is firmly of the opinion that the Bonus Ordinance signifies an all-round attack on the workers' right to bonus; and

This meeting rejects the argument of the Government that this step was necessary for fighting inflation.

This meeting notes with concern that, taking advantage of the ordinance, many companies have unilaterally declared a smaller quantum of bonus than that of previous years.

This meeting congratulates those workers who have been waging heroic battles against the companies' attempts to reduce bonus.

This meeting, therefore, demands that the Bonus ordinance should immediately be withdrawn and 8.33 per cent should be declared as minimum bonus irrespective of the profit or loss of the companies. This meeting also demands that there should be no ceiling on bonus.

This meeting further demands that the Government should direct the employers to pay higher rate of bonus than last year or atleast pay bonus at the same rate as in the last year. This meeting also demands that the Government should ensure that the bonus agreements are fully honoured and implemented by the employers.

The CITU calls upon the working class to resist in all possible ways this attack on their right to bonus and to build up powerful united movement to compel the Government to withdraw this ordinance.

The CITU appeals to all central trade unions to come forward and build united movement against this anti-working class measure by the Government.

10. ON BONDED LABOUR :

While taking note of the ordinance abolishing bonded labour in India, this meeting of the Working Committee of the CITU

is of the firm opinion that this evil system cannot be rooted out and totally abolished by the mere promulgation of an ordinance.

Bonded labour even before passing of this ordinance was prohibited under the Constitution of India, but this system is prevalent in different parts of India in not less than 15 States and the upper strata in rural areas have been continuing this evil practice in a nonchalant manner even after 28 years of independence and 25 years after introducing the the Constitution. The fact alone shows that this evil system cannot be eradicated by legal measures only.

Many studies conducted regarding bonded labour have clearly shown that this system is most prevalent among the landless peasants and agricultural labourers and among the tribals and harijans. They have also shown that the landlords and the money-lenders who generally belong to upper caste carry on this system of bonded labour. The studies have, therefore, pointed out that this problem cannot be solved and evil system cannot be eradicated until and unless landlordism is abolished and land is redistributed to the poor peasants and landless labourers and radical agrarian measures are carried out. But the said ordinance does not speak a single word about agrarian reform.

This meeting, therefore, demands of the Government that in order to stop this exploitative system of bonded labour, land be redistributed to the poor peasants and agricultural labourers and radical agrarian reforms be immediately undertaken.

Moreover, though the ordinance provides for setting up of vigilance committees at district or sub-divisional levels, no provision has been made for supervision by the representatives of the bonded labourers.

This meeting, therefore, demands that the representatives of the bonded labour and their organisations be given the full right to supervise over the abolition of bonded labour system.

This meeting demands more stringent and deterrent punishment for those who carry on this pernicious system than what has been proposed in the ordinance.

This meeting further demands forthwith liquidation of all debts irrespective of the fact whether any court decree is pending or not. This meeting also demands return of money to the bonded labour paid by him or his ancestors in excess of debt.

This meeting calls upon the working class to ally with the peasantry for building a powerful movement for uprooting this pernicious system of bonded labour.

11. ON INDIA - U.S.A. JOINT COMMISSION

The Indo-U.S. Commission formed last year for the promotion of economic co-operation between India and America held its meeting in America on "6 and 7th" October last. The decisions taken in that meeting indicate that flood-gates have been opened for American investments in India and whichever restrictions so long imposed on the investment of foreign money have been removed to create a new favourable climate for this. The meeting has also established an institutional frame work on a permanent basis to extend the scope of this collaboration. One of the major aspect of this institutional collaboration is the setting up of a joint business Council of the representatives of both the American Chambers of Commerce and the Federation of the Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industries.

The implication of the formation of this joint Council of big business of these two countries including multinational corporations under the joint initiative of two governments is very serious and dangerous not only for our economy but also for our independence. It helps not only greater penetration of American capital into our economy and consequently greater dependence on it but it also means greater voice and interference in matters of economic and political policies of the Government both internal and external.

The meeting decided that the opportunities for American investment of private capital will be extended in core Sectors and in areas with high export potential and those involving new technology not now available in India. The areas of penetration of American money and influence in the name of co-operation covers the wide field of industry and trade, science and technology and education and culture.

The Government of India have already declared several concessions in relation to foreign companies and monopoly houses, since the proclamation of emergency. Apart from the announcement of assurance of no-nationalisation, the government delicensed 21 industries on 25 October and permitted unlimited expansion, beyond the licensed capacities, of foreign companies and monopoly houses in 30 other important industries. Besides these, the foreign companies, mostly American, have been allowed exploration of oil not only in off-shore areas but in on-shore fields also. In the cases of collaboration industries and projects the foreign money has been allowed major partnerships not only for operation inside the country but also in Third Countries.

The Working Committee of the CITU views with seriousness these developments as growing threat not only to our economy which is already in the midst of deepening crisis, our democracy which is already subverted under emergency but also to our national independence. The talk of self-reliance has been reduced to a mockery.

Now the role of multinational corporations are exposed on an world scale. The brutal murder of Dr. Allende and the overthrow of his elected government by fascistic method with the hired army junta as an agency of CIA with full backing of U.S. Government has revealed the real character of U.S. Government and the multinational corporation.

Instead of closing the doors to these multinational Corporations and thoroughly exposing their real character, the Government of India have welcomed them, paved the way for their large-scale penetration and guaranteed favourable conditions for their operations.

The steps adopted by the Government on the decisions of the Indo-U.S. Commission instead of solving the economic crisis will further accentuate it and the attacks on democracy and the neo-colonialist pressure on the home and foreign policies of the Government will be further strengthened.

The working committee calls upon the working class and the democratic people of India to be vigilant about this new threat and expose the character of this commission and the deal. The working class should come forward as the champion of anti-imperialist struggle and rouse the patriotic heritage of the people of India to defeat this dangerous anti-national move of the Government.

*2. ON RETRENCHMENT, LAY-OFF AND CLOSURES :

The meeting of the Working Committee of the CITU expresses its grave concern at the growing offensive of retrenchment, lay-offs and closures since the Third Conference of the CITU and particularly after the proclamation of emergency.

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The Third Conference warned the working class of India about the serious threat of growing recession in the economy and called on them to be prepared to fight every attack unitedly. The Workers have learnt since then the correctness of the warning from their own experience. The Indian economy is witnessing an all pervading recession the burden of which is sought to be passed on the workers by the employers.

Despite tall talk of boosting production the Government has utterly failed even to ensure full utilisation of the existing unutilised capacity in most of the industrial sectors. During the last 5 months the conditions have gone from bad to worse and unprecedented unutilised capacity is in existence in several industries. With huge accumulation of stocks with factories, an all round offensive of retrenchment, lay-offs and closures is being launched throughout the country. The position, particularly in Jute, Cotton Textile, Engineering, handloom power loom and other industries, is very serious.

On the plea of lack of orders, a full scale retrenchment drive is on throughout the country affecting several thousands of workers. Since the proclamation of emergency casual and daily rated workers are being retrenched without even paying retrenchment compensation. The public sector undertakings are compelling forced retirement under the so called voluntary retirement scheme. The State and Central Governments are forcibly retiring employees who are above 50 years old on the ground of inefficiency. The women workers have also been made a special target of attack in this retrenchment drive.

Taking advantage of the emergency, several employers have led off lakhs of workers on flimsy grounds and even the lay-off compensation permissible under the law is not paid to them. The lay-off has become a handy weapon for the employers to impose partial unemployment on the workers in a period of recession, despite huge profits earned in all these years especially in boom period.

Several factories have been closed down rendering large number of workers out of jobs. The trade union demand of re-opening of these factories is falling on deaf ears. Recent credit squeeze has hit large number of small industrial units forcing them to close down the establishment. Threat of closure of many more factories is looming large and the employers are using this threat against every demand of the workers. The unemployed workers on the rolls of the employment exchanges have swelled to over 87 lakhs, while the rural unemployment has also reached alarming proportions.

Though the Prime Minister and several official spokesmen have repeatedly stated that employers would not be allowed to misuse the emergency no steps are being taken by the Government against the employers launching these attacks. They however are faced with ferocious repressive measures when they dare to fight against the threat to their job security.

The CITU calls upon the working class to resist the attempts of the employers and the Government to pass on the burden of recession of the shoulders of workers. The trade unions should immediately launch a countrywide campaign demanding the following to protect their job.

1. Ban on retrenchment.
2. Full compensation for lay-off period irrespective of the cause of lay-off.
3. Take over of all closed units and reopening them with the full complement prior to the closure without any change in terms of service conditions.
4. Stringent action against the employers responsible for the closure due to mismanagement, misappropriation of funds, transfer of funds to some other concern etc.
5. Employment relief

to all workers who are not provided with any job. 6. End to automation, modernisation and other job saving devices, immediate taking up labour intensive production programmes to boost employment.

The CITU appeals to all sections of workers to close up their ranks and fight for these demands so that the Government is forced to introduce these measures.

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C E N T R E O F I N D I A N T R A D E U N I O N S

WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING

MADRAS 10 - 12 NOVEMBER 1975

Resolution on Govt's scheme of "Participative
management"

The Working Committee of the CITU has considered the scheme of "Participative Management" through shop councils recently announced by the Govt. of India and hailed by the AITUC, INTUC and a section of the HMS as a great progressive measure. The title of the scheme, namely, "Participative Management" is a misnomer, for under the scheme the workers have no part in the management. The Scheme is a device to impose higher workloads and intensify exploitation with the facade of concurrence of workers' representatives .

The scheme empowers the management to form shop council at departmental level and joint council at the plant level in a factory where 500 or more workers are employed in private, public and co-operative sectors . The management has been given powers to decide the number of shop councils to be formed and the membership of such councils. The management can also decide which union or unions would be associated with the shop council. The workers' nominee would only be from among the employees in the department and a victimised worker would automatically lose the membership. The experience of the workers' participation in management since 1958 has given many examples of such victimisations. In Durgapur, where CITU union is recognised and was associated with joint council is now facing victimisation of large number of leading activists. The Chairman of the shop council and the joint council will always be a representatives of the management giving a decisive role to the management in all decisions.

The main objective of the shop councils would be "increasing production, productivity and overall efficiency of the shop/department". In the name of assisting the management in achieving monthly/yearly production targets every attempt will ^{be} made by the management to force the workers to work harder without even providing need-based human standard. On the plea of avoiding waste and optimum utilisation of manpower, workers will be asked to accept reduced lunch break, reduced time for attending calls of nature or cut down in time on similar necessities. In the name of reducing absenteeism attempts will be made to use this councils to impose more onerous working conditions on the workers. In the name of maintaining discipline in the shop, many existing facilities are likely to be curtailed. Already in several establishments secret employment has been given to some persons for spying purposes. Grievances of workers in the shop cannot be raised in the councils.

The experience in Great Britain, West Germany, France and Italy has shown that the employers have always utilised such schemes of workers participation in management" to increase productivity of the workers and add to their profitability. They had become instruments of class collaboration and were meant to blunt the edge of workers'

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struggle. The trade unions in these countries which have participated in such organisations have, out of their experience, come out against those schemes.

The Working Committee calls upon the CITU unions to educate the workers about the class nature of the present scheme and fight all the anti-working class measures advanced through such committees with nominees favoured by the managements. The CITU unions should point out that every increase in productivity is accompanied by reducing the existing employment in the factory or future job potential. The CITU unions should also explain to the workers the real purpose behind such committees, i.e. to resort to most brutal repression on the workers and curtail their trade union and democratic rights on the one hand and to make a show of workers' participation by bolsering pro-Govt. and pro-employer trade unions in these committees on the other.

If workers' rights inside the plants are to be real and effective, and not illusory and deceptive, the CITU demands the withdrawing of the scheme announced by the Govt. and provision should be made for :

1. All the workers' nominees should be elected through secret ballot.
2. The workers' representative should have the right to challenge the genuineness of the accounts. They should be protected from any disciplinary action for their stand.
3. While agreeing to give accepted norms of production the trade unions have the right to oppose every intensification of workload.
4. The workers' representatives should have the right to attack the inefficiency of the management, misappropriation of funds, bad supply of materials, etc. for the loss of productions.
5. Ban on retrenchment superannuation and lay-off consequent to any rise in production in the plant.
6. Extension of trade union rights at the shop level.

The Working Committee meeting calls upon the CITU unions to raise these demands so that workers understand the real nature of the present scheme through their experience.

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CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS

WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING, MADRAS - 10-12 NOVEMBER 1975.

REPORT BY COM. P. RAMAMURTI, GENERAL SECRETARY, CITU

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Comrades, the Bombay conference of the CITU passed a comprehensive resolution on recession and called upon our unions to mobilise the workers against its attacks. During the last six months, the recession has advanced by leaps and bounds and combined with the emergency which has paralysed working class resistance, illegalise strikes and all protests, it has worked havoc with the livelihood and living conditions of the working class.

Retrenchment, layoff, closures, throwing out tens of thousands of workers on streets, notwithstanding the demagogic official declarations that no such things will be permitted; the wholesale massacre of jobs in smaller industries and ruination of the defenceless workers in unorganised industries; lakhs of handloom workers virtually reduced to destitution--these are the realities faced by the working class.

The emergency has facilitated this monstrous attack on employment and reveals its class objective. There is no right party here to attack. It is well known that neither the right parties nor Shri J.P. were organising the working people in their class organisations nor were they advocating or supporting strike struggles against the vested interests.

THE BONUS ORDINANCE

The Government has taken a direct hand in attacking the workers. It has passed the bonus ordinance reducing the minimum quantum to 4%. The hard-won right of the workers to get a minimum bonus of 8 and 1/3 per cent as deferred wage has been scrapped. The progressive and Garibi Hatao Government has gone back on the Supreme Court verdict that the bonus is a deferred wage and the entire mass of workers are entitled to it. The 'deferred wage' principle had to go, to save the capitalists who plead no profit. Now under the benign emergency the companies showing no profits in their balance sheets -- which every one knows are manipulated -- need not pay any bonus. It means that a majority of the workers will not get it. The ordinance thus not only reduces the minimum quantum but deprives majority of the workers of the right to bonus. Secondly, even if a concern makes huge profits, thanks to the honest and strenuous work of the workers, it has been prohibited from making payments over and above the quantum payable under the ordinance. It also prescribed that where the workers have received any excess bonus over the quantum payable under the ordinance it should be recovered from them. The axe has fallen on the Insurance Bank and other employees also.

Compare this with the enormous amounts of export subsidies, withdrawal of export duties, tax concessions and withdrawals given to the capitalists before and during the emergency and you know who is fighting whom.

How much money has been fleeced from the workers? According to the Finance Minister, the workers have been deprived of Rs.200 crores-- perhaps an understatement. However, this is only the beginning. By next year, all bonus will disappear. On October 19, the Union Deputy Labour Minister, Balgovind Verma, addressing the Rashtriya Mazdoor Congress in Nagpur, foreshadowed the scrapping of the bonus system. He said that the cut in the percentage of bonus was a step in this direction. He added that the Government was thinking of linking wages with production and payment of bonus without linking with production led to inflation. (Hindusthan Times, 20-10-75). The Govt. froze additional dearness allowance; it froze wage increases; and now it is on its way to abolishing the bonus altogether.

LINKING WAGES WITH PRODUCTIVITY

Comrades, under the emergency, wage rises have been frozen, and no rise is permitted unless the workers agree to accept increased work load. In mining, in steel, in several industries, the exploited labour whose real wages have fallen during the last two years, have been forced to increase "productivity" in return for wage additions. This is called linking wages with productivity, though this is not all. The plan is much more nefarious than this.

Is it not monstrous to talk about increase in wages only after additional production; when the workers' wage is a denudation wage? It means you openly declare that the present division of surplus value by way of interest, profits, taxation and wages is just and even and the worker has no claim to an altered share unless he sweats himself further. This is the open charter of capitalist exploitation that the Government is sanctioning. This is a direct attack on the principle of need-based wage -- human living conditions. The acceptance of this principle enables the working class to stall the growing attacks of the employers and demand a time-bound programme to achieve it. Now, like the deferred wage principle regarding bonus, this basic principle is also being scuttled. We are thrown back to the period of pre-Independence days when the policemen's clout was the only reply to wage demands. It is not only a plan to deny need-based wage, it is a clandestine design to abolish all dearness allowance like the bonus and force the worker to sweat more to protect himself against the rising cost of living. The Government does not guarantee that the cost of living will not go up; at the same time, it says all increases not connected with increased productivity are banned. This means all increases connected with the rising cost of living are also prohibited. And thirdly, it is a plan to force down the wages to the level of rural agricultural workers whose wages are notoriously low--at any rate, to stop any addition in the name of bridging the gap between rural and industrial wages. There is of course no intention to raise the agricultural wage to a need-based wage at any time--even to raise it radically. The miserable increases after the declaration of emergency which sanction a wage between Rs. 3 to Rs.6.50 (Rs.8 only in Kerala) constitute the high watermark of this concern for agricultural workers.

A CANDID STATEMENT

The new principle demands that whatever production effort the worker might put, howsoever he might work, he should not get much over the minimum given to the agricultural workers, obviously the rest/his of surplus going to the capitalists for profit and their State for supporting the capitalists and landlords and suppressing the people. A writer in a daily paper puts the argument of the employers, in the following words :

"The employers have argued that because of the dualistic nature of the economy, the wages of the industrial workers should be related to the wages of the agricultural workers (they range from Rs.3 to Rs. 8) per day and should not be permitted to move too far ahead of the wage levels in agriculture. (No talk of raising the wages of agricultural workers). In linking wage increase with productivity, it is necessary that the average industrial and agricultural productivity rate should serve as a guideline for the determination of at least the basic wages of both the agricultural and industrial worker".

"The effectiveness of any wage policy eventually be determined by the extent to which it can reduce income disparities between the agricultural wage level and industrial wage in the urban sector and by changes in the wage structure of industrial undertakings."

The quest to remove poverty by abolishing income disparities has at last found an inspiring aim : bring the industrial wage to the low

level of the agricultural wage and it will be heaven ! The real problem is not the disparity between the incomes of the exploiting and exploited classes, not between the meagre incomes of the members of the latter class and the profits of capitalists and incomes of landlords, inflated incomes of distributors and the hangers-on maintained by the capitalists, but the disparity between agricultural and industrial wage. This is the high water mark of hypocrisy. But this is not only the employers' plan. It is Indira Government's plan also and it is being pushed forward with great advertising and called linking wage with productivity, making its hearer feel as if the workers are not producing enough to earn a better wage.

This is the new offensive in the offing, more dangerous than any hitherto unleashed. It is being prepared and will be suddenly thrust on the workers when all wage claims will be rejected, more work extracted and wages will be cut downwards. The CITU unions must prepare the workers to face it. They must educate the workers and expose the real meaning of the wages linked with productivity, and debunk the claims of the authorities to represent the interests of the agricultural workers or the people and the economy.

THE ROLE OF THE OPPORTUNISTS

Again, it should be noted that the Government is utilising the services of the AITUC and INTUC leaders to push across this scheme. They are holding exclusive consultations with them and harnessing their help to recommend the scheme to the workers. Once more there is attempt to divide the workers. This mischief can be prevented if we educate our ranks as well as their ranks. Only on the basis of such timely education, united action is possible and it possible to pressurise the leaders to give up their support to the new scheme.

It is pertinent here to remember that the gains of workers' productivity have been systematically appropriated by the capitalists in the past and it will be so in future. The National Labour Commission noted that production per worker increased by about 63 per cent between 1952 and 1964 but wages did not rise proportionately. According to a writer in the daily press, the share of wages in the value added by manufacture shows a decline from 50 per cent in 1960 to 36.4 per cent in 1964. During the decade, in real terms, total emoluments per employee went up only 23 per cent compared to 53 per cent increase in value added per employee. The writer concluded, "the gains in productivity have by and large been appropriated by entrepreneurs." (AB 25/10).

ATTACK ON SEA-MEN

Comrades, another wanton attack has been made against 30,000 foreign going Indian seamen. In October (press reports stated that) the Ministry of Shipping ordered discontinuing of a benefit scheme which was started in May last and which gave relief to the seamen during spells of unemployment every year.

It was not the Government of India that was spending money on the scheme; nor the Indian shipowners. The workers were being benefitted because of the solidarity of international transport workers who had compelled the British shipowners to raise the wages of Indian seamen.

The benefit scheme was being operated from a fund which was created when under the pressure of the National Union of Seamen of Britain and the International Transport Workers' Federation, of the British shipowners agreed to pay a minimum basic wage of £ 48 a month (the wage they were getting was much less) for Asian seamen. They only laid down one condition-- the Indian shipowners and the Indian Shipping Corporation also must agree to pay the same wage. But the Indians refused to pay it. But the British shipowners were not allowed to get out of the bargain, and were also not allowed to pay more minimum basic wages under separate Articles of Agreement for Asian Seamen. Once again under the pressure of the Transport Workers' Federation,

The British owners agreed to pay £ 32 a month to Indian seamen as wage and deposit the difference of £ 16 to a fund for their benefit. The deposit amounted to Rs. 10 crores annually from which the registered but unemployed seamen only in the fictitious name of "Needy Seamen" was paid Rs.10 per day. The Government now deprived the workers of the benefit of this fund under the plea that it may lead to mismanagement. The Government is thus directly obliging the British Ship owners and making them a present of Rs10 crores annually--a foreign exchange worth of Rs.10 crores. In effect, it is asking the foreign shipowners to pay lower wages, discriminate against Indians and get away with it. Why this solicitude for British interests? Why this arbitrary order to stop the benefit? Is it because the Shipping companies want recruitment at the lowest wage level and deprive Indian seamen of the chance of earning on foreign vessels?

INCREASED WORKLOAD

Comrades, last couple of years, the increased workload was being systematically imposed but denied by the employers. At any rate, it was not brazen-facedly advertised. But now under the emergency, with the threat of penalisation hanging against every resistance, the employers and the Government are having a free field. The censored press does not publish the protests of the workers; therefore its extent and intensity cannot be properly assessed though it is being introduced on a wide scale. But what is advertised and published by the employing agency as a great triumph shows how barbarously the workers are being exploited and sweated. The following message of PTI (New Delhi, 7th October)-- an officially inspired message--tells its own tale:

"Productivity of labour, machinery and plant, material and other capital assets has substantially gone up in the railway workshop since the promulgation of the emergency. The outturn of passenger coaches from the workshops was 1884 broad-gauge units in August 1975 as against the average monthly outturn of 1571 in 1974-75. The metre gauge output improved by about 80 units in August when compared with last year's monthly average. As regards periodical overhauling of wagons, the improvement in productivity has been nearly 45 percent over 1972-73 performance. From a monthly average of 5606 broad-gauge units in 1972-73, 6428 in 1974-75, railway workshops turned out 8356 broad-gauge units in August this year after periodical overhauling..... Besides, 9683 wagons were given other booked repairs during July 1975 compared to last year's monthly average of just over 7000 wagons. In the case of locomotives, 104 broad-gauge and 58 metre-gauge steam locos were overhauled in August 1975 which is an improvement of nearly 10 per cent over the average of 1974-75.

"The sharp increase in the turn out of wagons, locomotives and coaches after periodical overhauling is not a fair indication of the increase in productivity. The quantum of work also has heavily increased as a result of the recent decision of the railways to keep over-aged steam locos in service up to 60 years".

Only the railway workers can tell what sweating and barbarity is involved in this productivity drive. The public sector railways seem to be a more merciless slave driver than the private employers.

And for this increased productivity, the railway worker neither gets bonus, nor increased wage or dearness allowance. On the contrary, hundreds who have been victimised during strikes, the drivers, firemen, shunters, workshop workers, continue without jobs and those working must put up with the miserable wage that is their lot. Only they must increase their productivity.

The Apex Body--where the representatives of the officially patronised unions meet the representatives of the employers has taken the decision to introduce 7-days working of all the factories, with the AITUC dissenting. The pre-conditions for introducing non-stop working appear to provide against mischief. Only one promise is not there--consultation and consent of workers whose common holiday is being taken away by the proposal--the right of common holiday for which the working class had to wage innumerable battles for years. A more bureaucratic attitude cannot be imagined. It is clear that neither the INTUC nor the HMS organisations, individually and collectively, have any authority to barter away this right of the workers. The proposal is made in the name of providing additional employment, to offer jobs to the unemployed. Is this not an attempt to sidetrack the immediate problem--the problem of layoffs, closures, lockout, retrenchment and short-time work that faces the mass of workers. The employers seem to have succeeded in sidetracking attention on this by talking about seven-day working. Does it stand to reason that with the majority of concerns shouting about demand recession and heading for curtailment of production, they will be serious in adding to employment or working the factories one day more in the week. Two years back, the seven-day week was tried in the textile industry in Bombay. As a Bombay daily commented, "It proved to be a failure...an important reason which weighed with the workers was that they lost a common weekly holiday which disrupted their social life as well as their trade union activity. As for the sharing of the gains arising out of a seven-day week and the additional permanent employment stipulation as among the conditions of the implementation of the scheme, the Bombay experiment showed that the gains tilted in favour of the employers."

In Bombay, the workers under the influence of the INTUC union were inveigled into accepting the seven-day week by promising that in the additional employment, first preference will be given to the workers' relatives. Secondly, the seven-day week was introduced in certain mills in Bombay because these mills producing fine and super-fine cloth for export had booming orders and they wanted to make the maximum profits. It had nothing to do with the production of cheap cloth for the people or a desire to reduce unemployment. I would like to know from our Bombay comrades where exactly the scheme stands today.

The working class is bound to accept and implement every genuine measure for relieving unemployment. But it cannot be a party to deceptive propaganda measures. The employers and the Government have to accept the responsibility for providing genuine work or unemployment wage. The problem cannot be solved by attacking the rights already earned by the working class. The right to common holiday is an integral part of the right for trade union activity and certain employers and the Government seek the liberty to do away with it according to their convenience. The Government pretends to fight income disparities in India by proposals to reduce the industrial wage to the level of the agricultural wage; it pretends to fight unemployment by attacking the common holiday.

Neglect of the unemployed by the organised trade union movement emboldens the Government and the employers to mask their selfish schemes as intended for the benefit of the unemployed. It will be no surprise if large number of unemployed workers are deceived by it and hope to get work under it. Without educating and winning those without work, without a serious fight on the part of the organised trade union movement for effective alternative sources of relief or work, it will be difficult to resist such schemes. Of course, there is absolutely no chance of a large number of unemployed getting work under them, because with industrial recession and closures threatened, capitalists are not in a position to run their factories seven day in the week. Only a few with big export orders may think of it. Those without work will get nothing but promises.

It should be further asked whether seven day week is technically possible as a permanent measure. In India, the employers economise on the maintenance of machinery, neglect it, resulting in quick wearing down, lower productivity and increased accidents. Seven-day running will intensify these evils.

The guidelines given are intended to prevent certain mischief; but at the same time, they ensure the mischief of permanent loss of common holiday for the working class; ensuring further more profits for the capitalists (when conditions are better, seven-day working means exploitation of larger number of workers with the same amount of capital)

The guidelines are: (1) Before any unit or industry wants to introduce seven-day working, it must have worked all the three shifts for sufficiently long time and proved that its existing installed capacity has been utilised to the full; (2) Introduction of seven-day week working and recruitment of new labour under the scheme should be on a permanent basis so that workers are not thrown out after a short period. (In their anxiety for permanent jobs they are demanding that the loss of common holiday should be a permanent feature. This is how the INTUC guards the workers' interests. The clause should read "Seven-day week is a temporary measure; but those recruited under it should be considered permanent workers. The Government and the employers are bound to provide them with permanent jobs elsewhere to restore the common holiday of the workers as quickly as possible.) (3) There shall not be any increased retrenchment or lay-off consequent upon increased production on account of seven-day working; (4) Any increase in the gains arising out of seven-day working shall be shared in the manner agreed to between the union and the management; (5) The seven-day working should create additional employment (how much?) It is not for absorbing any labour rendered surplus by nationalisation.

With the INTUC leaders to negotiate and compromise, these provisions will be further watered down and remain on paper.

EQUAL PAY FOR WOMEN

The Equal Remuneration ordinance is a welcome development in the midst of these attacks. It prohibits any discrimination in the matter of emoluments on grounds of sex. As you know, the CITU had raised the question at its Ernakulam conference and represented to the ILO the discrimination practised by the Government and employers against women workers. It pointed out that wage committees appointed by the Government recommended lower wages for women for the same work. The reply of the Government to our representation was a callous one justifying the discriminatory practice. But then the International Women's Year intervened. With a woman Prime Minister, it became extremely difficult to ignore the problem. The result was the new ordinance--a half-hearted and partial measure. Immediately it is applicable only to the plantation industry. How long it will take to extend it to all industries and spheres of economic and social activity, one cannot say. We know how the Government implements the other acts--factory inspection, provident fund, etc. In fact, we have already noted that there is a growing collapse of all labour legislation. It is futile to expect a vigorous implementation of the Act, especially where such big foreign exchange-earning vested interests like the tea planters are concerned. The ordinance also seeks to go slow with the offenders. It provides a penalty of Rs. 500 to Rs. 5000 but no imprisonment. This is almost a temptation for permanent violation.

The provisions of the ordinance cannot be implemented without mass pressure and exposure of violations. The CITU unions should seize the issue now that the principle is finally accepted and legal provision for equal wage is made. They should be ready to fight the underhand methods of the employers to defeat the purpose of the Act--victimisation, stoppage of women recruitment and so on. The ordinance should be a great lever to mobilise women workers under the CITU.

APEX BODY

Along with direct attacks, the Government is perfecting the machinery of class collaboration to mislead the people into thinking that labour is being consulted at every step. You will all remember that in order to deny the CITU its legitimate right to represent at the tripartite labour conference and other meetings, the Government and its labour department evaded verification of membership of central trade union organisations.

AITUC boycotted the verification knowing that it would lose its inflated status. Verification was sabotaged to deny the CITU its legitimate right to represent the workers. Nor did the Government accept our demand for decision by ballot. At the same time, confabulations and consultations were continued by the Labour Minister with the INTUC and the AITUC leaders. The tripartite Labour Conference was given a burial .

Now all these clandestine operations and designs are being legitimatised. The APEX body has been formed and only the AITUC, INTUC and HMS are its members from the workers' side. When the Labour Minister was asked by Com. Ismail at one of the Parliament Consultative Committee meetings why the CITU was not on the APEX body, he replied that it was because the CITU was opposed to the Government's policy and joining hands with the reactionaries.

Joining hands with reactionaries--any lie is good enough under the emergency. But the cat was out of the bag. The body was to consist only of 'yes-organisations' of the Government; only the class collaborators could be its members. This is the new democratic concept under the emergency--democracy as it suits India according to the Congress concept.

MANAGEMENT PARTICIPATION

Apart from the APEX Body, the Government is forging another instrument for its class collaborating purpose--the so-called scheme for workers' participation in management. The CITU and its trade unions are prepared to accept the responsibility of conducting and operating industry if they are armed with real and equal power, if they are allowed access to all the finance operations and documents of the Company. They are prepared to combine a vigorous defence of the interests of the workers with an efficient conduct of the operation of the concern. And for this purpose, they demand that the workers' representatives be chosen by direct ballot and not nominated by Government favoured unions.

But this is not the concept of the Government and the INTUC and AITUC leaders. They want a few workers nominated by these organisations to function on the board of directors and at the mercy of the employers, operating only as a decoration and not armed with real power. They are trying to institute a similar machinery at the floor level. It is a plan for class collaboration and giving the status of workers' representation to these on this body or the Committee. In this connection the following comment of the London 'ECONOMIST' (15th August) is revealing : "The Germans have known about it since 1950s. Elsewhere in the nine European countries the message has been unbelievably slow to get through, but is now registering at last; the way to wed workers to capitalism, in sickness and health, is to put them in the board room and give them a part in running a firm's affair--particularly if the economic situation forbids pay rises they demand. Now that Iran is flirting with its own industrial variant of industrial democracy, Europe's industrial countries cannot with grace allow themselves to be left behind. Mr. Peter Shore, Britain's Secretary of State for Trade last week announced a committee of inquiry to study how best to represent workers on company boards." "Management participation" is a class manoeuvre of the capitalists when faced



with a crisis--the Government of India has got the message. And now, the Government has announced its scheme which reveals that there is no participation at the plant level, but only formal committees in departments to increase production. The full authority to 'hire and fire' for production norms, remains with the management. This is how, one of the 20-points programme of the Prime Minister is implemented by the Government. To call it a hoax is to use a very mild expression.

OFFENSIVE AGAINST EMPLOYEES

Needless to say, along with the workers, the employees, especially the Central Government and State Government employees, have been attacked. Hundreds of State and Central employees have been summarily thrown out. The Madhya Pradesh Government alone has discharged 4000 employees. The figures of other States are not available, as yet. The Centre has discharged 2000 employees and is examining the cases of 50000 more. The total number discharged by the Central and the State Governments must run into a big figure. How big the total ultimately is likely to be, can be gauged from the fact that according to the Union Home Minister's statement two months back, that there were two lakh surplus employees in the central administration.

This big offensive against the employees, this open retrenchment drive is being paraded as a cleansing measure to purify the services. In reality, it is a vindictive victimisation drive against active elements, a retrenchment drive to cut down Government expenses in the name of fighting corruption. Employees who do not actively support the ruling party run the risk of being dismissed.

Besides the legitimate dearness allowance instalments of the employees have been delayed and partly frozen. Their holidays have been reduced. Their hours of work have been lengthened and the intensity of work has been increased. Their trade union rights have been attacked. In West Bengal, the trade union leaders of State employees have been jailed and summarily discharged--all to strike terror among them. Again, Insurance, Banks and other employees have lost a number of trade union rights.

OFFENSIVE AGAINST JOBS

Comrades, the next monstrous offensive has been unleashed since the emergency against the jobs of the workers. The censored press is not allowed to publish the details of this attack, and yet what has appeared is enough to show its all-embracing character embracing lakhs of workers. The situation is so alarming that at the APEX Body meeting on October 20, the leaders of the INTUC and the AITUC, loyal supporters and advocates of emergency had to express their regret at what was happening. "The workers' side regretted that unilateral lay off was continuing in several industries including textiles, cement, sugar, engineering and jute. The earlier agreement that there shall be no unilateral layoff is not being adhered to by employers. The labour leaders insisted on the Government implementing the agreement and enforcing it so that there was no unilateral layoff".

In Tamil Nadu, at the beginning of September, about 3000 workers in the sugar industry, 20000 workers in the textile industry and about 10000 workers in the engineering industry, were laid off under various pretexts.

The situation in Kanpur has been worse since May last and emergency did not make any difference till early September at least. Two textile mills employing 5700 workers have been closed since May. The J.K. Rayon declared a lay off in March because power was not available. After the resumption of power supply, the lay off was not lifted. Recently, the employers announced their decision to close

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the unit, from September 14, rendering 1800 workers without jobs.

Press reports in September said that about 100 mini-steel plants have been closed down all over the country, rendering almost a lakh of people unemployed. In Maharashtra, about nine units have been shut down. The worst hit are the units in the northern belt which together account for a capacity of 1.5 million tonnes.

West Bengal, as usual, is one of the worst hit states. Though the plans of jute bosses for reduction of output have been stalled for the time being, still lay-offs, retrenchment, lock-outs, continue in the State. The Labour Department of the West Bengal Government revealed (October 24) in its recent review that there were now 20 cases of lock-out involving 9428 workmen. In nine cases, lock-out was declared following disputes over the quantum of bonus. Lay-off of workers is continuing in 55 units employing about 15000 workers and 13 units have been closed affecting 686 workers. Besides, the National Tobacco Company has issued orders of retrenchment to about 1200 employees.

A West Bengal AITUC leader, quoting the same source in his letter to the Labour Minister, gave the figures as follows: Closure in 206 units affecting 17000 workers; lockout in 29 units affecting 18000 workers; lay-off in 9 units affecting 13000 workers; and strike in 12 units affecting 1800 workers.

All these are, of course, under-statements.

Far more serious is the situation in unorganised and some other industries. The unemployment and deprivation of job among unskilled workers has reached a new high, thanks to the so-called anti-inflationary policy of the Government. Nearly half a million building workers have lost their jobs with the Government's ban on luxury construction which was not accompanied by plans of low-cost housing to protect the jobs of the workers. There is large-scale unemployment in the automobile industry. Its heavy excise taxation which makes the use of private cars prohibitive is not accompanied by promotion of the production of buses and trucks of which there is urgent need. The very progress of industry under the capitalist path has been creating unemployment at a rapid rate. The modern industry is capital-intensive and it displaces more persons than it employs unless its progress is rapid as under Socialism. As an editorial of TIMES OF INDIA points out, "Shoe factories, mechanised bakeries, cooking utensils plants, mechanised brick plants, textile dyeing and printing mills and the like, have thrown out millions of cobblers, bakers, potters, brickmakers, printers and others out of work". Now with the recession on in the modern industries also the cup is full.

GOVERNMENT PLANNING RETREAT

Has the Government made any serious effort to protect the jobs of the workers? Some times, they have taken some stop-gap measures but as the figures shows they have been unable to prevent lay-offs and retrenchment. They may formally even pass a law prohibiting unilateral layoff i.e. without the consent of the Govt. But in the end, the Govt. consent will be given. Already the ground for retreat is being prepared. Mr. S.B. Chavan the Maharashtra Chief Minister ordered sensationally the arrest of a millowner under MISA for unilateral layoff and made a meaningful statement. He said, the Government would however distinguish between "temporary difficulties" faced by industries on account of the current recessionary trends and those employers who deliberately laid off workers and declared lockouts. Referring to the arrested millowner Mr. Chavan pointed out that he was responsible for mismanagement and abuse of provident fund money. He said the Govt. would seriously look into the current layoffs and lockouts and study the reason. This is the promise "study the reasons" understand temporary difficulties.

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GOVERNMENT PRESSES FOR MODERNISATION

It may be added that while the Government and its ministries pretend to fight unilateral layoffs, the agencies under their control, nationalised industries are planning further onslaught on workers' jobs by introducing sophisticated modern machinery.

The Financial Express issue of October 4 reported, "The National Textile Corporation has taken in hand the modernisation of 83 mills under its control, at a cost of Rs. 50.83 crores. Of this, the mills have already received and installed machinery worth Rs. 14 crores is on order and is yet to be delivered. As the NTC suffered a loss of about Rs. 30 crores in the last six months of 1974-75. The Commerce Ministry advised it to go in for modernisation at the earliest to come out of the financial difficulties.

The Govt., has been pressing the jute millowners to modernise the industry. Once again the target is workers' jobs.

THE RECESSION

Comrades, I have already mentioned that the economy is in the grip of a widespread recession. The Indira Govt. and its spokesmen, Subramaniam, Pai, and others for months denied that there was any recession. But economic realities cannot be dispensed with by wishful thinking, or mendacious propaganda. Day by day the Government had to admit the force of the economic downturn though it is even now trying to belittle its gravity and meeting it by demagogic promises about preventing layoffs, lockouts and closures. We have to be very vigilant and active from now on lest the deluge might overtake and overwhelm us. What is posed is an unprecedented challenge to our jobs, we are threatened with further massacres, to bear the burden of capitalist mismanagement and undergo suffering and destitution.

The plain fact is that almost every industry is announcing huge accumulation of stocks which is but one step short of mass closures unless quick and proper steps are taken to reimburse the purchasing power of the people and expand demand. No doubt in some cases the capitalists are deliberately exaggerating the situation to stampede the Government into making quick concessions at the expense of the people. After all it is clear that the recession is widespread and deep.

At the end of September press reports said there is an unprecedented glut of steel running into about a million tonnes with the main steel plants. Steel has accumulated both at the plants as well as at the stockyards and there are no buyers. This has led to a crisis in the finances and it is said that the steel plants are some times unable to pay their suppliers in time. Why is there a fall in demand? The products turned out, except for Rourkela do not have much demand as construction both in the private and the public sector has seriously shewed down or even come to a standstill. Similarly, there is a complete recession in the automobile industry and others which use steel in their production programme. Unable to find an outlet in the home market the Govt. is desperately trying to win export orders where there is a big glut in world steel production, with steel plants working 25 per cent below capacity. (Business Standard, 26.9.75)-

COAL

For years, we have been hearing of coal shortage. Now it seems there is a glut. The Marketing Chief of the public sector BCL stated on October 20 that the collieries carry unlifted stocks of 4 lakh tonnes of hard coke valued at Rs. 10 crores, about 1.5 million tonnes of non-coking coal and about 16 days stock of coking coal. The stock locked up are valued around Rs. 30 crores.

Added to this are the huge unrealised outstanding dues from public sector consumers such as the Delhi Electric Supply Undertaking, Durgapur Project Ltd., Indian Iron and Steel Co. etc and defence establishments with the present decline in slump and the unrealised dues. The marketing chief says that the organisation is in difficulty. Because of the slump in demand the stocks are accumulating. But even those who have bought are unable to pay the dues. The defaulters are public sector undertakings. Every one is in difficulty. The chain of bankruptcy lengthens.

FERTILISERS ALSO

The production and consumption of fertilizer occupies a very important place in the Government's plans to increase food production. Every one knows that even now the consumption in India is far below the requirements of a developing agriculture. And yet we find pile up and accumulation of stocks with the public sector. Press reports noted in September massive pile up of stocks in public sector fertilizer plants, resulting in locking up of funds amounting to Rs.17 crores. Inventories of these projects have shot up by 250 per cent during the last one year.

Against 40,000 tonnes stock in August last year, the stocks amounted in September this year to 117,000 tonnes. This notwithstanding the reduction in prices announced in July last showing that the reduction was not enough to suit the resources of thousands of peasants fleeced by high prices and taxes. (Economic Times, 19.9.)-

The Financial Express (4.10) reported that more than 5,000 steel and iron dealers in Delhi were in the grip of a worst ever demand recession on a conservative estimate. There is a 50 per cent fall in their trade. It also reported stocks worth Rs.1 crores of iron and steel continue to pile up with the Rajasthan Small Industries corporation following the steep fall in demand for users. The small industries are facing the same fate.

WAGONS & AUTOMOBILES

The unfortunate wagon industry whose patron is the Rly. Board has no chance of accumulating stocks. It is unable to have orders to utilise even 50 per cent of its capacity. The wagon industry has a capacity to produce 23,391 wagons whereas the Railway Board has promised allotment sufficient to purchase 5,000 wagons only. Despite the Planning Commission's recent allotment of Rs.25 crores for wagon purchase, 60 per cent of the capacity of the industry will remain idle. Out of the 13 units eight are nationalised concerns. Their client is the public sector railways. And yet 60 per cent capacity remains idle. (Times of India, 13.10.75).

The automobile industry which imposed layoffs of thousands in West Bengal is now threatening similar steps in other parts because of demand recession. In October, the industry's representative represented to the Maharashtra State Government that there has been a steady fall in demand in passenger motor cars and jeeps to the extent of 50 per cent and unless the Government took some urgent steps by which the demand could be accelerated, the units engaged in the manufacture of these products are bound to take recourse to economy measures affecting the employment situation in the state.

The automobile position has affected the tyre industry. There is accumulation of stocks and in the trade, large discounts are offered on the list price. Utilisation of trucks has gone down by about one-third; utilisation of passenger cars has gone down by 30 per cent and demand for automobiles has fallen-all contributing to the reduction in demand for tyres. (E.T. 1.10)

Everything connected with the automobiles is affected. The general sagging of business and trading activity in the last few months which resulted in a reduced haulage of goods has also contributed to the drop in the spares sales market.

The railways which won a brutal victory over the strikers in 1974 are deeply in trouble. In spite of the advertised raids on ticketless travellers and other petty things, they will not be able to reach the original freight traffic target of 210 million tonnes at the end of the financial year. The traffic will be at best round 200 million tonnes. The figures will be meaningful if it is remembered that the railways were expected to carry originating traffic of the order of 240 million tonnes at the end of the fourth Plan, but carried only 184 million tonnes. Now they will carry only 200 million tonnes when at the end of the Third Plan, they carried 203 million tonnes. (Times of India, 13.10.75).

There is therefore a crash in the outstanding demand from 1.3 lakhs to 9500 broad gauge wagons and from 1.69 lakh to a mere 11,500 metre gauge wagons between June and August this year. (Financial Express, 14.9.75).

In August stocks of newsprint began to be accumulated. Press reports said:- that the newsprint which was a rare commodity in India two years ago is now stocked in godowns with no buyers despite prices showing decline. Three fourths of our newsprint requirements are met by imports. This year the availability is 2.13 lakh tonnes, 3,000 tonnes less than 1972-73 and yet there is a glut. (Hindusthan Times, 13.10.75).

There is accumulation of copper stocks (Economic Times, July 28) and there is big accumulation of stocks of aluminium, with the capitalists threatening closure. The Financial Express (29.9.75) reported: there are four main producers at present holding a stock of about 15,500 tonnes of aluminium. It is doubtful whether it would be worthwhile for them to go on producing more, adding to their unwieldy stocks and paying high interest charges. The lifting of aluminium according to them started falling rapidly following the exorbitant increase in excise duty and has come down to 40 per cent of production.

The stock pile of chemicals has also increased. The Economic Times (11.10.75) reported from Bombay: Unlifted stocks of imported chemicals with the State Trading Corporation continue to be heavy despite successive price cuts during April and June. Recessionary trends resulting in reduced off take of finished products appears to be the main factor for the poor consumption of dyes and chemicals. The demand for paints, varnish, plastic products and to some extent textiles, is much less than the normal level.

The Railway Board's so-called economy drive and official steps to curb inflation by reducing public investment is working havoc with the jobs of tens of thousands of workers. A typical instance is of the cast iron sleeper industry which employs over 150,000 people. It is facing difficulty as its order book is almost empty considering its total capacity to manufacture 400,000 metric tonnes every year. The reduced order placed by the Railway was less than the 15 per cent of the installed capacity. Quite a few factories may have to be closed.

THE COTTON TEXTILES INDUSTRY

The cotton textile industry which supplies a vital article of mass consumption is in doldrums when three-fourths of India is going naked. This is the state of affairs when more than 103 mills are taken over or nationalised-these nationalised mills

which were mostly sick are making huge losses. The mills under the National Textile Corporations have suffered a cumulative loss of Rs.60 crores as on August last. And now like the rest of private profiteers the Corporation is seeking exemption from the production of controlled cloth, i.e. cheap cloth for the people. (Economic Times, 4.10.75). Congress Socialism and nationalisation are indeed advancing.

In Indore in Madhya Pradesh, the nationalised and private mills are incurring losses, accumulating stocks and defaulting in payments to the E.S.I. and Workers' Provident Fund. By August end, stocks, of textiles, both controlled as well as decontrolled varieties with the six mills in Indore of which 3 are nationalised, doubled from 8200 bales of cloth in July last year to about 16,000 bales this year. This has led to the majority of the mills falling into arrears in respect of payments of provident fund, ESI contribution, electricity dues, and the like. (Times of India, 1.9.75).

The pile-up of controlled cloth has gone upto 1.05 lakh bales which works out to about 2½ months production. (Economic Times, 9.9.75).

The entire industry in the country is affected by accumulating of stocks. By September, Kanpur had accumulated stocks worth Rs.11.70 crores. Usually the value of stock at any given time does not exceed Rs. 4 crores. The heaviest accumulation (Rs.6.30mcrores) is in the three units of British India which has a Government nominated chairman.

In Tamilnadu, by middle of October accumulation of yarn and cloth at the mills had risen to nearly Rs.34 crores. A section of labour has already been retrenched. There has been a severe drought in Tamilnadu during the last two years eroding the purchasing power of the rural masses. Most of the mills are spinning mills depending on the handlooms which themselves are in doldrums. The pile-up of handloom cloth is valued at more than Rs.40 crores. The Puja and Diwali holidays have not seen a spurt in the demand for yarn from the handloom sector. Exports also are in doldrums and yarn prices are falling, and mills are complaining of lack of funds to keep them going. (Economic Times, 20.10.75).

Two mills in Uttar Pradesh were closed outright by October. Many in Maharashtra, West Bengal and elsewhere are feeling shaky. Stocks of cloth and yarn with the industry have been piling up. From 2.44 lakh metric bales in May, cloth stocks with the mills at the end of September were 3.8 lakh metric bales, that is about 470 million metres which works out to about 40 days' production.

It is not as if the industry had never held such big stocks. In fact, normally the industry holds just about three weeks' production. In November 1974, it held 3.20 lakh bales. But now with the Puja and Diwali demand turning a flop, with no exports on the downgrade, the prospects of further rapid accumulation stare the capitalists in the face.

In yarn, the stocks with the industry have jumped from 1.21 lakh bales of 180 kg. each in May to 1.47 lakh bales at the end of September. (Economic Times, 19.10.75)

It is significant that with all the accumulation of stocks the mill-owners have not yet agreed to lower the price of cloth to bring it within the easy reach of the people. They are banking on disposing it after the bumper kharif harvest, on the expected exports to West Asia and on the regulatory measures which they think the Govt. is bound to adopt to save the capitalist economy.

People want cloth but they have not the purchasing power to purchase it at the prices dictated by the millowners and sanctioned by the Government. In the 1973-74 boom conditions with the sanction of the Indira Government they more than doubled cloth prices. When demand fell off after September 1974, they sliced off only

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15 per cent to 20 per cent which was not enough to make the people buy. In December 1974, they again raised prices to the old level with the signs of demand picking up. Thanks to this, they find themselves in their present plight when even after reducing prices by 15 to 20 per cent, the off-take is not improving. (Economic Times 19.10.75).

THE JUTE INDUSTRY

The jute barons have been raising the cry of accumulation and no profits for quite some time, and had decided on a 15 per cent cut in production. The various concessions made by the Govt. withdrawal of the export duty on carpet backing, etc., have delayed the operation of production cut. But the danger is there and with it the danger to workers' jobs. A press note issued by the IJMA (Statesman, 13.10.75) stated, worse still the industry is unable to sell its output even at a loss. Inevitably therefore, the inventory of jute goods has swelled fast, it having increased on an average of 20,000 tonnes a month between end-June and end-August. Over these two months, stocks of the goods with mills have risen 40,000 tonnes worth about Rs.15 crores. The industry as a whole is losing Rs.5 crores a month. In regard to hessian, the industry does not enjoy the benefit of off-take either. The withdrawal of the hessian export duty has had no impact on the export of the fabric, consequently stocks are mounting. These shot up to 57,800 tonnes at the end of August 1975 from only 32,000 tonnes at the end of the same month a year earlier. It is not necessary to believe this entire tale of these merciless exploiters. Stocks are however accumulating and creating a danger for workers' jobs.

The recessionary trend has now affected two important commercial crops. cotton and jute, ruining the small cotton and jute producer. Press despatches reported on October 19 (Economic Times) raw jute prices are said to have fallen as low as Rs.40 per maund in several districts of West Bengal in the absence of mills buying for a long period. While the Jute Commissioner is content with measures like issuing show cause notices on the mills for not buying the fibre, a huge pile-up in the primary markets is reported to have depressed the prices forcing weak holders like marginal farmers to dispose saleable stocks at throwaway rates to avoid starvation. In many instances, according to Kisan Sabha sources, less than full payment, even at low rates, is being made by traders.

Both the jute purchasing corporation and the jute mill owners are taking full advantage of the situation to allow the jute grower to be robbed. This is the fate of all agriculturists who produce for industry and who happen to get a good crop. This is the jute baron's way of rendering their goods competitive abroad. If the workers prevent them from reducing their wages or creating unemployment by way of cutting production costs, they must hit the hapless grower, by slashing the price of his produce to ruination. The burden of the crisis must be passed on to either the worker or the peasant. It will be no surprise if after ruining lakhs of jute peasants and slashing the price of jute to Rs.40, the barons later on reveal some signs of recovery. They have already the export duty in their pocket, now they will have cheap raw jute. They are again demanding direct help against Bangla Desh competition so that their profits may remain unimpaired.

The same is the story about the cotton grower. An unprecedented cotton glut was reported in September. Over the last year, cotton prices have crashed by 40 to 58 per cent and may tumble down further if the hapless peasant produces a good crop in 1975-76 also. The total accumulation of cotton stocks ,

is estimated to be 29 to 30 lakh bales (Financial Express, 11.9.75). Last season in many places, the grower got only 50 per cent of the price in cash, the rest being deferred. This year he will be completely thrown at the mercy of the unscrupulous market manipulators. The effect of producing more under Congress regime is nothing short of ruination.

The recession directly visible in big industries, has spread to the entire economy. We have seen how it has affected the railway transport; it has affected the road transport accentuating the crisis in tyre industry and the spare parts trade and industry. In Faridabad as in some other parts the hardest hit are those units engaged in the manufacture of goods for the upper strata of society - refrigerators, and air-conditioners, electric gadgets and high quality synthetic fashion fabrics.

The condition of the handloom industry has inflicted the worst type of suffering on the weavers. Stocks worth crores have accumulated with loss of jobs and utter starvation for the weavers. The main market, the rural poor, is hardly functioning.

With the poor off-take from industry the distributive trade also has been affected and employment under it is being reduced. In industry, employment has been reduced by massive layoffs from time to time, stoppage of new recruitment and in smaller sectors by outright closure leading to unemployment for tens of thousands. The unorganised industries have closed by hundreds ruining the jobs of tens of thousands. There are no figures available but every one knows that they were the first to be affected. Such is the direct shape of recession as it obtains at present.

CHARACTER OF RECESSION

Comrades, the exact character of the present recession and the challenge it poses to the workers has to be properly understood. A trade union movement which educates the workers only in relation to wages, bonus, but fails to do so in relation to the economic policies which determine the living conditions of the working class, is unable to meet the challenge of recession. It will be sides fail to realise that it is a challenge to the entire people and society and cannot be fought only on the trade union plane, without involving other big sections of the people, though the trade unions will have to take a lead in organising the fight. The basic policies which have led to recession affect not only the working class but the entire people, their anti-people roots have to be uncovered and the fight has to be carried on as a popular democratic fight, against new burdens, for placing new burdens on the exploiting sections of the monopolists, capitalists and the landlords, for a social change.

The full blast of the recession in the shape of mass closures has not yet been felt by the organised industry. However, the workers in smaller and unorganised industries have been its worst victims. Along with them thousands in organised industries have been laid off from time to time. New recruitment has been blocked. The number of jobless has already reached more than 8 million (registered unemployed) - a 100 per cent increase in two years. Of these, 40 lakhs are educated unemployed. But if the situation continues like this then we should expect mass closures, mass dismissals of employees and utter ruination of the rural masses.

WIRKED CAPITALIST CRISIS

The recession though deeply rooted in Indian conditions, the capitalist path based on alliance with the landlords, is also an integral part of the recession in capitalist countries to which.

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our economy is linked. The expected recovery in the economic down turn of their economies is not taking place. The earlier hopes that the USA will get out of the crisis by the middle of 1975 have fallen to the ground. The recovery in the USA is very slow. It is estimated that unemployment will remain high in all big industrial countries even when production picks up and stocks get liquidated. The estimate about the USA is that it will be 1980 before the USA reaches the pre-recession unemployment rate of 5 per cent against the present rate of 8 per cent. All the western countries show a big growth in the number of unemployed with the USA having more than 8 million of them. Starting to control sweeping inflation, these countries adopted measures which landed them in deep recession*potential still there a number of them are adopting deflationary*spiral. The incapacity of the western capitalist order to function normally is seen clearly. It must either be in the grip of inflation or recession.

* without effectively tackling inflation. Now with the inflation.

Indian Stagnation

Indian economy has been stagnating since 1966. It has been experiencing crisis after crisis with shorter and shorter intervals of pick-up. It took a number of plan holidays. Its plan targets could not be reached. And finally it found itself unable to utilise fully the meagre industrial capacity it had created. Day by day the growth of productive capacity was coming into conflict with the limitations of the home market. This was bound to be so because the incomes of the mass of consumers - the exploited agricultural workers and poor peasants - continue to shrink under the exploitation. The number of those living under the official Indian poverty line began to increase and with it the difficulties of the economy. The foreign payments, the loot through official foreign debts and private exploitation compounded the matters further. That is why occasional good harvests also could not bring stability to the economy.

Increase taxation of the Congress Govt., foreign loans and deficit financing - weapons of raising finance - meant further growing attacks on all sections of the people - the working class real wage falling every year.

Purchasing Power Attacked

Unable to control deficit financing, the Congress Govt. handed the economy into the worst kind of inflationary spiral with prices rising in one year by more than 30% . By 1973-74, the rate of inflation had reached 27%. The situation was further accentuated by the mounting inflation in the capitalist countries with whose economy Indian economy is linked and by the hike in oil prices, demanded by the oil-producing countries. The rise in the price of oil contributed to the strengthening of the spiral. But this also meant further robbery of the people, lowering the wages, salaries and earnings of the mass of people and transferring them to the capitalists, landlords, traders speculators and the Govt.. It meant again a shrinkage in the market demand.

The inflationary spiral reached a point beyond which it could not be allowed to go. The Govt. with great demagogy went in for its so-called anti-inflationary measures which once more meant an attack on the earnings of the toilers. They involved a huge withdrawal of purchasing power from the working-

** measures to meet the economic stagnation and are again preparing for the inflationary.

class, employees by way of compulsory deposits of additional DA and wages, delay of DA payments, attack on bonus, huge taxation against all sections of the people including the rural masses, inflation of transport rates, electricity rates, petrol prices, bus charges and so on all in the name of bringing down the price level. The price level did not come down - only the rate of rise was brought down - but the purchasing power of the people was drastically reduced. People had to purchase at the same prices with reduced increases - an invitation* of the lower sections. The raids on smugglers and black marketeers achieved very little.

In 1974-75 alone, the Govts. - Central and State together - raised taxes by more than Rs. 1000 crores. The Central taxation measures including increased railway fares, freight rates and postal rates amounted to additional taxation of Rs. 690 crores in '74-'75 and Rs. 935 crores in a full year. The additional burdens imposed by the State Govts. amounted to Rs. 358 crores. (RBI Report and Trend and Progress of Banking, p.10, 12)

"These resource mobilisation efforts were further reinforced by another set of measures designed to mop up additional purchasing power, impounding a one-half additional dearness allowance and almost of all of any other wage or salary increases, ceiling on the amount of distributable profit and compulsory savings for tax payers in the higher income brackets" (P.2).

The compulsory deposit of additional DA and wage alone involved withdrawal of more than Rs. 200 crores of purchasing power. The latest bonus ordinance deprives of the workers of another Rs. 200 crores of purchasing power. The denial of bonus to bank employees, and others adds to the sum. The high prices and taxation measures denuded the rural masses. The wages of the agricultural workers were not raised for years with the prices rising in an inflationary spiral. The implementation of the minimum wages Act was farcical in relation to the agricultural workers as well as other categories. The cost of living index was manipulated to lower the DA. Is it any wonder that this huge denudation of the purchasing power of the common mass should cause a slump in the demand especially for consumer goods and the recession should spread all over the country. If today, recessionary tendencies are in evidence with lay off, closures, inability to utilise full capacity of industries it is the Govt. that is directly responsible for it.

The Govt. also instituted credit control or credit squeeze to check the speculative use of bank capitals, to curb the growth essential to prevent the mischief committed by the speculators, smugglers, stock accumulators. But the Govt.'s credit squeeze, operating in the framework of the capitalist-landlord-big trader economy has mainly operated to the ruin of smaller concerns, smaller traders and affected the employment of thousands. What ever marginal checks it might have given to the operation of speculators, the stark fact is that it has ruined a large number of smaller concerns and traders.

Govt's. Claims and Price Fall

In this background the claims made by the Govt. stand exposed. It claimed that it would bring down prices through these measures and make the situation easier for the common man. Prices have hardly been brought down. They continue

* to demand slump and recession
compare with this denudation

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to remain practically at the peak level. Only the rate of growth has been brought down. But this has been done by enormous attacks against the earnings of the people, by depriving them of their jobs and making many face outright starvation. The measures have become a weapon of piling the burdens of the crisis on the people.

What is the truth about the price fall advocated by the Govt? Of the control of inflation? Many have noted in fact that the small reversal that took place since September 1974 was more in response to the bumper rabi crop estimated at 44 million tonnes. The vaunted fall measured only 5.4 per cent (index wholesale prices) over the year ended Sept. 13. The important fact is that in spite of all these measures, and attacks prices should be down only 5.7 per cent from its all time high record in the last week of Sept. 1974. The index for food article also shows only a fall of 6.4 per cent from its all-time high. Between 1972-73 and 1974-75 prices rose by more than 50 per cent. Is it not adding insult to injury to parade this fall of 5 per cent as a great achievement after depriving people of the job and earnings to the tune of hundreds of crores?

Besides, this miserable fall has for the most part not reached the people, there is not much change in retail prices.

Considering the following: "The Economic Times of retail price index with 1969-70 as the base indicates that the rate of retail prices rise in Greater Bombay was 16.1 per cent in 1973-74 and 21.1 per cent in 1974-75. For the first six months of 1975-76 (April-September) the average index at 181.1 showed an increase of 6.8 per cent. The current rate of increase is thus about one per cent per month as compared to 1.8 per cent per month last year." The retail prices continue to rise in the last two years. This is how the anti-inflationary measures have succeeded.

Foreign Help

What is not known however is that even for this marginal fall in wholesale price index, this slowing down of the rate of rise in retail prices, India has to take the help of foreign countries and increase the country's dependence on them. It is foreign borrowing of more than 600 crores of rupees that helped substantially in lowering the rate of inflation. "The net inflow of foreign exchange resources in 1974-75 was larger than in 1973-74 by about Rs. 649 crores, Rs. 423 crores under drawals from IMF and Rs 226 crores as net additional inflow of external assistance On the whole it is more than probable that in the absence of such a large inflow of external resources, the fiscal and monetary policies undertaken in 1974-75 would have been made less effective." (P.3 RBI Annual Report on Progress of Banking).

The CITU must take serious note of this dangerous trend which may compromise national independence any time. This year again the authorities are wooing for massive aid and seems to be prepared to pay the price. The Indira Govt. while pretending to fight the USA influence and taking an anti-American pose is simultaneously wooing American capital, private as well as official, wooing the American dominated World Bank to give bigger and bigger loans. The necessity of exports and the foreign borrowings without which the economy cannot stand on its legs is driving the Govt. to make more and more concessions.

The propagandist cry of zero aid and self reliance has disappeared in thin air. The net inflow of external assistance at Rs. 480 crores in 1974-75 was nearly double the figure of Rs. 254 crores for 1973-74 (Report of RBI, P. 37).

Subramaniam Invites USA Capital

Still more help is required to get out of this crisis.. Chavan's tour to the USA - a tour which was denied publicity in the USA press - to activate the joint Economic Commission under the Indo-American agreement was part of this effort. Earlier in September Subramaniam had paved the way for US and World Bank assistance. As part of the bargain the Finance Minister said on Sept. 10 that the American private equity participation would be allowed in "Selected areas" of the core sector. The Finance Minister identified the areas in which US investment would be permitted as export-oriented industries and sectors where specialised technology was required so that the country would get the benefit of foreign expertise and technological know how. Mr. Subramaniam did not see any difficulty in controlling multi-national organisations functioning in the country had already been mostly Indianised and there are very few foreign personnel in them. "We have been able to control them in a much better way", he said. Only a fool or a knave will dispose of the multi-national corporations in this light-hearted manner. When the economic power and conspiracies of the corporations is now being revealed to the world after the diabolical role in the overthrow of Allende and the establishment of fascist rule in Chile, does not the Finance Minister know that they act as the agent of the CIA. These certificates are coming from the Finance Minister whose Govt. has ushered in the emergency to fight fascism. But then anything to certify the USA corporations since we are in need of funds. In pursuance of this policy, the Govt. of India make further concession to foreign monopoly capital on 25th October.

No wonder that he expected dividends from the World Bank which are now forthcoming.

The Bank Group's lending to India reached a new record of 840 million dollars. Current indications are that it would be roughly of the order of 800 million dollars in fiscal year 1974. A World Bank Study team has suggested that gross aid to India should rise from an estimated level of 2332 million dollars (Rs. 2098 crores) in 1975-76 to 3527 million dollars (Rs. 3174 crores) in 1979-80 to 5425 million dollars (Rs. 4720 crores) in 1985-86.

World Bank's Demands

To give this aid, the world Bank team is emboldened to suggest breath-taking suggestions completely upsetting the Congress claims of Garibi Hatao or serving the poor. In effects, the World Bank asks that the talk of uplifting the poor etc. should be wound up for the time being. The special correspondent of the Economic Times who has unearthed this sensational report writes in the issue of the paper dated Oct. 20 : "India should reshape its industrial development programme, leave away from heavy and capital goods industry, and go in for massive export production during the coming decade. In terms of this prescription by a World Bank Study team, exports and massive foreign aid should form the major part of saving, investment and growth for boosting India's flagging industrial growth rate - which is currently 1.5 per cent to 2 per cent - to 8 to 10 per cent a year. He quotes the report "a strong revival could be expected to follow from a successful strategic emphasis on the development of India's considerable agricultural, export and energy capabilities". This will make for an easier foreign exchange and international situation". (They are keen on recovering their debts and milking the cow).

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According to the report, the heavy emphasis on basic and capital goods industries and on virtually complete substitution of domestic for imported manufactures has lost much of its significance. The scope for import substitution has shrunk in relation to the size of domestic industrial activity (The bankers are cleverly exploiting the under-utilisation of capacity for their own purpose. The home market is clogged on the basis of the present distribution of national income as between the various classes. It can be rapidly expanded if a radical redistribution of income in favour of the masses takes place. But of this neither the bankers nor the ruling party will think of).

It adds that the availability of saving from industrial surpluses has probably been less than it might have been "because of price controls on industrial products (allow the capitalists to loot the people.) "and of administrative inabilities to collect the taxes that should be payable on industrial profits". (Cue for tax raids) ?

It is against this background that the report emphasises "the need for an alternative strategy of adequate demand outlets for existing and expanding industrial capacities". In this strategy there is scope for some shift in emphasis on industrial production toward mass consumption items accompanied by a corresponding redistribution of income to make the mass consumption market effective. However, for poverty reasons the linkage of the mass consumption market with industrial structure are limited and weak, they are largely confined to textiles, kerosene and to a lesser extent to processed foods.

A reliable and lasting programme, the report adds, would have to be based on widespread improvement of productivity among the poorer sections. There are large opportunities for this, but they will take time. "The strategic problem, meanwhile is to develop other large outlets for additional industrial production which can again facilitate a dynamic revival of industrial activity".

The correspondent comments, "In other words, Garibi Hatao should not lead to an uncontrolled improvement in the consumption of the poor. Production and savings are for exports."

Indian economy must be in a very vulnerable position indeed if despite the developing trade and economic relations with the USSR and other Socialist countries of Eastern Europe GDR, Czechoslovakia, Romania, the World Bank can make these arrogant proposals. Subramaniam did know of this report when he hopefully looked for more Bank aid and certified the multi-national as harmless non-violent creatures. In fact, many of the slogans of the Bank have a very strange similarity with the Govt. slogans and actions like export promotion, the efforts to bring the tax evaders to book, the call to foreign companies to start export oriented industries by offering cheap labour and the emphasis on energy production, and emphasis on rural demands only in the 20 point programme, the attack on people's purchasing power. It is obvious that some bargaining will be struck.

This is the danger that faces India in the course of the recession. The economy is being dragged on to be more dependent on exports in the absence of the development of the

home market, and more on foreign aid.

Official Line

The Govt.'s plan to fight recession, to get out of it firstly hinges on the attacks on the incomes of the workers, the middle classes and the rural masses. At the same time it may offer some relief to the lowest sections of the rural masses by way of the debt relief and paltry rise in agricultural wages. But it knows that with the present distribution of national income, it will not be in a position to utilise the full capacity of its industries, even consumer goods industries. It must growingly rely on exports of cloth, of engineering goods, sugar, marine products, jute goods, apart from commodities. It is giving concession after concession to the big capitalists to invest more, to peg up the economy, to keep recession down. On October 25, the Central Govt. announced further concessions to Indian and foreign monopolists, preventing unlimited expansion beyond licensed capacities, of foreign companies and monopoly firms in 30 important industries like basic drugs, cement, paper chemicals including fertilizers, and heavy industries and electrical equipment. There seems to be no limit to these concessions in the name of fighting recession and liberalizing the licensing procedures. There is a frantic search for markets which have been falling with the end of the commodity boom and state of recession in the western countries. It hopes for revival of exports with the hopes of western recovery which is very slow to come. It hopes to increase its exports to the oil exporting countries who are mostly importing from western countries. To the extent it succeeds in finding outlets, it will have some cushion left. But the competition is severe. The markets are controlled by the big industrial countries. Hence the offer of opening India to foreign monopolists to start production for export. The attraction is cheap labour, the attraction / holding / of labour claims in check. The danger to the economy, the people and the working class from this line is obvious. But the capitalists path can find no alternative. For their selfish class interests, the capitalist class and its Govt. are likely to sacrifice the long-term interests of the people. There is no doubt that if a satisfactory bargain is struck, massive aid from the World Bank together with opening of some of the export markets may relieve the situation for the Govt. and the capitalists at the expenses of the people and the country.

For the vast mass of workers this reliance on exports is bound to be attended by further attacks on its wage standards. The exports have to be competitive, i.e. cost of production must be reduced, i.e. wages must be lowered. The capitalist class is posing the alternative - less wage or total unemployment. It should be mentioned here that even during the last year, the big capitalists have made huge profits - concealed as well as open. They want to maintain them at the old level.

Besides, the Govt. is adopting a callous policy towards those thrown out of jobs. Posing to take a democratic stand, the Union Finance Minister said those industries which do not produce for the poor, which produce for the elite may be allowed to die. This refers to the automobile, electric, refrigerators, etc. industries. What about the workers whose livelihood depends / se on them? He is not prepared to talk about it. It is only a plea to close down some industries because the capitalists cannot manage them in the crisis.

Another Turn :

And now we come to yet another turn in Govt. policies. Having denied slump and recessionary conditions, the Govt. was forced to accept its existence and promise a new packet of concessions. The demand was for credit relaxation, putting more money in the hands of the capitalists and traders. The latest RBI statement promises the start of reflation which may push prices up on the midst of attacks on workers' wages and middle class salaries. Once more the same old story.

New Attacks

Comrades, the recession portends big attacks against the jobs and the standard of living. The attacks have already started. They are backed by certain ideological propaganda and an attempt to drive a wedge between the working class and the rural masses. They are to be effected with the aid of the reformist and revisionist leaders, by dividing the ranks of the workers, of the trade unions, by politically using Congress influence with certain sections. And above all, they are to be effected with the aid of attacks on the basic rights of the working class and the people, by abrogation of democratic rights of trade unions, of democratic rights of the Indian people. The struggle to fight against the burdens of the crisis, the struggle to protect jobs and the standards of living is integrally linked with the struggle to save Indian democracy from being extinguished by the authoritarian one-party rule.

It calls upon us to map out our organisation/methods / al and technics in a new way to meet the challenge of abrogated rights.

Response to New Situation

We must first deal with the organisational methods. What has been the response of the organised trade union movement to the Emergency, to the direct political attacks of the ruling party on the working class and the people? With the given consciousness of the working class, the state of the trade union movement and the strength of the contending forces, it was no wonder if the political reaction was one of being dazed and stupified. Where the CITU is strong and some direct legal response was possible, there was angry united political protest of the workers, agricultural workers, middle classes as in Kerala. There was satyagraha, there were repeated protests leading to the arrests of some of our prominent leaders.

Barring Kerala, there were hardly any immediate political actions anywhere. There was a very small strike in Bombay and similar small actions perhaps in some other places.

The reason for this earlier paralysis was (1) fear of repression under the Emergency, (2) a section of the working class (INTUC) continues to be under the political influence of the ruling party and did not regard the Emergency as an attack against itself and the people. The same applies to some extent to the workers under the influence of the Right C.P.-led AITUC (3) the left and democratic section could have organised protest resistance and drawn others into it. But it was accustomed to open calls, meetings, processions, press propaganda, posters -

in short all open legal methods of preparations. Deprived of all this its mass could not be reached, could not be united and did not know how to act. Calls given without publicity had no effect. The lack of action by left was more an organisational failure - failure because of inability of organisers to reach the masses than lack of anger on their part.

Initially, all the independent unions - unions of State and Central Government employees, Railways, etc. - were afraid of doing anything.

The Bonus Ordinance

Recovering from this initial stupefaction the workers have begun to react and be active on partial demands. The bonus ordinance has come as a big shock, compromising the position of the INTUC and the AITUC leaders. Before this workers in several factories and industries were experiencing lockouts, closures, but they could not become a general issue like the bonus ordinance.

The detailed reports of protests against the bonus are not available. In Kerala, there have been big actions - strikes uniting the ranks of the CITU and the AITUC. In West Bengal, there have been big protests and demonstrations in the jute industry, in textiles, etc. with the workers refusing to accept the reduced bonus. According to the Labour Department of the West Bengal Government, (Statesman, 25. .75), only 20% of the workers in Jute industry have accepted bonus at the rate of 4%. In the cotton textile industry, workers in general except a few employed in mills managed by the National Textile Corporation have refused to accept bonus at the rate of 4%. In West Bengal through these factory protests some concessions in bonus advance over the offer made by the employers have been won.

In Tamilnadu, there was a united State-wide protest strike organised by the CITU, AITUC, DMK and other unions on the question of bonus on October 24, 1975.

It is obvious that by and large, the CITU, its trade unions and the trade union movement as a whole has been unable to meet either the political offensive of the enemy or its economic offensive. Even on such an issue as bonus which has affected all sections of the workers, neither countrywide, State-wide, nor industry-wise action has been possible, except a one-day strike in one or two States. The earlier all-India unity centring round the anti-wage freeze conference stands disrupted. Even the local or State unity fronts are unable to function.

The unions are not yet illegalised. Their executives can meet, they can sometimes hold hall meetings, make representations to the Government. And our unions are utilising these openings to the extent possible. Only in West Bengal some of our unions cannot use these openings, also as they are unofficially banned under the goonda terror.

The Main Weakness

But the main weakness that paralyses the united activity of the masses is the lack of alternative machinery to reach the masses, to keep the unions' hold over them and rouse them to action. We are called upon to keep our mass strength,

to increase it and develop working class action under conditions of growing illegality. We have to make our presence felt among the workers under the emergency - we who are the symbol of their fighting capacity and unity. The fact is that the first signs of common resistance are appearing but there may be organisational failure on our part to harness it. The protests may develop into isolated actions without our leadership.

We have been warning against the functioning of the trade unions on the pattern of 'leaders and followers'. In the new conditions it has become all the more urgent to discard this pattern. New methods must be found to forge active links with the leadership and the mass of workers.

Our discussions must answer the question how far we are in contact with our mass following, and how far we are advancing in the direction of the united front from below for action.

Acid test will be provided by the collection of union dues, funds collection, workers approached, number of activists and followers actively working for union collection. So long as collection of union dues is not legally prohibited, every opportunity should be taken to use this to approach the workers, through a wide network of cadres. Besides, every opportunity of mass approach through relief collection (flood) etc., should be availed of so that the contacts are renewed. Agitation for the immediate and partial demands has to be nurtured through such campaigns.

United Front

Despite the attack on Trade union and democratic rights, despite severe restriction on trade union functioning, we have to wage a fight for the mass through our independent work, as well as through steady pursuit of united front efforts. The open desertion of the INTUC and the AITUC leaders creates a growing gap between them and their followers. It also widens the differences between local leaders in contact with the masses and top leaders sitting on Government committees. This is because every day exposes the emergency more and more, discrediting the reformist and revisionist policy. This is seen in Kerala, Tamilnadu and several places where the local leaders of the AITUC sometimes join in actions. This tendency is going to increase day by day. The opportunity for united front is sweeping and wide and we must make the best use of it by systematically approaching the masses belonging to these organisations.

Storm Clouds

In spite of the initial paralysing effects of the emergency, we should not miss the storm clouds gathering on the working class front. The full use of emergency legislation to reduce the living standards of the working class, to thrust unemployment on it, is rousing the anger of thousands. The struggles are going to be fiercer and fiercer but whether they will be isolated efforts of sections or the

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co-ordinated and united resistance of our class, depends on our organisation and activity. None except us is going to take initiative to link up these struggles into common action. Then they will merge with the general struggle against emergency. It is our privilege and duty to act on this path, reforge and expand the link with the working class masses and make vast united front action possible.

There is no doubt that the fighting working class is going to respond in a big way to our well-calculated organisational endeavours, provided we are able to remove the feeling of isolation, of lack of unity, felt by the masses with new methods of approach.

In this struggle, to move it forward, we must come forward with concrete demands to counter the emergency, the ideological propaganda of its advocates and the concrete economic and political points of offensive.

We must demand end of emergency of all attacks on the fundamental rights of the people, on the trade union rights, banning strikes and meetings, etc., demand release of political prisoners and lifting of press censorship, fair and free elections and other demands.

Against the official policy in relation to recession, we demand no retrenchment, lay-offs or closures, right to work or compensation. Immediately we demand reversal of Government policy of saddling the people with burdens, reducing the purchasing power in the name of fighting inflation. We demand full reimbursement of the lost purchasing power through drastic reduction of taxation, withdrawal of bonus ordinance, withdrawal of recent restrictions on wages, allowances and complete unfreezing of the dearness allowance and wage increases held in deposit with the Government. (3) Simultaneously we demand a drastic rise in the wages of agricultural workers and guaranteed prices for the small farmer. (4) We demand withdrawal of attacks on the employees like withdrawal of bonus and other facilities, of longer hours of work and cut in holidays, also demand stoppage of harassment of professionals by bureaucratic income-tax officials. (5) Along with this we demand a drastic reduction of prices especially of necessities of life. Without increasing the purchasing power of the people on the one hand and reducing the prices of nece-

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on the other

necessaries, / a big market cannot be assured for the products of industry and the recession cannot be fought. (6) We demand immediate protection to the handloom workers, workers in unorganised industries, relief to them to maintain themselves. (7) We demand right to work to be accepted by the Government and immediate introduction of unemployment relief or wage in cities and villages and starting of a massive rural works programme in villages. (8) We fully support the demand for cancellation of all debts of the agricultural workers, poor peasants, village artisans and urban workers, support the right of every agricultural worker to have a free house site and demand land to the tiller. (9) Against the Government's proposals to link wages with productivity we come out with our concrete suggestions asserting need-based wage and agreed norms of work. (10) We expose Government's class collaborating management participation scheme and raise the concrete demand for real influence and authority to the workers to manage the affairs of the factory--workers' representatives to be elected by ballot. (11) We expose the seven-day week proposal. The problem of unemployment cannot be solved by attacking the right of the workingclass earned through hard struggles. (12) We expose Government's efforts to foist the INTUC and AITUC and HMS on the workers and give them the monopoly of representation. (13) We warn the country against official policy of inviting foreign capital, World Bank aid and making the country dependent on foreign and American help. We oppose new concessions to foreign monopolies. (14) We oppose the policy of making more and more concession to Indian monopolies. (15) We demand nationalisation of foreign monopolies. (16) We demand nationalisation of Indian monopolies without compensation. (17) We also demand nationalisation of Cotton Textiles, Jute and Sugar industries. (18) We demand effective measures against black money and smugglers

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REPORT FROM HOOGHLY DISTRICT

Information document

(WEST BENGAL)

- 1) Since the promulgation of emergency, a reign of terror has been let loose by the employers in different factories of our district in the form of lay-off, increase in work-load, indiscriminate charge-sheets, suspensions, arrests etc. In most of the factories 4% bonus has been declared which the workers have still been boycotting.
- 2) Some important facts and features
 - a) In Hindmotor, large-scale lay-off on rotational basis is continuing, despite assurances given to the Govt. to the contrary. The Govt. has, however, granted tax-relief to the extent of about Rs.4000/- per car. This lay-off is continuing for more than a year now and as result of which the wages of each worker has gone down by more than 50%. The workers are getting work for 9 to 13 days at the maximum. This lay-off is without any compensation now.
 - b) Nearly 2000 workers have been indirectly retrenched on various untenable grounds, such as, overstay while on leave, medically unfit without being examined by any medical practitioner, forcible retirement even before the age of 55, offering lump sum money and after obtaining resignation, refusing to pay the promised amount etc. Some workers have also voluntarily resigned with the expectation of getting some money immediately from gratuity and P.F. ect., with which to support their family for the time being.
 - c) Naturally declaration of 4% bonus has added fuel to the fire, causing stoppage of work for two days and total boycott of bonus. INTUC with a very insignificant following also participated in this movement at our initiative. The management of Hindustan Motors i.e. Birlas have let loose a reign of terror with the help of police. Police is indiscriminately arresting the workers on the one hand and the management is chargesheeting and suspending on the other. In a few cases of suspension even the subsistence allowance has not been offered in violation of the existing law of the land. The total arrest so far is 25, total charge-sheeted and suspended is more than 50. Braving such attacks both from the management and the authorities, the workers are continuing the boycott movement successfully. Enraged by such a massive challenge from the workers, the management and police have intensified their attacks. The police is raiding the houses of the workers every night and threatening them with bitter consequences if they do not lift their bonus-money and arresting the leading workers and implicating them in various false cases including dacoity, attempt to murder, theft ect. The management is taking away all the rights and privileges so long enjoyed by the workers even in contravention of their own standing order. Despite all these, the workers morale is still high. INTUC is vacillating but afraid of opposing and avoiding our invitation to a joint meeting for a united programme. It must be admitted, however, that the local leadership being divided, failed to assess and realise the mood of the workers in the beginning and were hesitant.
- 3) In Kesoram Rayon, also of Birlas, the 6 months old strike struggle conducted jointly by our union AITUC and INTUC had to be withdrawn following the later betrayal and our inability to continue in this situation. Still 300 workers are out of employment even now. All our leading cadres and some INTUC and AITUC cadres are dismissed from services - all these disputes are pending with the Labour Department

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and are still unresolved due to Govt. policy. Bonus for the year 1972-73 has only been settled at 20% just before the promulgation of the ordinance.

- 4) In Dunlop a productivity agreement has been thrust upon the workers in the name of emergency, which we are trying to resist.
- 5) In Kesoram Spun 20% bonus has been realised without much trouble. Moreover, contractor labourers have been absorbed and made permanent workers of the company.
- 6) In all the 10 jute mills of the district workload are on the increase, replacement of narrow by the broad-loom is going on. Charge-sheets and suspensions have been more frequent. In the beginning, all the workers in all these mills, boycott is continuing. The workers of Telinipara jute mill stopped work for half an hour in protest.
- 7) 20% bonus has been realised by Lagan Jute Mfg., Bellis Mercom, Shalimar Wires, Alkali etc. Without any major trouble.
- 8) In Textile Mills, except in one 4% bonus has been declared and the workers have accepted under protest. In Jayshree Textiles, the management has been forced by Gherao etc, to honour the bonus agreement, but subsequently issued notice of deduction.
- 9) In J.K. Steel, inspite of the agreement bonus is under dispute and pending before the Labour Minister of the state. In Gobinda Steel, bonus has been paid in accordance with the agreement.
- 10) In tack & Nail, Seraikella Glass, Coir & Felt, the issue of bonus still remains unresolved. In Fort William 9.12 % has been paid.
- 11) In Shalimar Industries, although 16% bonus has been paid to those workers, who have signed a prepared agreement placed by the management. The workers, being terrorised by the stiff attitude of the management signed the agreement and accepted the bonus but 4 of our leading cadres, including Jt. Secretary and Asstt. Secretary refused to sign such a heinous agreement which was prepared without consultation with the recognised union and has not been paid any bonus as yet inspite of the request made by the Deputy Labour Commissioner. On the contrary, the management transferred the two secretaries to heavier machines in which they are not accustomed and charge-sheeted them for lower production, sabotage etc. Charge-Sheets and suspensions are common factors in this factory.

In fine, it must be pointed out that all sections of workers are very much aggrieved and agitated and looking forward particularly to CITU for some suitable actions. The possibilities of a broader and united movement have become brighter and this depends on our initiative. Any mark-time will bring peril to our cause.

The Hooghly District Committee of the CITU suggests an All India action starting from a million signatures to the President demanding withdrawal of bonus ordinance etc., culminating in an All India Industry-wise Token Strike in consultation with other Trade Unions.

* unitedly boycotted 4% bonus. Later on, with exception of two mills,

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WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING

- Madras - 10 - 12 November, 1975

Information Document - 1

Report on Western Madhya Pradesh

- by Com. Md. Ismail, Vice-President CITU.

I visited Nagda on 18th and 19th October 1975 to meet the family members of late Comrade Bhairav Bharati and to find out attack on the CITU after the proclamation of Emergency.

In my two days stay there, I contacted and met many comrades. There is a very serious attack on the CITU through-out the State. T.U. Office is locked by the police or closed, nobody is there to attend the union office, as it would cause further arrests. Already many have been arrested.

As far as possible I have met comrades and active workers of mass organisations and collected information which I have given below :

Com. Bhairav Bharathiya

He was an ardent and consistent fighter for the cause of peasant and other toiling people throughout his life, till death, said Amarjit, Harijan peasant of Baimpura village of Nagda, who was a close associate of Com. Bharathiya for the last 40 years, worked in the peasant movement with him in all the villages of this area. He used to meet Bharathiya almost daily. He was in Grampanchayat since 52-57 and Bharathiya was then Sarpanch of his native village from 1957 till his death. He met Bharathiya one day before his arrest and his health at that time was good. He used to walk 10 miles a day though he had developed low blood pressure some time before.

I also met Sri Balwant Singh, who was a close associate of Com. Bharathiya since 1935. Both were working in the Congress, he was the District Secretary at that time, then both have organised Gwalior State Sarva Janick Sabha, for nationalist movement in princely States. He was the member of its working Committee and Bharathiya was an office bearer in 1944. Bharathiya was member of the State Congress Committee and A.I.C.C. member also. Regarding Bharathiya's health, he said that he never heard about any serious disease which might result in death nor he found him complaining about his health before arrest from his native village.

Hariprasad Singh an old pundit who was his teacher also, has been a Congressman throughout his life, supporting now the Indira Congress. He said : " I knew Bharathiya since his childhood. He was a trusted, and ardent fighter of peasants and workers. He believed in Marxism, and fought for it. I differed with him and stuck to believe Congress ideology. But we both remained friends. I regard him and love him. As far as

I know about his health, there was no serious illness which might have caused his death surprisingly but he died under Government custody".

Com. Bhairav Bharatiya's death in Jail

Bharatiya was arrested alone on the first day of the declaration of Emergency (25th June) at his native village 4 miles away from Nagda. I enquired about his health from almost all his close associates, such as Amarjit, Balwant Singh, Hariprasad Singh and his 59 years old mother Hasarbhai, his wife and his son. Nobody could tell me of any serious disease or illness of Com. Bharatiya before arrest. Nor Com. Bharatiya complained to any one of them about his health.

Inside Ujjain Central Jail however after some time, some minor complaints had developed, which later was reported as "Jaundice". Doctor wanted him to get admitted in Jail Hospital/ by giving wrong medicines etc. He had taken medicine in the jail ward for a number of days.

After some days Dr. Sawant, a retired deputy health officer of M.P. Government, who is also under MISA inside the jail, after thoroughly examining Bharatiya said that in his opinion Bharatiya's health is deteriorating fast and specialist from outside should be asked to examine him thoroughly. The same opinion was also given by Dr. Dubey, the visiting Surgeon in Ujjain Jail in August. Dr. Fzal Hussain was also of the same opinion, but the Government did not take any serious note of it.

In September when Com. Bharatiya was suddenly served transfer order from Ujjain Jail to Indore Hospital, Com. Bharatiya refused to go to Indore Hospital and said "You are taking me there to kill me because Birla wanted to kill me." Transfer was held up for one day. Nihal Singh a comrade detained in the same jail stated that Com. Bharatiya was very much afraid to go alone even in Jail hospital, his demand was "either my family member or one of my party comrade who is in detention in this jail should be allowed as my attendant. His demand was accepted. Com. Nihal Singh was allowed to go to Indore Hospital along with Bharatiya as attendant.

But as soon as the ambulance reached Indore Hospital, Nihal Singh was separated and since then he did not see Bharatiya. He enquired about Bharatiya and about his duty to attend to him, even if he was admitted in outside hospital. The jail authority did not give any reply and he was kept in dark throughout.

Bharatiya told Nihal Singh all along, that if he was put in the hospital outside, he apprehended that Birlas might kill him if he was alone in the hospital. He was sent back to Ujjain Jail again in October till that time he did not know any thing about his death. He had heard that no nurse were provided to Bharatiya in the hospital nor any specialist was brought according to Doctor's demand.

Com. Nihal Singh also thought that everything was planned and it led to the death of Comrade Bharatiya.

Com. Bharatiya had been resisting to be in the hospital alone. He expressed his doubt that if he was alone, he will be killed. He demanded that either his family member or any of his party comrades should be allowed to look after in the hospital. This was denied to him.

He was taken to M.G. Hospital by force and deception and put there alone. His family members also demanded one of them should be allowed as attendant or at least daily interview should be allowed.

/ but he refused as he apprehended that Birla wanted him to get admitted in Jail Hospital. on page - 3

Nothing has been conceded. Even while he remained unconscious nobody was allowed to see him.

When he was about to die in a few minutes, his family members were told that order has come to release him. His son refused on seeing the condition of his father. The dead body was however handed over to his son.

I heard from his wife and son that in one or two interviews with them, said 'I will not be with you, as a conspiracy is going to kill me. You should not give after my death. My body should be taken to my village for cremation.'

Com. Bharatiya belonged to a well to do peasant family. He had left behind 6 sons, two daughters, wife and 95 years old mother and elder brothers. I met all of them.

Mother of Com. Bharatiya said that from his childhood (12-13) he was doing social work, especially among the village poor. He used to hold meetings in our village house regularly. He had contacted Congress. His father was against all these activities, but he could not stop it. For this reason, she was shifted to another village house where he could regularly held meetings of village congressmen, she had encouraged him to go ahead.

One incident she narrated. When control on price was introduced he distributed almost all the wheat and rice stock openly to all the poor section of villagers, while his father had to buy 6 quintals of wheat etc. from the market for home use.

Sabha

Bharatiya had organised Nagda Grasham Mazdoor after it became impossible to function within AITUC Grasham Mazdoor Union which has been affiliated to CITU in 1971. This Union under CITU leadership has tremendous influence and command, fought many united struggles successfully. Since our Union came into existence Birla Management of Nagda could not break and smash our union inspite of police repression, Com. Bharatiya stuck to his post.

It is Com. Bharatiya's contribution that union has tremendous respect among neighbouring peasantry. This was the reason for which Birla management were unable to break the union even with M.P. Government's backing.

Recently on 25th April, 1975, Birlas' security force opened fire on the villagers, killed one child and one old lady and injured nine in the presence of the police. The issue was that the villagers of M. village protested against closure of a passage which was used by villagers traditionally, even though it went through Officers' colony when the factory was started. Management suddenly decided to stop it by erecting iron gate, which led to the protest.

Com. Bharatiya along with others demanded enquiry and punishment against the culprits. The movement for an enquiry was gathering momentum day by day. The entire people of the locality was with Com. Bharatiya. Then he was arrested on the day of Emergency. In this situation he apprehended that Birla will try to kill him in jail by some means or other.

Com. Bharatiya was one of the founders of Gwalior State Sarva Janik Sabha for nationalist movement in M.P. in 1935, with Balwant Singh and others. In 1942 Com. Bharatiya was arrested along with others. He later on joined the All India Kisan Sabha and was elected to the CKC. He did not join the split organised by the Right C.P.I. and later on organised the CITU unions in and around Nagda. He was also once elected to

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to the Legislative Assembly from Nagda Constituency.

Attack on CITU Unions

A full scale attack has been mounted mainly against the trade unions from the day of proclamation of emergency. Almost all leading comrades and active workers of CITU union in Bhopal, Indore, Damoh, Jabalpur, Mandsaur, Nagda, Ujjain, Ratlam and Gwalior have been arrested or warrants have been issued.

This was aimed at disrupting of the Trade Unions, so that there could be no link or co-ordination. No one dares to sit in the union office as he is likely to be arrested. The police officials are openly saying that the CITU will not be allowed to function in M.P., Due to this terrorisation no union membership is collected. There is heavy watch on our activities and even local CPI members or who co-operate with us are arrested.

The position at different centres is as under : -

Bhopal : In Bhopal, Purohit and others are wanted by the police and bails in Railway strike case, have been cancelled.

Mandsaur : C.S. Surana, local secretary was arrested from Gorot in June and warrants have been issued against Deep Narain Pandey, Katlana, Kashiram and Pathan (who died recently). All are T.U. workers.

Jabalpur : Soni and Kanti Kumar Dubey were arrested on 26th June.

Gwalior : Motilal Sharma and Radhakishan Sharma were arrested on 25th June night.

Indore : Gool Tokkar, Vice-President, LIO Union and one more comrade were arrested. T.U. Office not open. Only one union Laghu Udyog Mazdoor Sabha (Small Scale industry) is functioning and mill committee in cotton textiles, is working.

Nagda : 1. Pralhad Roy was arrested on 9th July, and 2. Rajendra Singh (ex-worker) on 20th July, 3. Nihal Singh (worker) on 11th August, 4. Pushpangdon (worker) on 15th July, 5. Ramchandra (pressman) 6. Kanailal (General Secretary) Grasham Mazdoor Sabha registered in 1972, all have been arrested. In the Grasham Mazdoor Sabha Building, Mazdoor Union and CPI(M) offices in Lakshmi Bai Marg, Nagda were sealed officially by order of the Government since 30th June. Satya Narain Tomar wrote about it but no step has been taken. I met D.C. and only then the Govt. have taken decision to lift the ban.

Damoh : Com. Choubey was arrested, No other details about T.U. are not available.

Ratlam : Com. Balkrishna Vyas and Com. Pyarelal Dhonor arrested. Com. Vyas is the elected member of the city Corporation.

Ujjain : In Ujjain Com. Bansidhar Azad has been arrested. There is widespread terror as a result of which no one can stay in the union office. Electricity and telephone connections have been cut off because bills could not be paid, as normal trade union activities have been stopped.

Surakachar (Chhattisgarh Region)

I visited Banki-Surakachar Coal Mine area, in which there is a very militant trade union affiliated to CITU, the Koila Shramik Sangha. This union was made a target of attack by the Police just after proclamation of emergency.

Com. Kameshwar Singh, Asst. Secretary and Com. Jogeswar Jha, Organising Secretary of the Koila Shramik Sangh were arrested on 28.6.75 under MISA. The Police also arrested the owner of the house in which the union office was situated. He was told that he would be released if he cancelled the tenancy of the union and the union office is closed. He agreed to do so and he was released. As a result the union office ceased functioning.

Unfrightened by this terror tactics and despite the difficulties created in the functioning, Coms. Bodhiram, and others started collection from amongst the workers and kept up union activities. They were able to send Rs. 50/- each to the families of the arrested comrades and Rs. 20/- to the comrades in jail per month. They used the remaining fund for the normal activity of the union.

I met the family of Com. Kameshwar Singh and his brother, who is working in the Sand Depot, informed me that he was not allowed any interview with his brother.

The morale of the workers is still high and the comrades desire that some one from the Central office should visit the area for a day or two and guide them about the future activities. I have paid a sum of Rs. 30/- as relief to the family of Com. Kameswar Singh.

Bilaspur : Com. S. C. Moitra, Advocate and a trade union worker has been detained under MISA along with some Kishan Sabha and SFI workers. It is also understood that warrants of arrest have been issued against 4 leaders of railwaymen's movement and notices have been issued for seizure of their properties.

Md. Ismail

N.B: Coms. Kameswar Singh and Com Jogeswar Jha have, however, been released recently.

Report of the Activities of Koila Shramik Sangh, Bisrampur (M . P)

After the emergency declared, the repressive activities of Management of Bisrampur colliery has gone up and has made all attempt to crush down our T.U. even not allowing our union officials to enter in to the office area for collection of union membership.

More than 20 person has been chargesheeted and number of them has been placed under suspension by framing false and fabricated cases. For number of case Departmental enquiry proceedings are started. Our entire time is utilising to these cases at present. The programme of the Management is also the same not to organise T.U.

No attention is being given by the Management over the reasonable demands and disputes. A consultative Committee has been framed by the Management on the 12 points Programmes accepted by the CMA Ltd authorities for its implementation. C.R. Manoharan, Secy. of K.S.S, Bisrampur Branch has been taken as Co-opted member in the said Committee where as 5 representatives from INTUC has been accepted, though we are the majority T.U. at Bisrampur.

12th November 1974 there was a "GHERAO" to the Project Officer, Bistrampur for the payment which was boy-cotted on 9th November '74 on protest of compulsory deduction which was already reported earlier. A Criminal case U/S 341/342 I.P.C. has been charged against some House-wives and members of our T.U. and registered in the Court in Oct. '75.

On 2nd Oct. '75 at about 10 A.M. some Police headed by one Sub-Inspector of Bistrampur Police Chowky severely beaten by lathy to four Contractors Labourers in the work site where they demanded for their back wages which has not been paid by Shri Baijnath Agarwal, Wagon loading contractor. In this connection telegrams were sent to Collector, S.P. and other responsible officials.

In the evening of 2nd Oct, one Head constable of Bistrampur Police chowky, Radhesyam Yadav tried to insult and assault in drunken state our Union president Comd. Chakradhar Prasad and a report has been lodged to police Chowky, S.P. and other officials for enquiry and action against the Head constable.

Now not only by the Management with their goondas but the police is also started attacks on our Union officials, Members and its sympathisers

Information Document

Struggle of J.K. Jute Mill Workers For Bonus

The promulgation of the state of emergency has given a golden opportunity to the employers to start their attacks on the workers. Singhanias, the owners of the J.K. Jute Mills at Kanpur have laid off 1,000 permanent badli workers at the first opportunity and have stopped paying lay off benefits. Before the emergency the workers generally used to get 50% compensation. The workers protested against this decision of the employers and they continue to do under the leadership of the CITU. The employers were compelled to call the representatives of CITU affiliated and other unions for a talk. They had to accept the demand that the laid off workers will be given work by starting a special shift.

The Company notified a 4% bonus in August last. The worker were furious and protested against this decision. The workers of the weaving department demanded the withdrawal of the notice of suspension of work for an hour per shift. The mounting anger of the workers compelled the management to invite the representatives of CITU union along with others. The HMS leaders were against the invitation to CITU union representative. During the talks a decision of 8.33% bonus was reached. It was also decided that the bonus will be paid within a period of two months. The dates for the payment in each department was also fixed.

A few days after the above agreement the management conspired to increase workload on the workers. The workers immediately protested against this vigorously, so this order was withdrawn.

After the declaration of the emergency issuing of charge-sheets, suspension, and fines have become a general practice. The workers are harassed for nothing and they are being terroised too.

According to the agreement no bonus was given to the workers. The workers of one or two departments only were given bonus. The workers who did not get bonus are furious. The management advanced the plea that there is no money and they will be paid when money is available. But the workers were not paid bonus even after the fixed date for payment had expired. The workers concluded that the management is out to cheat them.

In the meanwhile the Central Government announced the 4% bonus decision. The workers became restless. The Id and Dussera festivals were near at hand. They wanted that bonus should be paid before these festivals.

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They began to put pressure on the management for the payment of the bonus. The management in collaboration with this stooges wanted to give another colour to the bonus dispute. The workers began to demonstrate before the office after the working hours daily and demanded their bonus. On the 29th September the management called the workers for talks on the bonus question. The notification issued by management after this talk was misleading. The percentage rate of bonus was not announced. The bonus distribution for one department only was announced. There was great excitement among the workers and stoppage of work took place which was due to the conspiracy of the management.

The management raised a hue and cry that the workers have resorted to illegal strike. Advertisement to this effect was inserted in the newspapers by the management. On 30th September the Labour department in order to solve the dispute, invited the management and the representatives of all unions for a talk. The J.K. Jute Mill Mazdur Panchayat (CITU) was not invited to this talk. The show of talk was only a device to cheat the workers. After this so called talk nothing whatsoever was done. In order to have the blessings of the Chief Minister and the Labour Minister for the steps they had taken, the management began to visit Lucknow, the seat of U.P. Government. The other unions were quite well aware of this conspiracy. When the CITU union invited them again and again to a meeting to solve the dispute they expressed their inability to participate.

With the blessings of the Chief Minister and the Labour Minister in their pocket, the management inserted an advertisement in the newspapers of the 2nd October that the "MARXIST" in the mill have provoked the workers to an illegal strike and they have refused to accept the advice of the Labour Department. The police raided the quarters of the CITU Union workers in the night of the 2nd October but they had returned unhindered. Later they arrested two workers and thrashed them mercilessly. Later two workers of the executive of the Union-Hirdalal and Kasim Ali were arrested and sent to jail. The office of the Panchayat Union was also raided. Warrant of arrest was issued not only against the leaders of the Union but also against all the members of the executive Committee. Warrants of arrest have been issued against Com. Bankey Behari, the beloved leader of the workers and five other workers under DIR. Sixteen workers belonging to the Panchayat (CITU) all members of the Executive Committee have been illegally dismissed from service.

Meanwhile the mill was started with the help of the stooges of the management. The management started a reign of terror in the mill with the help of goondas.

It was in this condition that the management announced the election of the Provident Fund Committee of the mill on the 28th October last. CITU Union set up its own conditions. There were 14 candidates in the field including those of AITUC, INTUC, HMP, HMS, BMS and some independents. The management tried its level best that no candidate of the Panchayat is elected. But the workers' enthusiasm and courage got all their candidates elected by an overwhelming majority. The CITU union's candidates got from over thousand to over 1500 votes while the highest among the defeated got only about 500 votes. The AITUC and INTUC jointly contested but could get between 150-200 votes. The results of the election have shown that no repressive measures can wipe out the CITU from the workers.

Report on Rajasthan Trade Union

After my second visit in Rajasthan, many of the T.U. workers and leaders were released, while during my first visit most of the leading comrades of CITU were under arrest. During that time T.U. offices were closed by the police.

During my second visit, on 22nd October 1975 most of the T.U. leaders were released on conditional bail, most of whom are state leaders city committee (CITU leaders) and factory leaders. Most of the factory leaders were dismissed by the management.

What I have seen during my 2nd visit is that the leaders released from jail, have opened the old CITU office and started functioning.

Jaipur National Industry (Birla Group with 3600 employees) a strong union of ours, have collected Rs. 3000/- secretly for CITU functioning in a very short time. I met the following representatives of different industries in the CITU office in batches :

1. Jaipur National Industry, 2. Jaipur National Engineering
3. Jaipur Spinning & Pedar Mills, 4. Somani Engineering, 5. R.S. Mottle,
6. Ashok Foundry, 7. Copstan Metal, 8. Rohtak Industries, 9. Jaipur Bone Mill, 10. Rajendra Plastic, 11. M.B. Industry, 12. Man Industries.

In addition to the above, I also met 4 State Council members of CITU including B.L. Bopna, Office Secretary. I also met 17 other City Committee members of CITU, Jaipur.

In Kota, Bonus was given at the rate of 20% and 10% Ex-gratia in the month of August. Kamani Industries and some other industries 8.33% and in other factories, the employers were unable to issue notice with the offer of 4% bonus by seeing the fighting mood of the workers.

The workers' representative of CITU went to the gate of Jaipur National Engineering to place the demand of 20% bonus as was given in the last year. On seeing this, all the workers have left their job and come to join the demonstration. On finding it very difficult, the employer requested the leaders to ask the workers to start work so that they may be seated for the discussion. The negotiation failed. On the next day, some other workers were charge-sheeted. But the moral of the workers are very high. They are fighting against this.

Md. Ismail.

(Vice President CITU)

172, Lenin Sarani , Calcutta - 700013

Information document

Text of Ordinance On Equal Pay For Women

The Equal Remuneration
Ordinance , 1975
No. 12 Of 1975

Promulgated by the President in the Twenty-sixth Year
of the Republic of India.

An Ordinance to provide for the payment of equal remuneration to men and women workers and for the prevention of discrimination, on the ground of sex, against women in the matter of employment and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

Whereas parliament is not in session and the President is satisfied that circumstances exist which render it necessary for him to take immediate action;

Now, therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred by clause (1) of article 123 of the Constitution, the President is pleased to promulgate the following Ordinance :-

CHAPTER - 1
Preliminary

1. (1) This Ordinance may Short be called the Equal Remuneration Ordinance, 1975.

(2) It extends to the whole of India.

(3) It shall come into force on such date, not being later than three years from the date of promulgation of this Ordinance, as the Central Govt. may by notification in the Official Gazette, appoint and different dates may be appointed for different establishments or employments.

Short
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Defini-
tions.

2. In this Ordinance, unless the context otherwise requires,-

(a) "appropriate Government" means,-

(i) in relation to any employment carried on by or under the authority of the Central Government or a railway administration, or in relation to a banking company, a mine, oilfield or major port or any corporation established by a Central Act, the Central Government, and

(ii) In relation to any other employment, the State Government;

(b) "commencement of this Ordinance" means, in relation to an establishment or employment, the date on which this Ordinance comes into force in respect of that establishment or employment;

(c) "employer" has the meaning assigned to it in 39 of '72; clause (f) of section 2 of the Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972;

(d) "prescribed" means prescribed by rules made under this Ordinance;

(e) "remuneration" means the basic wage or salary, and any additional emoluments whatsoever payable, either in cash or in kind, to a person employed in respect of his employment or of work done in such employment, if the terms of the contract of employment, express or implied, were fulfilled;

(f) "man" and "woman" means male and female human beings respectively, of any age;

(g) "same work or work of a similar nature" means work in respect of which the skill, effort and responsibility required are the same, when performed under similar working conditions, by a man or a woman and the differences if any, between the skill, effort and those required of a woman are not of practical importance in relation to the terms and conditions of employment;

(h) "worker" means a worker in any establishment or employment in respect of which this Ordinance has come into force;

(i) words and expressions used in this Ordinance and not defined in the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, shall have the meanings respectively assigned to them in that Act.

Ordinance
to have overri-
ding effect.

3. The provisions of this ordinance shall have effect notwithstanding anything inconsistent therewith contained in any other law or in the terms of any award, agreement or contract of service, whether made before or after the commencement of this Ordinance, or in any instrument having effect under any law for the time being in force.

CHAPTER II

Payment of Remuneration At Equal Rates To Men And Women Workers And Other Matters

4. (1) No employer shall pay to any worker, employed by him in an establishment or employment, remuneration, whether payable in cash or in kind, at rates less favourable than those at which remuneration is paid by him to the workers of the opposite sex in such establishment or employment for performing the same work or work of a similar nature.

(2) No employer shall, for the purpose of complying with the provisions of subsection (1) reduce the rate of remuneration of any worker.

(3) Where in an establishment the rates of remuneration payable before the commencement of this Ordinance for men and women workers for the same work or work of a similar nature are different only on ground of sex, then the higher (in cases where there are only two rates), or, as the case may be, the highest (in cases where there are more than two rates) of such rates shall be the rate at which remuneration shall be payable, on and from such commencement, to such men and women workers,

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Provided that nothing in this sub-section shall be deemed to entitle a worker to the revision of the rate of remuneration payable to him or her with reference to the service rendered by him or her before the commencement of this Ordinance.

(5) On and from the commencement of this Ordinance no employer shall, while making recruitment for the same work or work of a similar nature, make any discrimination against women except where the employment of women in such work is prohibited or restricted or under any law for the time being in force.

No discrimination to be made while recruiting men & women workers.

Provided that the provisions of this sub-section shall not affect any priority or reservation for scheduled casts or scheduled tribes, exservicemen, retrenched employees or any other class or category of persons in the matter of recruitment to the posts in an establishment or employment.

6. (1) For the purpose of providing increasing opportunities to women for employment, the appropriate Govt. shall constitute one or more Advisory Committees to Advise it with regard to the extent to which women may be employed in such establishments or employments as the Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, specify in this behalf.

Advisory Committee.

(2) Every Advisory Committee shall consist of not less than ten persons, to be nominated by the appropriate Government of which one half shall be women.

(3) In tendering its advice, the Advisory Committee shall have regard to the number of women employed in the concerned establishment or employment, the nature of work, hours of work, suitability of women for employment, as the case may be, the need for providing increasing employment opportunities for women, including part-time employment, and such other relevant factors as the Committee may think fit.

(4) The Advisory Committee shall regulate its own procedure.

(5) The appropriate Government may, after considering the advice tendered to it by the Advisory Committee and after giving to the persons concerned in the establishment or employment, an opportunity to make representations, issue such directions in respect of employment of women workers, as the appropriate Government may think fit.

Power of appointment of appropriate authorities for hearing and deciding claims and complaints. 7. (1) The appropriate Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, appoint such officers, not below the rank of a Labour Officer, as it think fit to be the authorities for the purpose of hearing and deciding -

(a) complaints with regard to the contravention of any provision of this Ordinance,

(b) claims arising out of nonpayment of wages at equal rates to men and women workers for the same work of a similar nature,

and may, by the same or subsequent notification, define the local limits within which each such authority shall exercise its jurisdiction.

(2) Every complaint or claim referred to in sub-section (1) shall be made in such manner as may be prescribed.

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(3) If any question arises as to whether two or more works are of the same nature or of a similar nature. It shall be decided by the authority appointed under sub-section (1)

(4) Where a complaint or claim is entertained under subsection (1), the authority appointed under sub-section (1) may, after giving the applicant and the employer an opportunity of being heard, and after such inquiry as it may consider necessary, direct, -

(i) in the case of a claim arising out of non-payment of wages at equal rates to men and women workers for the same work or work of a similar nature, the payment to the worker of the amount by which the wages payable to him exceed the amount actually paid,

(ii) in the case of complaint, that adequate steps be taken by the employer so as to ensure that there is no contravention of any provision of this Ordinance.

(5) Save as otherwise provided in sub-section (6) every authority appointed under sub-section (1) shall have all the powers of a Civil Court under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, for the purpose of taking evidence and 5 of enforcing the attendance of witnesses and compelling 1908 the production of documents, and every such authority shall be deemed to be a Civil Court for all the purposes of 2 of section 195 and Chapter XXVI of the Code of Criminal 1974. Procedure, 1973.

(6) Any employer or worker aggrieved by any order made by an authority appointed under sub-section (1), on a complaint or claim may, within thirty days from the date of the order, prefer an appeal to such authority as the appropriate government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, specify in this behalf, and that authority may, after hearing the appeal, confirm modify or reverse the order appealed against and no further appeal shall lie against the order made by such authority.

(7) The authority referred to in sub-section (6) may, if it is satisfied that the appellant was prevented by sufficient cause from preferring the appeal within the period specified in subsection (6) allow the appeal to be preferred within a further period of thirty days but not thereafter.

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(8) The provisions of subsection (1) of section 33C of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, shall apply for the recovery of monies due from an employer arising out of the decision of an authority appointed under this section.

CHAPTER III

Miscellaneous

8. On and from the commencement of this Ordinance, every employer shall maintain such registers in relation to the workers employed by him as may be prescribed. Duty of employers to maintain

9. (1) The appropriate Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, appoint such persons as it may think fit to be inspectors for the purpose of making an investigation as to whether the provisions of this Ordinance, or the rules made thereunder, are being complied with by employers, and may define the local limits within which an Inspector may make such investigation. Inspectors.

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(2) Every Inspector shall be deemed to be a public servant within the meaning of section 21 of the Indian Penal Code.

(3) An Inspector may at any place within the local limits of his jurisdiction, -

(a) enter, at any reasonable time, with such assistance as he thinks fit, any building, factory, premises or vessel,

(b) require any employer to produce any register, muster-roll or other documents relating to the employment of workers, and examine such documents,

(c) take, on the spot or otherwise, the evidence of any persons for the purpose of ascertaining whether the provisions of this Ordinance are being, or have been, complied with,

(d) examine the employee, his agent or servant or any other person found in charge of the establishment ~~or any other person found in charge of the establishment~~ any premises connected therewith or any person whom the Inspector has reasonable cause to believe to be, or to have been, a worker in the establishment,

(e) make copies, or take extracts from, any register or other document maintained in relation to the establishment under this Ordinance.

(4) Any person required by an Inspector to produce any register or other document or to give any information shall comply with such requisition.

10.(1) After the commencement of this Ordinance, any employer, being required under the Ordinance, so to do -

Penalties (a) omits or fails to produce any register, muster-roll or other document relating to the employment of workers or,

(b) omits or refuses to give any evidence or prevents his agent, servant, or any other person in charge of the establishment, or any worker, from giving evidence, or

(c) omits or refuses to give any information, he shall be punishable with fine which may extend to one thousand rupees.

(2) If after the commencement of this Ordinance, any employer -

(a) makes any recruitment in contravention of the provisions of this Ordinance, or

(b) makes any payment of remuneration at unequal rates to men and women workers, for the same work or work of a similar nature, or

(c) makes any discrimination between men and women workers in contravention of the provisions of this Ordinance, or

(d) omits or fails to carry out any direction made by the appropriate Government under sub-section (5) of section 6

he shall be punishable with fine which may extend to five thousand rupees.

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(3) If any person being required so to do, omits or refuses to produce to an Inspector any register or other document or to give any information, he shall be punishable with fine which may extend to five hundred rupees.

Offences by companies 11.(1) Where an offence under this Ordinance has been committed by a company, every person who, at the time the offence was committed, was in charge of, and was responsible to the company for the conduct of the business of the company, as well as the company, shall be deemed to be guilty of the offence and shall be liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly,

Provided that nothing contained in this sub-section shall render any such person liable to any punishment, if he proves that the offence was committed without his knowledge or that he had exercised all due diligence to prevent the commission of such offence.

(2) Notwithstanding any thing contained in sub-section (1) where any offence under this Ordinance has been committed with the consent or connivance of, or is attributable to, any neglect on the part of any director, manager, secretary or other officer of the company, such director, manager, secretary or other officer shall be deemed to be guilty of that offence and shall be liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly.

Explanation - For the purposes of this section, -

(a) "company" means any body corporate and includes a firm or other association of individuals and

(b) "director", in relation to a firm, means a partner in the firm.

12.(1) No court inferior to that of a Metropolitan Magistrate or a Judicial Magistrate of the first class shall try any offence punishable under this Ordinance.

(2) No court shall take cognizance of an offence punishable under this Ordinance except upon a complaint made with the sanction of the appropriate Government or an officer authorised by it in this behalf.

(3) No court shall take cognizance of an offence punishable under the Ordinance unless complaint thereof is made within three months of the grant of sanction under this section.

13.(1) The Central Government may by notification in the Official Gazette, make rules for carrying out the provisions of this Ordinance.

(2) In particular, and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing power, such rules may provide for all or any of the following matters namely :-

(a) the manner in which complaints regarding the contravention of any provision of this Ordinance is to be made,

(b) registers which an employer shall be required to maintain in relation to the workers employed by him,

(c) any other matter which is required to be, or may be prescribed.

(3) Every rule made by the Central Government under this Ordinance shall be laid, as soon as may be after it is made, before each House of Parliament, while it is in session, for a total period of thirty days which may be comprised in one session or in two or more successive sessions, and if, before the expiry of the session immediately following the session or the successive sessions aforesaid, both Houses agree in making any modification in the rule or both Houses agree that the rule should not be made, the rule shall thereafter have effect **only** in such modified form or be of no effect, as the case may be; so, however, that any such modification or annulment shall be without prejudice to the validity of anything previously done under that rule.

14. The Central Government may give directions to a State Government as to the carrying into execution of this Ordinance in the State.

Power of Central Government to give directions.

Ordinance 15. In so far as -
not to apply
in certain
special
cases.

(a) the terms and conditions of a woman's employment are, in any respect, affected by compliance with the law regulating the employment of women, or

(b) any special treatment is accorded to women in connection with the birth or expected birth of a child,

then to that extent the requirement of equal treatment for men and women as mentioned in this Ordinance shall not apply (but without prejudice to its operation as regards other matters), nor shall that requirement to requiring equal treatment as regards terms and conditions related to retirement, marriage or death or to any provision made in connection with retirement, marriage or death.

Power to make declaration. 16. Where the appropriate Government is, on a consideration of all the circumstances of the case, satisfied that the difference in regard to the remuneration, or a particular species of remuneration, of men and women workers in any establishment or employment is based on a factor other than sex, it may, by notification in the Official Gazette, make a declaration to that effect, and any act of the employer attributable to such a difference shall not be deemed to be a contravention of any provision of this Ordinance.

Power to remove difficulties. 17. If any difficulty arises in giving effect to provisions of this Ordinance, the Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, make any order, not inconsistent with the provisions of this Ordinance, which appears to it to be necessary for the purpose of removing the difficulty:

Provided that every such order shall, as soon as may be after it is made, be laid before each House of Parliament.

FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED,
President.

K. K. SUNDARAM,
Secy. to the Govt. of India.

WORKERS PARTICIPATION IN MANAGEMENT

Scheme Prepared by the Union Labour Ministry

The scheme, applicable to those units in the public private and cooperative sectors as announced by Shri Raghunatha Reddy, Union Minister for Labour at a Press Conference, is limited to the production process to begin with and will apply to units with 500 workers or more on their rolls. The present scheme for participative management through shop councils provides:

I. that the employer shall constitute a shop council for each department or shop, or one council for more than one department or shop, considering the number of workmen employed in different departments or shops,

II. (a) Each council shall consist of an equal number of representatives of employers and workers, (b) The employers' representatives shall be nominated by the management and must consist of persons from the unit concerned, (c) All the representatives of workmen shall be from amongst the workers actually engaged in the department or the shop concerned,

III. The employer shall decide in consultation with the recognised unions, or various registered trade unions, with workers, as the case may be, in the manner best suited to local conditions, the number of shop councils and councils and departments to be attached to each council of the undertaking or the establishment,

IV. The number of members of each council may be determined by the employer in consultation with the registered union, or workers in the manner best suited to local conditions obtaining in the unit, the total number of members may not generally exceed 12,

V. All decisions of a shop council shall be on the basis of ~~xxx~~ consensus and not by a process of voting, provided that either party may refer the unsettled matters to the joint council for consideration,

VI. Every decision of a shop council shall be implemented by the parties concerned within one month unless otherwise stated in the decision itself and compliance report shall be submitted to the council,

VII. Such decisions of a shop council which have a bearing on another shop, or the undertaking or establishment as a whole will be referred to the joint council for consideration and decision,

VIII. A shop council once formed, shall function for two years. Any member nominated or elected to the council in the mid-term to fill a casual vacancy shall continue to be a member of the council for the unexpired portion of the term of the council,

IX. The council shall meet as frequently as is necessary and at least once in a month and,

X. The chairman of the shop council shall be a nominee of the management. The worker members of the council shall elect a vice-chairman from amongst themselves.

Shop Council: The shop councils should, in the interest of increasing production, productivity and overall efficiency of the shop / department attend to the following matters,

(1) Assist management in achieving monthly/yearly production targets,

(II) Improvement of production, productivity and efficiency, including elimination of wastage and optimum utilisation of machine capacity and manpower,

(III) Specifically identify areas of low productivity and take necessary corrective steps at shop level to eliminate relevant contributing factors,

(IV) To study absenteeism in the shops/departments and recommended steps to reduce them,

(V) Take safety measures,

(VI) Assist in maintaining general discipline in the shop/departments,

(VII) Physical conditions of working, such as, lighting ventilation, noise, dust, etc. and reduction of fatigue,

(VIII) Welfare and health measures to be adopted for efficient running of the shop/ department, and

(IX) Ensure proper flow of adequate two-way communications between the management and the workers, particularly on matters relating to production figures, production schedules and progress in achieving the targets.

Joint Council: In every industrial unit employing 500 or more workers, there shall be a joint council for the whole unit. The main features of the scheme of joint council may be as follows:

(I) Only such persons who are actually engaged in the unit shall be members of the joint council,

(II) The council shall function for two years,

(III) The Chief executive of the unit shall be the chairman of the joint council. There shall be a vice-chairman who will be nominated by worker members of the council,

(IV) The joint council shall appoint one of the members of the council as its secretary. Necessary facilities for the efficient discharge of functions by the secretary shall be provided within the premises of the undertaking establishment,

(v) The term of the council once formed, shall be for two years. If, however, a member is nominated in the mid-term of the council to fill a casual vacancy, the member nominated in such vacancy shall continue in office for the remaining period of the term of the council,

(VI) The joint council shall meet at least once in a quarter,

(VII) Every decision of the joint council shall be on the basis of consensus and not by a process of voting and shall be binding on employers and workmen and shall be implemented within one month unless otherwise stated in the decision itself.

Functions: The joint council should deal with matters relating to :

I. Optimum production, efficiency and fixation of productivity norms of man and machine for the unit as a whole,

II. Functions of a shop council which have a bearing on another shop or the unit as a whole,

III. Matters emanating from shop councils which remain unresolved,

IV. Matters concerning the unit or the plant as a whole, in respect of matters relating to work planning and achieving production targets, more specifically, talks assigned to a shop council at the shop department levels but relevant to the unit as a whole will be taken up by the joint council,

V. The development of skills of workmen and adequate facilities for training,

VI. The preparation of schedules of working hours and of holidays,

VII. Awarding of rewards for valuable and creative suggestions received from workers,

VIII. Optimum use of raw materials and quality of finished products, and

IX. General health, welfare and safety measures for the unit or the plant.

Diversity of Units

Composition : There is considerable diversity in the situation prevailing from unit to unit in different industries ..Even departmental undertakings, and public enterprises under the same ministry have had to adopt different systems depending upon the local conditions and their individual needs keeping this diversity in view, no uniform pattern is being laid down for the constitution of shop councils and joint councils, particularly relating to the representation of workers. The manager in consultation with workers should evolve the most suitable pattern of representation so as to ensure that representation of the workers results in effective, meaningful and broad-based participation of workers.

Communication : For any scheme of workers participation to succeed, there must be an effective two-way communication and exchange of information between the management and the workmen. It is only then the workers would have a better appreciation of the problems and difficulties of the undertaking and of its overall functioning. With this end in view, each unit should devise a suitable system of communication within the undertaking works committee. The works committees as prescribed under the Industrial Disputes Act shall continue to function as at present.

Appropriate Government: The scheme not being statutory, the concept of "appropriate Government" as in the I.D. Act is not relevant. However the union and state governments have an important role in promoting the healthy and speedy implementation of the scheme in as large a number of units as possible. While the initiative for the introduction of the scheme will mainly be with the undertakings concerned all matters relating to the operation of the scheme will be dealt with by the Union Government in the case of public sector / departmental units of the Union Government.

"GUIDELINES " FOR 7 - DAY WORKING

The National Apex Body for Private Sector industry representing both employees and workers met in New Delhi on October 18. It accepted the following guidelines for introduction of a seven day working week for the industrial workers. The AITUC expressed reservations for the Scheme.

1. Before any unit or industry wants to introduce seven day working, it must have worked all the three shifts for sufficiently long time and proved that its existing installed capacity has been utilised to the full.
2. Introduction of seven day working and recruitment of new labour under that scheme should be on a permanent basis so that workers are not thrown out after a short period.
3. There shall not be any retrenchment or lay off consequent upon increased production on account of seven day working.
4. Any increase in the gains arising out of seven day working shall be shared in the manner agreed to between the union and the management
5. This seven day working is being resorted to for providing additional employment opportunities and not for absorbing any labour rendered surplus due to rationalisation.
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A NOTE ON THE BONUS STRUGGLE OF THE IDPL EMPLOYEES :

HYDERABAD

Synthatic Drugs Plant (SDP) is part of Indian Drugs & Pharmaceutical Limited (IDPL). A public sector undertaking established with the aid of U.S.S.R. The Hyderabad Unit employs about five thousand workers and staff in the plant. It manufactures drugs.

On 5th October, 1975, a thousand strong army reserved police occupied the plant in the afternoon went on tear gassing and lathi charging the 4 thousand employees waiting to hear the announcement of the management on bonus for the year 1974-75. Many employees were beaten up and a good number of them were arrested by the Police. The Plant was virtually handed over to police on 5th October, 1975. Even the by-standers on the main road leading to the plant were charge-charged. The traffic was closed.

134 permanent employees have been suspended by the management. 20 Badli workers were removed from work. 65 employees have been implicated in cooked-up criminal cases. Of the 65, 9 were detained under MISA and were lodged in Musheerabad Dist. Jail, Secunderabad. Some among the 65 are yet to be arrested. The atmosphere inside the plant is one of the terror and intimidations.

This unprovoked attack was resorted to by the Management on 5th October without any valid reason. The workmen, demanded payment of bonus on eve of the Ramzan and Dasara. They also pointed out that more bonus than the statutory minimum be paid to them in view of the fact that the management declared profit to the tune of nearly Rs. 4.7 crores. This announcement was made by the management in India and abroad also. This profit related to Hyderabad Unit of IDPL only. So naturally employees were expecting higher bonus than the statutory minimum. To impress upon the management, the employees after their working hours gathered at a place and resorted to sit down inside the premises. This started from 4th Oct. after the General shift and the employees working in 'B' and 'C' shifts also joined them after their duty hours. Sunday 'A' shift employees also joined afterwards. The police intervention took place about 3.30 P.M. on 5th October.

The recognised Union in the plant is one Karmika Sangham; formerly affiliated to HMS. The local leader is Shri Madhav Reddy, a close associate of Badri Vishal Pitti, a Multi-millionaire, socialist turned into BLD. The Union leadership failed to voice the genuine demands of the employees promptly Shri Madhav Reddy, President of the Union signed an agreement with the management fixing the wages for below the wages in other Government undertakings.

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The employees strongly resented this action. Apart from this, the Union affairs were conducted undemocratically.

The second Union is the INTUC affiliated SDP Employees Union with a small following. Earlier this union was a recognised Union. Shri G. Venkat Swamy, present Deputy Minister in the Union cabinet, was the leader of that union till he assumed ministerial post at the centre. Due to undemocratic functioning of the union and questionable integrity of the leadership, it lost confidence of the employees. Therefore, the HMS affiliated Union, Kar mika Sangh got recognition.

Recently Right Communist Party leaders started a new Union with negligible number of workers and got it registered and affiliated to AITUC. There is no response to this Union from among the workers.

The net result is large number of employees having lost confidence in the recognised union leadership against whom they demanded Union elections through secret ballot. Therefore the employees took initiative to redress their bonus demand by, silent demonstration by sitting in the premises on 4th and 5th October,. The management instead of solving the problem, took a hostile attitude and summoned, Police to beat the employees. There was no damage or loss in the plant on these two days. There was no reason to call the police.

The unfortunate part of the development is that the leadership of the 3 Unions are disowning the employees suspended by the management, numbering about 134. Some of these leaders are giving a political colour to the suspended employees having leanings to Marxists and Extremists. The management is also acting vindictively against the employees without caring for production or better industrial relations.

There is a proposal to form a defence committee to Co-ordinate the legal aid and help the employees and their families. Still about 25 are in jail, including 9 under MISA. We hope you will understand the situation in its proper perspective and extend your co-operation.

HYDERABAD
Dt. 19.10.1975

TWELVE POINT PROGRAMME DRAWN BY MINISTRY OF ENERGY

1. Discipline: Full time work, punctuality, banning private work, discontinuing overtime, reduction tea-break and incentive scheme.
2. Recruitment of Workers - Banning
3. Redeployment of Surplus manpower.
4. Over lapping shift working
5. Seven day working with staggered Holiday.
6. Utilisation of Machineries Maximum-preventive maintenance, adequate spares and reduction idle time.
7. Elimination of Fall back wages.
8. Weeding out of "dead wood"
9. Strict Security Measures and Vigilance-proper utilisation of staff, stoppage of coal pilferage.
10. Welfare measures-Housing, watersupply, essential commodities, credit facilities, bank account, medical and other facilities.
11. Law and order-stoppage of illegal mining
- 12 workers participation in action programme implementation.

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A Short report on West Bengal

- By Monoranjan Roy
General Secretary
CITU West Bengal Committee

10th November 1975

Comrade President and Comrades,

I am reporting here the situation prevailing in West Bengal after the third Conference of CITU held in Bombay and I will be as brief as possible.

Rally of 5th June

Immediately after we returned from CITU Bombay conference a massive rally was held in Calcutta on 5th June 1975. It was jointly sponsored by Jayaprakash Narayan and eight left parties of West Bengal. Nav Nirman Samity and Congress(o) also joined this rally. The participation of workers and employees in the rally was very good. Large number of people from rural areas also came and joined the rally. The rally created a very good impact amongst all sections of the democratic people and reflected the ascending tide of movement against the Congress misrule. Our State Committee though not a joint sponsorer, fully mobilised its forces to make the rally a success.

Reception to Vietnamese Representative

The reception given to the representative of South Vietnam Government on 13th June 1975 in a mass meeting held in Calcutta is a notable event of this period. Over 50 thousands people participated in the meeting and representatives of nearly 400 mass organisations including political parties, Trade Unions, Students' Youths, Women's and others garlanded the Vietnamese representatives in the meeting itself. The majority of these organisations were our unions.

Statewide General Strike of 20th June

The State-wide General Strike on 20th June 1975 was the sixth General Strike in West Bengal after the 1972 rigged election.

The State Government took the General Strike of 20th June as a challenge and openly declared that all out measures would be taken to foil the General Strike. Armed squads of anti-social elements and police started terrorising activities - assaulting, intimidating and arresting the workers to disrupt all campaigns and preparations for the Strike. The workers were threatened and intimidated even inside the Mills and factories and bastees and quarters. The workers were openly told that if they participated in the General Strike, they would not be allowed entry into their workplaces from the next day. Employers also issued notices threatening the workers of dire consequence if they failed to report for duties on 20th June. The Government employees were threatened with break of service and dismissal.

contd..2

The shop owners were told by the congress rowdies that if they did not open their shops on the General Strike day, the shops would be burnt.

The mobilisation of police and CRP forces was unprecedented since 1972 rigged election.

Despite all these provocations and attacks even before 20th, the General Strike took place although with police help the Government brought out on road a number of State Buses and Trams and declared that the strike was a failure. Though in a number of cases the workers could not resist the attacks perpetrated by the strike breakers, in overall analysis we can say the general strike was quite effective. The success of the General Strike was manifested in so far as a large number of workers were forcibly prevented from reporting for duties from 21st June for their participation in the General Strike.

Enraged by the success of the General Strike at Chittaranjan Locomotive (where unprecedented terror and repression were let loose since the Railway Strike), the Congress rowdies murdered Comrade Mihir Dey, Vice-President of Chittaranjan Locomotive works Labour Union on 22nd June 1975 dragging him out of his quarter. The houses of other union leader were gutted, a Jeep of the union was burnt and a co-operative Store of the employees was looted. The workers of Chittaranjan Locomotive Works and their families faced these attacks with exemplenary courage. Large number of workers including the union General Secretary were arrested.

INTERNAL EMERGENCY
- A NEW SITUATION

The Ordinance on Internal Emergency came when our unions and workers were grappling the problems arising out of the general strike of 20th June 1975.

Since 1972 rigged election our activities were greatly disrupted by the continuing semi-fascist terror and the internal emergency further curtailed our work. It is a new situation and a very difficult situation.

The workers from their direct experience understood the meaning of the Internal Emergency in as much as their workloads were suddenly increased. The Ordinance on Emergency was followed by large scale lay-off and retrenchment. The State Labour Minister Dr. Gopaldas Nag said on 24th October 1975 that since promulgation of Emergency Ordinance on 26th June, 1975, 27830 workers were affected due to lay-off, closure and retrenchment in West Bengal. I am not in a position to give the actual figure but I can confidently say that actual figure will be much more than quoted by the State Labour Minister.

In a few places like Sen-Raleigh (where our union cannot function due to terror), AITUC and INTUC leadership have accepted retrenchment and also reduction of wages on the plea of avoiding further retrenchment, after the unit was taken over by the Central Govt. The workers existing rights and privileges have been curtailed in various places. A strike against retrenchment and mass victimisation in Kesoram Rayon was disrupted after the internal emergency. In National Tobacco Co. 1180 workers out of a total compliment of 2500 have been retrenched. In Jute industry while the Government is giving more and more concessions to the employers in the form of reduction/withdrawal of duties, and subsidies for Carpet backing the workers are left completely at the mercy of the jute barons. The Dearness Allowance of the workers is reduced through manipulation of price Index based on the plea that prices have come down.

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Repression

With the declaration of Internal Emergency repressive measures have been intensified against the workers and employees of Govt. and Non Govt. establishments, mills and factories.

The Govt. first struck against the employees of the Central and State Govt. employees leaders in West Bengal. Fifteen leaders of the State Govt. employees Co-ordination Committee and 9 leaders of the Central Govt. employees Organisations have been detained under MISA.

All the arrested State Government employees, leaders have been summarily dismissed from their services.

In Dooars tea garden area alone 36 workers and leaders have been detained under MISA. In Darjeeling hills 8 tea garden workers are detained under MISA. In D.S.P. and also organisers of the movements of the Kisans, Students, Youth have been arrested under DIR or MISA. Still now in our State either leadership of the State CITU or that of CITU affiliated unions have been under attack nor large scale arrested has been resorted to after the emergency, but I don't know how long Govt. will continue this policy.

Though there is no order under sec.144 prohibiting meetings, demonstrations etc. these are not allowed and thus virtually banned. CITU and other associated left trade unions still enjoy the stamp of legality but their routine functioning has been made impossible and in fact prohibited. The right to strike is not yet taken away but if the workers resort to strike demanding stoppage of large scale retrenchment, lay-off etc. the police threaten to arrest all the workers of the respective plants, not to speak of the leaders.

The workers and employees of both the public and private concerns are marked absent or punished in various ways for a bit delay in their attendance which may be due to transport difficulties etc. for taking short leave, even casual leave, without prior information or sanction.

The workers and employees are forced to retire prematurely on pains of dismissal under various pretexts. The employed personnels are forced to take up their volume of work over and above the increased workload thrust upon them.

The existing rights and benefits of the workers and employees are being curtailed. There are many factories which are run with the help of the Government financial Institutions, keeping the actual management in the heads of the old employers. In these factories financial Institutions offer help only when the workers unions agree retrenchment and curtailment of existing rights of the workers including wage cut and other facilities. Even when Government takes over such factories the same conditions are forced upon the workers.

In Sen -Raleigh Company's Cycle factory workers faced the same fate. The old management, although squandered the money and capital was allowed to get help from IRCI etc. of Rs.8 crores in 1972 after its closure for one and half years. The factory was reopened with depleted staff after an agreement with AITUC & INTUC, CITU refusing to sign such agreement. The factory has again been closed and ultimately taken over by the Govt. after the Emergency. Again the INTUC and AITUC unions signed an agreement allowing retrenchment and wage cut etc.

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That this Internal Emergency mean complete freedom for the employers is already understood by the advanced workers and this awariness is rapidly percolating to the mass of the workers. While the internal emergency has created a new and most difficult situation, the rapid growth of consciousness of the workers are tending to open up new possibilities and this was amply demonstrated in the movement against Bonus Ordinance in West Bengal.

BONUS ORDINANCE: RESISTANCE MOVEMENT

There was a massive protest movement against the Bonus Ordinance. The State Labour Minister Dr. Gopalidas Nag said that even in some places in the third week of October 70 percent of the workers of West Bengal were boycotting 4% bonus. Actually all workers had boycotted 4% bonus. The workers organised mass deputations, mass squatting, stoppage of work and even partial strikes. The workers have shown their initiative and talents in organising the movement against the bonus ordinance.

In Jute Industry the boycott is still continuing. All the Calcutta Tramways workers also had boycotted 4% bonus. The workers of INTUC, CITU and AITUC affiliated unions of Hindusthan Cables Corporation in Asansol have been unitedly boycotting the 4% Bonus. Boycott of 4% Bonus is also being unitedly continued in Jay Engineering and Gardenreach Workshop. In State Electricity Board 70% of the regular employees had refused to accept 4% bonus.

The workers outbursts against bonus ordinance have compelled AITUC and INTUC leadership in many places to fall in line and support the boycott movement. General workers belonging to INTUC and AITUC took active part in the Bonus movement.

The bonus ordinance has thoroughly exposed the congress Government and all its pretensions. The contentions of AITUC, INTUC and HMS (Congress faction) leaders are also exposed before the workers. The tempo of the movement against bonus ordinance is still very strong. Our State Committee is trying to unify this movement channelising it through state-wide protest action. We also seek guidance of the centre in this regard.

Despite the ordinance the workers in various workplaces in West Bengal were able to secure bonus at last at years quantum and in some cases even more than last year. A list giving details is submitted separately.

A rally for protesting against Bonus Ordinance was jointly planned by CITU, UTUC and TUCC on 8th October 1975 but police banned it, so the rally could not be held.

STATE APEX BODY FORMED

The State Labour Minister called a meeting of the Central Trade Union representatives on 26.7.75 " to discuss the issues relating to industrial relations and also the matters mentioned below:-

1. Schemes for workers participation in industries particularly at shop floor level and production programme.
2. On indebtedness of industrial workers.
3. Welfare of Agricultural Workers
4. Industrial Housing."

The notice was issued on 12th July 1975.

We had been discussing with other left T.U. who were also invited as to whether we should at all attend the meeting and if so what should be our stand.

On the 24th July a letter was sent to us by the Secretary of State Labour Department cancelling the said Labour Ministers meeting convened on 26.7.75.

After 2 days representatives of AITUC, INTUC and HMS (Congress faction) were called by the Labour Minister and discussed on the same issues. Thus the State Labour Advisory Board (SLAB) was reconstituted excluding CITU and other left TUs. The new name was given to the SLAB as State APEX BODY.

Instruction has been issued by the Government forbidding registration of any new union which donot belong to INTUC, AITUC and HMS (Congress faction).

The West Bengal Government is also contemplating to adversely amend Industrial Disputes Act soon and impose compulsory arbitration. It is apparent that this amendment will be processed with the consent of the State Apex Body.

SITUATION IN HINDUSTHAN MOTORS

The Management of Hindusthan Motors owned by the Birlas resorted to large scale lay-off on the ground of reduced production for reduction in demand for car.

In June last the West Bengal Govt. had reduced sales tax on cars manufactured by Hindusthan Motors Ltd., to the extent of Rs.4000/- per car. Wide publicity was given by Press that the concession was given on assurance of the Management that Lay-off would be withdrawn. It is to be mentioned here that for the last one year majority workers of Hind Motors are being given 13 days work in a month. The production has been reduced to about 30% only.

The Birlas got the concession alright, but lay-off continued. The 14,000 workers found the complete ineffectiveness of the Emergency with regard to monopoly Houses. No step was taken or even threatened against the Birla management.

In the wake of this came the bonus Ordinance and the Birlas immediately took advantage of the same and issued a notice that 4% Bonus would be paid and that too on the wage payment day along with wages. The workers spontaneously reacted. This was a calculated provocation on the part of the Management, who in advance ask the CRP and the local Intelligence Branch to occupy the factory premises. The notice was served on 6.10.75 in the evening from 7.10.75 morning workers found hundreds of armed police, CRP and plain dressed personnels of Intelligence Branch occupying the factory.

The whole factory was agog with excitement but workers continued to demonstrate in protest against 4% Bonus notice. Virtually no work was done for 3 days till the Puja holidays came. Workers in a body refused to accept 4% bonus and forced the employer to pay their due wages. The boycott is still continuing.

From the very first day of the issue of notice 5 workers were arrested, later released on Bail. All of them however have again been

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arrested after the Puja holidays when the employer and the Govt. found to their surprise that the workers in general have been continuing the bonus boycott, despite arrests and show of force. The Intelligence Branch officers are going from workers house to house and threatening the workers of dire consequences if they still refuse to accept 4% Bonus. As a matter of fact more than 16 workers have been arrested since 21.10.75 and about 50 workers have been charge-sheeted and suspended for bonus boycott.

The combined activities of the police and the management to force the workers either to accept 4% bonus or face suspension/dismissal and/or imprisonment on the one hand and continuing the lay-off with impunity have completely exposed the face and purpose of the Emergency not only before the 14,000 workers of Hind Motors, but also to masses of workers in neighbouring areas. The INTUC workers also joined the boycott movement enmasse. The leaders of the INTUC Union in Hindusthan Motors have jointly issued a statement with the CITU affiliated union and also agreed to join the movement.

Jute Workers' Movement.

Despite the proclamation of Internal Emergency the jute workers are on move and are continuing the united struggle against the onslaught of Government and employers.

On 1st July 1975 the Central Executive Committee of the Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor Union (BCMU) met and assessed the situation since emergency. Political implication of this proclamation was explained.

All branches of BCMU were asked to explain the political impact of the situation to workers convening extended meetings of the Branch Executives and to general workers in group meetings.

Emphasis is also given to form Factory and Department Committees to maintain better contact with the jute workers at the base.

BCMU have submitted a Memorandum to State Labour Minister on 2nd September 1975 in which it was pointed out that when jute goods' market are gaining ground and the Government of India has not only given relief in the form of withdrawal of all taxation, it has given extra cash remuneration for export of Carpet backing. This memorandum was circulated to jute workers through various branches of BCMU.

Jute mill owners with the consent of Government of India have concentrated attack in the form of lay-off without compensation, rationalisation with much 'tears' and snatching away the hard won and long enjoyed facilities of the workmen. The millowners have started attacks on jute workers by enforcing so-called 'voluntary resignation with payment of a very small amount as retirement benefit as done in Ludlow Jute Mill (Chengail) and thus deliberately reducing employment. Budli workers are not given any job on the false plea of lack of market and piling of stocks. Apprentices are appointed with nominal wage of only Rs.90 to Rs.100/- p.m. by throwing out the regular workers who were getting nearly Rs.375/- p.m. for the same job. BCMU Branch Secretaries and leading Organisers are made targets of attacks for crushing our organisation as evidenced in Premchand Jute Mills, Chengail, Howrah. The Branch Secretary of that Branch was charge-sheeted along with other leading members of the union for leading a deputation to the management. In Budge Budge Mill, one of our leading organiser was suspended for taking part in a deputation. The jute mill managements are continuing this sort of activities by taking the advantage of Internal Emergency.

Another Memorandum was submitted by the jute workers with mass signatures of thousands of workers addressed to the State Labour Minister through Managers of different jute mills (in 51 jute mills out of 62 mills). And in some mills the workers demonstrated before Managers' Offices with stoppage of work for half an hour. In these demonstrations and mass deputations hundreds of workers belonging to AITUC, INTUC, TUCC joined with CITU workers. These demonstrations have kept alive the spirit of united struggle at the base and have brightened the image of CITU as a champion of unity and struggle.'

There are unrest in all the jute mills and workers are fighting back every issue in one or other form. The BCMU urged to all Central trade unions in jute industry particularly after the emergency for building up united movement against the onslaughts of the Government and the employers. But no response has yet been received by the union from INTUC, AITUC and HMS (Congress faction) though they are holding separate Conventions in the name of fighting the Bonus Ordinance. UTUC, TUCC and the other Section of HMS (Socialist) are moving with us.

On November 6, 1975 in almost all jute mills the BCMU along with other associated Central TUs observed Demand Day on Bonus by organising gate meetings, wearing badges and in various other forms.

In recent results of elections of Works Committees and P.F. Trustee Boards in jute mills at Chitrigunj, Anglo-India Lower and Middle (Kankinara), Union North, Delta Jute Mills, Telenipara etc. CITU candidates won by huge margins. That overwhelming majority of Jute workers in West Bengal are looking to BCMU and CITU for leadership is evidenced from the result of these elections.

ENGINEERING INDUSTRY

I have dealt elsewhere the situation prevailing in the Hind Motors Ltd., a major engineering unit of the State. On 4th May, 1975 a meeting of the State Labour Advisory Board was held in Calcutta. In that besides the State Labour Minister, and Commerce Minister, the Labour and Commerce Ministers and State Finance Minister of the Centre were present. The agenda of the meeting was to discuss the acute crisis in Engineering, Jute and Cotton Textile industries of the State. One after another representatives of the employers of Engg. and other industries, contended in the meeting that the demands for their products are going down and they threatened to retrench and lay-off large number of workers. The employers representatives demanded financial concessions from the Govt. of Engineering units, particularly the builders of railway wagons complained that the prices for wagons are not remunerative and the Railway Board has also drastically cut down orders. But these contentions as reported are not accepted by the Railway Board. Though the prices from Railway board and for foreign railways have been raised to some extent and orders for wagons have also been increased, yet according to the management of the wagon building industry, the majority of which are now in the public sector, these concessions do not meet their requirements.

On this plea the management of wagon building factories are contemplating large scale lay-off and retrenchment. Large number of subsidiary industries are connected with the wagon building industries, these and their workmen's interests are also affected adversely.

The electrical machinery and goods manufacturing industries are not faring any better. Lay-off of about 200 workmen in Philips Electricals a very big unit is continuing.

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The small engineering units are facing acute crisis due to shrinking market, shortage as well as excessive prices of raw materials, lack of availability of easy credit etc. In Howrah and at many other places a number of small and medium fundries and manufacturing units have closed down due to which thousands have lost their employment.

The employers are utilising the Internal Emergency for keeping intact their profits and solving their crisis at the cost of the workers interests and heaping more and more burdens on them. A memorandum was submitted by the Federation of Metal and Engineering Workers Unions of West Bengal to the Labour Minister of West Bengal in this regard. Four and half lakhs of Engineering workers have carried on consistent fights against 4% Bonus Ordinance. In general the engineering workers, have been able more or less to retain the bonus which they realised last year. Some Engg. units have been locked out by the management as sequel to the bonus movement. The heightening feature of the bonus struggles is the fact that by the side of workers belonging to CITU and other left TUs the workers following INTUC, AITUC etc. took part in joint actions. This urge for united action is gaining ground and will be the mightiest weapons for fighting back the offensives of the employers and the Govt.

MOVE FOR DA FREEZE

It is reported that the employers and the Government are jointly planning to permanently Freeze D.A. rise and it is apprehended that due to this scheme the existing earnings would also be reduced. This is a very serious matter and calls for proper discussion immediately.

FUNCTIONING OF THE STATE COMMITTEE

The situation following the emergency was discussed in detail in the State Working Committee in its meeting held on 24th August 1975. Series of small meetings with unions representatives were also held.

HOW TO FACE THE SITUATION

How to face the situation created by the Internal Emergency ? This is our main concern to day.

The Emergency has imposed a practical ban on T.U. movement. Meetings can not be held without police permission and police do not give permission. If we want to print a leaflet that requires approval of the Censor. We are not supposed to do anything which the Govt. do not approve. Thus T.U. freedom is completely withdrawn.

It is also reported that special officers are being posted in factories to keep watch over workers and report to Central Government from time to time.

A circular has been issued by a chamber of Commerce instructing the employers to report if policy delay or waver in giving help in case of labour unrest.

The workers of a factory in Howrah served a strike notice. The District Magistrate and S.P. came and told that all measures would be taken to crush the strike if it was launched.

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After the Emergency we find - lay-off, closure, retrenchment and lock-out have become more rampant and on top of it workloads are sharply increased and existing rights and privileges are curtailed.

This is one side of the picture.

On the other side we find that the workers are getting more and more aggrieved and agitated and they are coming out in protest in large numbers.

In a situation like this what step should be taken to channelise the protest of the workers and how to we should streamline the organisational activities ? This is an all-India question.

We expect this question will be discussed in this meeting and proper guidance will be evolved.

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M E M O R A N D U M

To
Dr. Gopal Das Nag,
Labour Minister,
Government of West Bengal,
Writers' Buildings,
Calcutta-700001.

(Submitted through Managers of Jute Mills)

Dear Sir,

We, the workers and employees of Jute Mills in West Bengal, want to draw your attention and the attention of the Government of West Bengal, through the Managers of our respective Mills, to some urgent issues and demand their immediate settlement. The issues are as follows :

1. B o n u s : For a long time the Jute Mill workers have been demanding minimum 20 per cent Bonus and, last year, they accepted 8.33 per cent Bonus plus Rs.120/- in cash in lieu of Bonus paid to them, under protest. Now, when our demand for 20 per cent Bonus is under consideration, the mill owners are again trying to take the workers back to the former position. We, all the Jute Mill workers irrespective of views and affiliations, again place our demand for 20 per cent Bonus to the Government and the millowners through you, and hope that this will receive your favourable consideration.

2. Retrenchment : You are aware that, although two and half lakhs workers and employees work daily in the Jute Mills of this State, the number of permanent and registered workers and employees is only one and a half lakhs. It is reported that, in order to bring down this number still further, the millowners have sought the permission of the Government of India for the retrenchment of further 50 thousand workers and employees. If the Govt. of India accedes to this request of the monopolist millowners, the number of permanent and registered badlis and workers in the Jute Mills will come down to only one lakh. We, the Jute Mill workers, vehemently oppose this plan for retrenchment and demand that all workers and employees who have worked for six months be declared permanent.

It may be pointed out in this connection, that in order to put pressure on the workers and the Government the millowners have planned to close down 15 per cent of all looms and machines including spinning, and they are still continuing their policy of lay-offs, lock-outs, closures, chargesheets and retrenchments in different Mills.

In addition to these two issues, we also submit the following matters for your consideration :

3. Closure of Mills : The Khardah Jute Mills are lying closed for the past five months and closure has been declared recently in Bharat Jute Mills. We request the Government to take-over the management of these two mills.

4. Increase in Work-load : In every mill the work-load of workers has been increased forcibly. In order to extract more work, the workers are even not being allowed to answer calls of nature. In Agarpura Mills the number of helpers has been reduced. Budli helpers are being paid lower wages. In Gouripore Mills, attempts have been made to run 18 pairs of Double Spinning machines. In Hukumchand Mills, workers have been forced to work in Double Spinning machines, and as a result 95 workers including 25 permanent workers have been retrenched. In Union North Mill, workers are being forced to work in Night Shift without the facility of half-hour tiffin period which has been withdrawn. In Cheviot Mills, three workers used to work in each Sewing machine; now attempts are being made to get the same work done by two workers. Double Spinning Frames have been introduced in Birla Mills. In Howrah Mills, work-load has been increased by reducing workers for Drawing machines in Batching Department. Formerly one worker used to operate only one spinning frames; now they are being forced to operate two. In Bharat Jute Mills, attempts have been made to run double looms. Issue of warnings and chargesheets to workers who protest against increase in work-load have become matters of daily occurrence. In Gagalbhai Jute Mills, the management

has issued notice increasing the hours of work from 45 to 48 hours for workers in the Back Process and Finishing Depts., and from 39 to 45 hours for workers in the Weaving department. Instances can be multiplied.

5. Reduction in number of Workers: The number of workers in the industry is being reduced by taking recourse of retrenchment of Budli and permanent workers in every mill. In Agarpara Mills, two workers are being engaged for working in each Double Loom, but wages of only one worker are being paid. The two workers are being asked to divide the single wages between themselves. This is being called "Bhagawallah" and this system is being introduced in all Mills. In Meghna Mills, 20 sewing machines have been closed and the workers laid-off. The mills are getting the sewing work done under contract system. In Waverly Mills, 600 workers have been laid-off. In every mill, the Budli workers are not being given work for even the minimum number of days. In Nuddea Mills, the workers who had opposed the working of Double Looms are being refused work. For the same reason 2 to 3 hundred workers of Gouripore Mills had been laid off without compensation. In Union North Mills, 60 Budli workers have been retrenched as a result of the closing of the narrow looms. In different mills, work is being carried on under the contract system and the workers concerned are being retrenched. Sewing of gunny bags and loading and unloading of goods in Waverly Mills, and sewing work in Cheviot Mills are being done under the contract system. In Budge Budge Mills, the management is getting the work of the Selectors done outside the Mills under contract system. In the Ludlow Mills, permanent and temporary workers are being retrenched under the garb of a so-called "voluntary retirement" system. In Delta Mills, 800 casual Budli workers have been retrenched through forcible running of Double Looms and Spinning machines. 50 permanent and 40 P.F. Budli workers have also been retrenched for their inability to operate Double looms and spinning machines. The owners of Premchand Mills have retrenched 400 workers of the Night Shift defying the order of the Government. In every mill, retrenchment is going on in a pre-planned manner to reduce the number of workers in the industry. In Titagarh Mills, all the women workers of the Batching department have been retrenched.

6. Where are the Provident Fund and ESI Money Going ? : Nobody knows where the Provident Fund and ESI money, deducted from the wages of workers, are going. The leading millowners in this respect are those of Waverly, E.M.CO., Meghna, Kankinarah and Ambika Mills. Since these owners have not deposited the moneys, workers are being deprived of medical benefits under ESI and are not getting their Provident Fund moneys after leaving work. The owners of Meghna Mills have not submitted Provident Fund accounts since 1967. Although they have mis-appropriated lakhs of rupees in this way, the Government has not taken any steps against them.

7. Increase in Hours of Work : Although the mill-owners are shouting that stocks of finished goods are piling up and sales are falling off, in every Mill workers are being made to work for 7 days or 7 nights in a week. 7-days work in a week has been introduced in Waverly, Auckland and Kankinarah Mills and 7-nights work in a week in Naskarpara and Nafarchand Mills. The common weekly holiday has been abolished in every mill. Although the workers are being made to work for 7-days in a week in Kankinarah Mills, one day is being shown as lay-off day. The wages of that day are being paid through vouchers instead of regular wages. In Reliance Mills, single wages are being paid in place of double wages for over-time work. In Bally Mills, no wages are being paid for over-time work. In Ambika Mills, the clerks and mistries have not been paid their annual increments. In Kelvin Mills, seven posts of clerks have been abolished. In Hukumchand Mills, about 280 women workers and quite a number of boys have been engaged in the Sewing Dept., but they are being made to work for 12 hours a day for which they are being paid only Rs.1.50 as daily wages. Their names are not entered in the rolls and their wages are paid through vouchers. In Bally Mills, boy workers have been

engaged for stamping on gunny bags, but they are being paid nominal wages. In Budge Budge Mills also the stamping work is being done under the contract system.

8. Withdrawal of hard-won Benefits : The millowners are appointing many local people loyal to the Congress as 'Apprentices' at much lower wages and are laying off the Budlis. Wages of workers are being reduced by transferring them from one job to another. The incentive system has been abolished in Kelvin and Empire Mills. The facilities in the Mill Canteen are nominal and prices of food-stuffs are also being raised. In Fort William Mills, no wages are being paid for leave period even when 'leave with pay' is due to the clerks; this is a violation of a more than 20-year old convention. Even able-bodied workers are being retrenched on the plea of super-annuation. Workers are being abused or harassed for reduced production even when this is due to poor quality of raw material supplied or due to obsolete machine. Disregarding the protests of workers, the system of 'fortnightly' payment of wages has been introduced in Shyamnagar North Mills, Bally No.1 and No.2 Mills (Sira Mills), Hastings Mills, India Mills and in some other mills. Attempts are being made to introduce 'fortnightly' payment in Howrah, Fort William and other Mills.

9. Plans have been made for total removal of Budli and Women workers from the Mills, We request the re-instatement of all such workers.

10(a) The arrangement of Mill Canteens has broken down in most of the Mills and prices of goods have also been raised. We draw the attention of the Government for steps to supply cheap tiffin through Canteens and to open fair price shops in Mill areas for supply of food and other daily necessities at fixed price.

(b) Since lack of adequate supply of raw jute will hamper production, we request the Government to directly purchase raw jute from the jute growers at fair prices.

Finally, we request the Government to intervene for the immediate settlement of these issues.

Yours faithfully,

24th September, 1975.

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M E M O R A N D U M

T O

DR. GOPAL DAS NAG, LABOUR MINISTER, WEST BENGAL

F R O M

FEDERATION OF METAL & ENGINEERING WORKERS' UNIONS

O N

THE LARGE SCALE LAY OFF, RETRENCHMENT OF WORKERS,
LOCK OUTS, CLOSURES ETC. IN ENGINEERING FACTORIES.

1. Since the last few months the engineering workers have been subjected to severe attacks on their jobs, earnings and other conditions of service by the employers which have been manifested in large scale lay-offs even without any compensation, retrenchment of workers and lock-outs and closures of many engineering units.
2. The employers representatives have assured the Prime Minister that they would not take recourse to large scale lay-offs, retrenchments, lock-outs, closures etc. but they have not abandoned their oppressive attitude towards the workers. They are daily mounting up their ruthless attacks upon the poor workers. More and more workers are being laid-off without compensation, retrenched, forced to accept premature and voluntary retirement due to which besides being thrown out of their employment they are being tactfully deprived of the retrenchment benefits etc. Also they are pressurised to accept higher and higher workloads as a result of which fresh number of workers are made surplus and then laid off, retrenched and or made to "voluntary" agree to accept jobs at a lower rate and/or of temporary, casual and contract nature. We are citing below some glaring examples of the attacks on workers.
3. In Hind Motors out of 14,000 workers a big section had been thrown out of jobs on the plea of "over staying of leave", 'voluntary retirement' or being temporary or casual etc. Even now about 5,000 workers are laid-off without compensation for half of the month. Taking into account the period of weekly off due to power shortage etc. the number of actual working days are lesser. Besides the company is most shamelessly deducting the arrear loans of the workers thanks to which many workmen return empty handed to their families at the end of the month. Naturally, they have to incur more and more loans for feeding themselves and their families. Thus finding no other means and being frustrated more and more workmen are leaving their jobs and the Company finds no difficulty for realising its plan of drastic reduction of personnels.
4. The employers pleas of shortage of funds, raw materials etc. which have lead to the almost total lay-off of workers of Sen Raleigh Company of Asansol and of its sister units at Kalyani are well known. This concern is being financed by the Industrial Reconstruction Corporation but the Management has been left mainly in the hands of original managing body which is responsible for the deplorable conditions of this unit. The result have been quite apparent. Though the products of this unit e.g. bi-cycles, have fairly expanding markets both inside and outside the country, the output of cycles and other vital products have been almost frozen and more than 4,000 workers of this and including its sister concerns are faced with loss of jobs and starvation. Six hundred workmen of Kolay Iron and Steel of Kankinara are laid-off on the plea that management is short of funds. Lay offs are going on in Metal & Ores and Aravind Industries of Calcutta-27 and Veegal India of North Dum Dum. In Philips Electricals, another prosperous unit lay off has been continuing for more than two weeks, the lay off of more than 300 workmen. There are many more engineering factories particularly small and mediums where workers are being laid off on various plea.
5. The Management of J.K. Aluminium has kept the factory closed for more than two years. Three thousand workers are out of jobs and there is huge loss of production. The Central Minister's assurance for re-opening of the factory has not materialised. In Motor Machinery of Dum Dum, which was on

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lock-out/closure but has re-opened recently with 125 workmen out of 500 previously employed in this unit. In the Usha Automobiles of Cossipore, 119 workmen had been retrenched of late. In Electric Construction Company (Cossipore) 200 workmen have been declared surplus and are facing loss of jobs. It is reported that Hooghly Docking & Engineering Factory has been recently reopened but some workmen have been left out. Metal Box Factories (both 1 & 2) of Kidderpore, employing 4,000 workers have been locked-out by the Management since 6.7.75 most arbitrarily. The authorities of the Oriental Metal Industries of Agarpara denied to redress the legitimate grievances of workmen and instead have declared lock-out in the factory since 2.7.75. Both the factories at Narkeldanga and B.T. Road of Orient General Industries Ltd., are on lock-out for similar reasons. The lock-out in India Foils Ltd., have not yet been lifted due to the Company's adamancy. The Gondalpara Foundry which has not yet implemented the Tri-partite Engineering Wage Settlement of 1973 have declared closure of the factory recently for depriving the workmen of their legitimate claims. The Industrial Plants, Panchla, Howrah, owned by the Birla Brothers, produce highly sophisticated machineries. The company refused to concede the legitimate demands of the workmen for implementation of Tripartite Engineering Wage Settlement and to redress their other grievances, but had suspended and charge-sheeted a section of Union leaders, retrenched some and kept the factory closed for the last six months or more. The high handedness of the Management is evident by its denial to agree to the conciliatory proposals of the Unions for resumption of normal work in the factory on the basis of withdrawal of suspensions, charge-sheets, retrenchments and sitting around the table for amicably settling other pending issues raised by both parties. In Howrah and in other places several small factories specially Foundries have closed down on the ground of shortage of fund and raw material supply.

6. The Crown Alunimiun of Salkia, Howrah, and some other concerns have not yet given effect to the Engineering Wage Settlement and are threatening the workmen with repressive measures. West Bengal Government's order for Wage increase of workers of small engineering factories have not been implemented by many employers. In Texmaco on the plea of shortage of orders of jobs the Management have stopped recruitment of substitutes for filling up leave vacancies, retrenched more than 100 'Contract' workers and rendered large number of workers surplus by creating an artificial surplus pool. Thus a large number of workmen are facing partial and/or total loss of jobs etc. In Beni Engineering Limited the workmen's justified claim for higher bonus is not being settled by the Company.

7. Reduction of number of workmen/employees by many devices including putting pressures for accepting voluntary retirements have been taken recourse to by the employers in Jessop, Burn, Texmaco, M.M.C., Jay Engineering, Hind Motors and in many other units.

8. The recommendations of the SLAB for enabling forcibly evicted workmen of Saxby, Jaya, Texmaco, Bengal Enamel, Orient General Industries and other units to resume their work and guarantee trade union rights are fragrantly violated. It is complained that outside elements in connivance with the Management, are using gangsters methods upon the workers of Parbangla, Mahestola Unit of Hindusthan Gas for dissociating themselves from their original union.

9. Last but not the least, a circular purported to be issued in Jessop and rigorous repressive rules and methods introduced in some other Engineering Units speak of the attempts by the employers and the authorities for snatching away the most elementary rights of the workmen which have pervaded a reign of terror, panic and frustration among them.

10. The Small Engineering Units have some problems about easy credit or supply of raw materials etc., but these do not justify the workers should be made to suffer for that. The Government should pay more attention for meeting the requirements of the small units.

11. The spokesmen of both the engineering employees and the Government emphatically asserted in their public utterances that the markets for engineering goods both inside and outside the country are becoming more and more bright. The published balance sheets of some engineering units also are indications of the growing prosperity of the industry.

12. The Central and State Ministers, including the Prime Minister herself have asked the workers to increase production. The workers, for their own sake, are vitally interested in the smooth running of the wheels of the factories. But the employers of engineering factories are availing themselves of the present situation in the most crooked way and are bent upon for earning higher and higher profits by further intensifying ruthless exploitation of the workers and depriving them of their jobs and earnings, forcing them to starve and accept various coercive methods. The employers are not utilising the full productive capacity of the factories. Had they done so, that would have paved the way of additional employment and production. Thus it is the employers who are deliberately hindering production as well as causing tremendous sufferings to the workmen. They do not really mean which they do profess.

13. We hope that the Government would adopt measures for defence of the rights and interests of the workers and you would be pleased to take necessary steps for the following :-

- 1) Re-opening of all locked-out and closed factories and resumption of normal production with all workmen;
- 2) Lifting and stoppage of lay-off etc.;
- 3) Withdrawal of retrenchment direct/indirect and re-instatement of retrenched workers without curtailing their rights and privileges;
- 4) Stop all undue pressure for premature and wrongful retirement and all other coercive measures;
- 5) To guarantee normal Trade Union Rights;
- 6) To ensure supply of easy credit, raw materials, arrange markets etc., for small engineering units etc.;
- 7) To take steps for implementation of the decision of SLAB meeting of 19.10.1974 in respect of evicted workmen and trade union rights;
- 8) To stop unjustified and arbitrary increase of workloads;
- 9) To fill up all existing vacancies;
- 10) To settle pending strikes and other major grievances of the workmen amicably;
- 11) To make the employers in engineering industries fully implement the Tripartite Settlement dated 25.6.73, where it has not been implemented, as also the Government Order dated 22.2.74 on the workers wages of small engineering factories employing 10 to 49 workmen;
- 12) Relief to the workers affected due to lay-off, retrenchment, closures, lock-outs and other reasons;
- 13) Full utilisation of installed capacity in the factories.

Sd/- Santi Ghatak 30-7-75
General Secretary

Sd/- Robin Mukherjee
President

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