



THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITU

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EDITORIAL

The Calculated Inaction Of The Union Labour Ministry

THE Union Labour Ministry has of late been increasing by showing an attitude of total unconcern about the pressing problems facing the working class. The usual show of presenting the image of the Labour Ministry as a third party in the industrial dispute is being shamelessly given up. The tendency has become particularly more pronounced since the recent Railway strike.

The Labour Ministry openly exempted the Railway Board from implementation of Payment of Wages Act during the railway strike and deprived the workers of their rightful wage with a view to starve the workers and force them into submission. Though the railway unions gave strike notices, the Labour Ministry did not make any effort to conciliate on the plea that under DIR there could be no scope for conciliation and unions must surrender before the law.

Encouraged by this attitude the Railway Board resorted to large-scale victimisation and all types of unfair labour practices were introduced to intimidate the workers. The Labour Ministry, instead of bringing both the parties together, only echoed the statements of the Railway Ministry. Even when M.P.s raised the question of victimisation of Railway workers in Labour Consultative Committee meetings, the Union Labour Minister Raghunatha Reddy only quoted the stand of the Railway Board in the matter.

There is no wonder that the Labour Ministry has virtually become a non-entity in several industrial disputes. In the Electricity negotiations the employers refused to participate in the meetings and Union Minister of Irrigation and Power K. C. Pant clandestinely encouraged the representatives of various State Electricity Boards from not participating in the meetings. These Boards openly opposed All India common wage level and advocated state level settlements. Many state electricity boards failed to implement the interim relief recommendations of the Bi-partite Guidelines Committee and there is every danger of its winding up the show.

Editorial Board

B. T. Ranadive (Chairman)

P. Ramamurti

Monoranjan Ray

Niren Ghosh

Sudhin Kumar

Though the Labour Ministry officially announced constitution of wage negotiations committee for sugar industry last year, the proposal is practically kept in cold storage to satisfy the sugar monopolies.

In the matter of coal wage negotiations the Labour Ministry constituted a bipartite committee. The Committee came to unanimous conclusion for Rs. 325/- as the minimum wage at 264 price index (base 1960) and Rs. 1.30 per point rise in index in December last. Regarding the standardisation of wages the INTUC and AITUC leaders came to a settlement with the management though CITU expressed its reservation. However, the unanimous understanding about the minimum wage as well as the agreement reached between the INTUC and AITUC with the managements representatives is not accepted by the Government. The Labour Ministry refused to intervene in the matter and the All India strike of over 4 lakhs Coal Mine workers is now on the agenda.

The Beedi and Cigar Act was sabotaged by the employers by going to the courts. After years of legal battle the Supreme Court has finally given the verdict that the Act was *intra vires*. More than 8 months have passed since then but the Labour Ministry has not taken any step to enforce its implementation. The Union Labour Ministry only promised to discuss the matter with the State Labour Ministries. In Karnataka, TU movement forced the managements to implement the Act while in other States the Act remained on paper.

With regard to Jute industry despite earlier assurance that West Bengal agreement will be implemented on an All India scale, the wage levels outside West Bengal has not yet been brought at par with West Bengal. Even the promised All India meeting on jute is not being considered seriously. The Union Labour Minister's award regarding relief to Badli workers has been kept in cold storage with employers obtaining stay order against it in the Court. Except the promise of fighting the case in the court the Labour Ministry is doing nothing in the matter, while the West Bengal Government is supporting the IJMA bosses.

The Third Pay Commission recommended that if the average price index would reach 272 with 1960 base, the Govt. should reconsider the constitution of another Pay Commission. Already three increments in DA which are due to the Central Govt. employees have not been paid to them. Since this is the position of the Central Govt. employees the State Govt. employees are also deprived of any rise in the DA. Despite representations the Union Ministry is behaving like a helpless spectator and refusing to move though the norms laid down by the Govt. itself are not being implemented.

The workers were told in 1971 that the Bonus Review Committee would complete the work in six months. However, more than three years have passed but the Committee's report has not yet been submitted. The Union

Labour Ministry is conniving at the delay in submission of the report and one does not know the fate of workers' bonus even after the submission of the report.

The question of fraudulent price indices has been raised by the united TU movement in several States. In Delhi Textile Award the defect in the index have been noted and the Director of Labour Bureau admitted before the arbitrator the faulty character of the index. The Expert Committee for Calcutta appointed by West Bengal Govt. recommended corrections but the Govt. is sitting tight over these recommendations only to suit the interest of employers. The Union Labour Ministry has not taken any steps despite representations by Trade Unions and Members of Parliament.

The re-verification ordered by the Union Labour Ministry in Goa to deny representation to CITU Union when it was proved to have the largest membership in Port and Dock is a shocking development. The cooked up results of re-verification showed INTUC to have majority throwing overboard the findings of the official of the Labour Ministry itself. This has only proved the fictitious character of the verification machinery as was claimed by CITU.

The Labour Ministry has not convened the Indian Labour conference during the last three years giving up usual show of consultation with the Trade Unions. Though the Trade Unions were asked to submit

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The Second Conference of Kerala State Committee Of CITU

THE Second Conference of the Kerala State Committee of CITU held at Trichur on September 20-22 registered a remarkable growth in the strength of CITU in the State. The 859 delegates and observers representing 343 unions with a total membership of 1,81,911 who participated in the Conference came through series of struggles conducted during the recent past throughout Kerala.

The Conference was held immediately after the complete State-wide strike on September 18 against Wage-freeze. This was the first Statewide strike action of the working class after promulgation of the wage-freeze Ordinance.

C. Kannan, President Kerala State Committee of CITU presided over the Conference. He hoisted the Red Flag and the delegates marched to the spot where Comrade Azhikodan Raghavan was brutally murdered last year on September 23.

The Conference adopted a resolution on the Martyrs and expressed heartfelt condolences at the sad demise of Comrade Muzaffar Ahmed, Hare Krishna Konar and others.

B.T. Ranadive President CITU, while inaugurating the Conference, conveyed his greetings to the working class of Kerala for the magnificent strike of September 18 and expressed his confidence that the action would inspire the working class

in other States to organise similar actions.

Ranadive expressed at length the background of the skyrocketing prices of essential commodities and pointed out how the policies of the Government were the root cause of the price rise. He repudiated the arguments of the Government that wage rise was the cause of the price rise. He called upon the workers to confiscate the stocks of hoarded goods and organise their distribution through people's Committees.

Reviewing the growing united struggles all over the country, Ranadive pointed out how the repressive apparatus of the Government is resorting to most brutal measures to stem the rising tide of struggles. He gave instances of heroic resistances of railwaymen during their struggle braving all repressive measures. "The struggles of the workers are bound to grow in future despite the repression of police and gangsterism by anti-social elements", he said.

Ranadive called upon the working class to express solidarity with the struggles of agricultural workers and peasants. He stressed the need for trade union participation in political struggles so that the anti-working class and anti-people policies are defeated squarely.

E. Balanandan, General Secretary Kerala State Committee of the CITU submitted an exhaustive report of the activities of the

CITU in the State since the last State Conference held in 1970. He reviewed series of struggles conducted unitedly and pointed out how CITU emerged as the builder of unity in a short period.

Attacking the Achutha Menon Government for its anti-working class policies, he gave examples of how AITUC workers were brought in the united struggles against these policies. He condemned the repressive measures against the T.U. and democratic movement in the State and pointed out how despite the repression the united actions have grown immensely.

Balanandan emphasised how the growing economic crisis would bring larger sections of workers in the struggle and called upon the CITU unions in Kerala to be prepared to mobilise workers in these struggles.

Md. Ismail, President, West Bengal State Committee of CITU while greeting the Conference explained how the working class of West Bengal is fighting for its rights despite repression and terror.

Over 30 comrades who participated in the discussion on the Report narrated their experiences in conducting struggles and elaborated how the CITU policy of unity and struggle has helped them in organising united actions. They gave examples of treachery of AITUC leaders and pointed out how the rank and file workers of AITUC and INTUC could be brought into struggles. The delegates also gave suggestions for improving the Report.

The Report was adopted unanimously after discussion.

M.K. Pandhe, Secretary CITU while explaining the growth of united front actions all over the country noted certain organisational weakness which should be overcome in order to play an effective role in the forthcoming struggles.

E. M. S. Namboodiripad explained the present political situation in the State and called upon the working class to play a leading role in changing the situation.

Among those who greeted the Conference were E. K. Nayanar, Secretary, Kerala State Committee of CPI(M), Achutanand (Kerala Kisan Sabha), E. Padmanabhan, General Secretary, NGO's Union, T. K. Ramakrishnan, Secretary, Agricultural Workers Union and Joseph (Primary Teachers Organisation).

General Strike in Kerala Against Wage Freeze A Grand Success

The State-wide General Strike on September 18 against Wage Freeze law, at the call of opposition Parties in Kerala, proved a grand success. The CPI, which initially opposed the strike, joined at the last moment.

The General Strike, the first State-wide action against Wage Freeze, completely paralysed industrial and commercial establishments, Government and private offices, Banks and Insurance offices throughout the State. Shops and markets remained closed, taxis and buses did not ply and electricity and telephone services were disrupted.

The Conference by a resolution condemned the anti-labour policy of the Achutha Menon Government and called upon the working class to resist this policy unitedly. By another resolution the Conference congratulated the working class of Kerala for the glorious strike on 18th September against wage-freeze and decided to organise still bigger struggles to defeat the wage freeze offensive. The Conference demanded withdrawal of emergency and DIR. It strongly condemned the repressive measures of the Kerala Government on legitimate struggles of workers, peasants, students and other sections of people.

By yet another resolution the Conference expressed concern at the growing unemployment and demanded unemployment allowance. It further greeted the railway workers for their heroic struggle and demanded withdrawal of all victimisation measures against them.

The Conference adopted several resolutions on problems of various industries in Kerala.

The Conference elected a new General Council of 183 members and the Executive Committee of 31 members with C. Kannan as President and E. Balanandan as General Secretary.

B. T. Ranadive President CITU while summing up the deliberations of the Conference pointed out the strength and weakness of the movement and called upon delegates to carry forward the work of CITU with more determination.

A colourful procession in which several thousands of

workers participated paraded the main streets of the town. It culminated in over one lakh strong rally which was addressed among others by B. T. Ranadive, E. M. S. Namboodiripad, V. P. Ayyappan, C. Kannan and E. Balanandan.

N. Karnataka T.U. Convention Against Wage Freeze

A Convention against Wage-freeze and D.A. —freeze Ordinances was held at Hubli on September 8-9. The Convention was jointly sponsored by the Karnataka State Road Transport Employees Union, P & T Employees Union, Insurance and Bank Employees Unions, Dandeli Paper Mill Employees Union (CITU) and Bagalkot Cement Workers' Union (CITU). The workers of these unions made intense preparations and contributed liberally for the success of the Convention.

168 delegates and 150 observers from 35 unions, representing nearly 35000 workers and employees, participated in the Convention. Among the unions participating were those belonging to AIRF, LRSA and AITUC, State NGO's Union, Road Transport, Bank, Insurance, P & T, Paper, Cement and Engineering. The convention was inaugurated by R. Umanath, General Secretary, Tamilnadu State CITU.

The open session of the Convention was held on September 9 at the Nehru Stadium and was attended by about 10,000 workers and employees despite inclement weather. It was addressed by R. Umanath (CITU), Keshavamurthy (NGO) and others.

Legal Victory of Railwaymen

A significant victory was won in the Calcutta High Court by a team of lawyers headed by Shri R. C. Deb, Senior Advocate on behalf of victimised railway employees. In the midst of the Railwaymen's Strike in May this year, thousands of Railway workers were removed from service under Rule 14(ii) of the Railway Discipline & Appeal Rules and in some cases under that Rule read with proviso (b) to Article 311(2) of the Constitution. The stock orders served upon the Railway employees in thousands were inter-alia to the effect that it was not reasonably practicable to hold an enquiry in the manner as provided for in the Railway servants (D & A) Rules of 1968. In many cases, particularly in the case of N.F. Railway even these words were considered to be surplusage and long lists of names were hung up under the laconic order that they were removed from service under Rule 14(ii) of the D & A Rule.

Such large scale orders of dismissal without even a show of justice shocked the conscience of many a democrat of this country, though they were passed under the garb of what was alleged to be law under the aforesaid Rule 14 (ii) and proviso (b) to Article 311 (2) of the Constitution. The authorities banked upon the words in Article 311 (3) of the Constitution that if a question arises whether it is reasonably practicable to hold an enquiry, the decision thereon

of the authority empowered to dismiss or remove such persons or to reduce him in rank shall be final.

The matter was argued before Mr. Justice Amiya Kumar Mookerji of Calcutta High Court and argued threadbare.

It is a matter for pleasure that the learned Judge rose above the mass campaign whipped up against the Railway employees that, by their strike, they had impeded the economic progress of the country.

Mr. Justice Mookerji has emphasised in his judgment that the administrative authorities having a duty to act judicially cannot decide on consideration of policy or expediency. Again, at another place of the judgment, Justice Mookerji has said that "To accede to the claim that the jurisdiction of the court is barred in respect of whatever the executive asserts is valid is plainly to subvert the Rule of Law." The learned judge has not also refrained from commenting on the callous and heartless way in which orders of removal were passed on a large scale and has observed, "There was no consideration of individual cases. Everything was done mechanically and in utmost efforts to expedite the matters...Concept of Rule of Law would lose its vitality if the instrumentalities of the State function in com-

plete disregard of the requirements of the statute."

The judgment of Mr. Justice Mookerji is a notable addition to that line of judgments which assert that, where the rights of citizens are affected, the minimum that is required of the administrative authorities is that there must be fair play and justice. The protection that law gives must also be scrupulously observed. The Judge has therefore observed that, both according to Rule 14 (ii) and proviso (b) to Article 311 (2) of the Constitution reasons are required to be recorded in as much as "Recording of the reasons is the only protection which is afforded to the persons affected to ensure that the reasons..... were those germane to the content and scope of the power vested in him." Elaborating this point, the Judge has further said that "Reasons are the links between the materials on which certain conclusions are based and the actual conclusions. They disclose how mind is applied to the subject matter of a decision, whether it is purely administrative or quasi judicial. They reveal a rational nexus between the facts considered and conclusion reached. Only in this way can opinions or decisions recorded be shown to be manifestly just and reasonable." In the circumstances, the Judge comes to the conclusion that "when the administrative order is made which affects the right of an individual, the reasons of the order must be fully stated." In the cases under consideration it was

obvious that no reasons were recorded for not holding the enquiry in accordance with the Discipline & Appeal Rules and Article 311 (2) of the Constitution.

But it was urged that reasons need not be recorded in the order itself but might lurk somewhere in the administrative files. This contention was also rejected by the court. According to the Judge, the decision must itself show the reasons.

It was also urged that, if the opinion of the administrative authority that it is not practicable to hold the enquiry is final, the court could not reopen that question. To that the Judge has replied that "Finality in clause 3 of Article 311 is attracted when the decision made under proviso (b) to Article 311 is a valid decision. If the statutory requirements are not complied with, that decision is not a decision within the meaning of the said proviso, in such case finality does not attach to that decision. The jurisdiction of the court is not ousted to set aside such an invalid decision".

The Judgment of Mr. Justice Amiya Kumar Mookerji is now under appeal. It looks as if the administration were bent upon exacting its pound of flesh. The judgment of Calcutta High Court should have persuaded the Government, if it were enlightened as it claims to be, to drop its witch-hunting of the striking employees. Instead, it is proceeding as if it were a serious issue of prestige to be able to keep out

Bhilai Convention Against Wage Freeze & For Bonus

UNDER the auspices of the Trade Union Council, Bhilai consisting of Hindustan Steel Employees' Union (CITU), Bhilai Steel Mazdoor Union (AITUC), BSP Shramik Sangh (HMS), Bhilai Steel Kamgar Sangh and BSP Shikshak Mahasangh—a Convention of Bhilai Steel Plant workers was held on September 8 at Bhilai on the issues of Wage freeze and Bonus. A presidium of six members guided the deliberations and proceedings of the Convention.

The Convention unanimously adopted a resolution rejecting the wage freeze law and demanding that no deduction from

increased wages or D.A. should be effected under this law.

In another resolution the Convention demanded 20 per cent Bonus for 1973-74 and settlement of the issue through negotiation with the Trade Union Council.

The Convention decided to carry out a mass signature campaign on these issues from 11th to 15th September and to submit the same to the General Manager on 16th in a mass deputation.

The Convention also adopted resolutions on Bharatpur firing, Chile, Price rise, victimisation of Railway and Govt. employees, anti-T.U. attitude of the BSP management etc.

of employment large number of workers.

We do not know what the result of the appeal will be but we can only urge upon the Government that oppression can never make the Government run its departments smoothly. No nation building is possible by humiliating the worker and employees.

Let us still hope that the reason of the judgment of Calcutta High Court will prevail upon the authorities and the dismissed employees will be taken back into service.

Arun Prokas Chatterjee

Successful One-Day Strike By W. Bengal Jute Workers

At the call of the Central Trade Unions in Jute industry, including the INTUC, workers in Jute Mills all over West Bengal observed a one-day strike on September 24 in support of their 7-point demands. The demands include: purchase of raw jute by Govt. at Rs. 100 per maund, implementation Expert Committee's recommendations on D.A., full wages for lay-off due to Power cut, 20 per cent Bonus etc. According to the State Labour Minister, only 4 out of 62 jute Mills in the State worked on the day. The CITU, two UTUC's, TUCC and HMS have congratulated the workers for the successful strike.

N. C. C. R. S. Goes Ahead

OPEN attempt by the Government to break the NCCRS through continuing victimisation and refusal to negotiate, has created doubts inside the NCCRS and consequently strains have also developed. The much divided railway trade union movement became united for the struggle on common basic demands. But after the struggle the old differences have raised their heads once again. From confidential reports of different railway officers it appears that their design is to keep up and widen these differences. Hence some of them refused to talk to some of the leaders of recognised unions, only because they are fighting for the unity already achieved. Open threats are being made to penalise all who collect or contribute to the victimised workers Relief Fund. Mass scale transfers, suspensions and other punishments are being imposed only to break the morale of the staff and to rouse their sentiment against NCCRS. The State Governments have been aiding these designs by continuing summary trials of DIR cases, imposing Sec. 144, keeping up police patrolling etc.

The Railwaymen however are refusing to oblige the authorities. Every fresh move of victimisation is being met with resistance. Samastipur perhaps tops the list in such resistance. There have been stoppages of work on four occasions since withdrawal of the strike on May 28. Each organisation is busy reorganising its

forces and developing resistance at work spots. Adequate help is being rendered by the Legal Aid Committee formed by the CITU at Calcutta with the help of the Democratic Lawyers Association. In Calcutta High Court alone the following cases have been launched.

Against MISA	68 Cases involving	68 railwaymen
" 14(ii)	37	" 255
* " Transfer	17	" 57
* " Forced retirement	2	" 2
* " Summery trial		
under DIR	15	" 46
" 149 RI	1	" 1
(* Stay orders have been granted in most of the cases.)		

In this background, the Action Committee of the NCCRS met on August 29 and 30 and decided to hold the national Convention on October 4, 1974 at Delhi. All Zonal NCCRS have been advised to complete the Conventions at local, divisional and zonal levels if not done yet. Another meeting of the Action Committee was fixed on September 17 in which all the conveners of the zonal NCCRS were requested to attend. But conveners from only three zones (ER, CR and NFR) attended the meeting. The position was reviewed and found that the local, divisional and zonal conventions have not been held as scheduled. Besides certain other difficulties have cropped up. A fact finding mission from ITF is visiting India in November. As desired by many members present, the following revised schedule of conventions were

drawn : Local Conventions by October, 10 ; Divisional Conventions by October 30 ; Zonal Conventions by November 15. The National Convention will be held sometime early December.

Technical Supervisors Association Meets

The IRTSA, which created history by organising the Charge-men and Foremen and joining

the struggle, is busy reorganising their forces. As many as 350 supervisors drawing salary between 700-1100, stand victimised and relief to them was an urgent problem. They also weeded out strike-breakers from their organisation. Its SER branch met at Khargpur on September 8, and decided to strengthen the NCCRS and prepare for next phase of movement.

Signal & Tele Com. Organisations' Annual Meet

The All India organisation of the Signal & Tele-Com. staff held their annual meeting at Jaipur on August 8 and 9. They also dropped the office-bearers who did not join the strike and elected new office-bearers. Decisions for strengthening the NCCRS and preparing for the struggle were taken.

The Working Committee of the LRSA met at Delhi on July 29-30 and decided that a suggestion would be placed in the railwaymen's Convention to be held under the auspices of NCCRS that a decision for direct action should be taken by the Convention to be preceded by a phased programme of action. They also have taken action against strike-breakers. A decision to hold Conventions of Loco Running staff at all levels was also taken. It was also decided that NCCRS at all levels should be strengthened. The CEC of the AILRSA would meet again at Itarsi on October 7 and 8 to review the situation and decide the next course of action.

Calcutta High Court holds removal under 14 (II) illegal

In about 14 cases involving over 200 railway employees, Calcutta High Court has held that removal/dismissal under Art. 311(2) (B) or 14(II) of DAR was illegal. The orders were challenged on various grounds viz. personal mind was not applied in each case, the procedure was not followed properly, etc. and the court upheld the contention of the petitioners.

The judgment laid bare the vindictiveness of the railway authorities, who have expressed their desire to file appeals. The prayer of the authorities for stay was, however, granted on a limited scale.

Workers Demand Take-over of Sick & Closed Plantations

AIPWF Petition Submitted to Parliament

A petition signed by more than 40,000 plantation workers was submitted to the Speaker of the Parliament by Biren Dutta, M.P. on 26th August. The petition protested against the closure of more than 100 plantations rendering thousands of workers unemployed and their dependents on the verge of starvation.

A deputation on behalf of All India Plantation Workers' Federation (AIPWF) consisting of Monoranjan Roy, Biren Dutta, Ratanlal Brahman, Nurul Hudda, Vimal Randive, Nalashivan, C. Nanjundappa and Kunni Kannan met the Commerce and Labour Ministers to impress upon them the urgent need of taking over these sick and closed gardens and of nationalising the plantation industry and trade. They also informed the Ministers that the subsidised rationing system has totally collapsed in these States leaving the workers in utter distress.

The Commerce Minister stated that a bill was introduced in Parliament to take over the closed and sick gardens. He

admitted that there were some difficulties in taking over which he did not visualise before. The deputation tried to impress upon the Ministers that behind the closures and sick gardens, there is a calculated move by the planters who are minting profits by exporting the production to foreign countries. Biren Dutta informed the Minister of Commerce as to how the so-called "sick gardens" were taken over by the workers in Tripura in the absence of the owners and run them efficiently. The owners, after observing this, returned to the estates ultimately.

The following demands were included in the petition:

1. The Plantation workers should not be retrenched after taking over of the gardens.
2. The wages, arrears Bonus, Provident Fund and other amenities should not be curtailed.
3. Trade Union and democratic rights of workers should not be suppressed under the plea of "restoring law and order".
4. Adequate wages with D.A. linked with the cost of living index.
5. Equal wage for men and women.
6. Restoration of the subsidised ration to the plantation workers in the North and North East.

Eminent lawyers of Calcutta High Court such as R. C. Deb, Som Nath Chatterjee, Sadhan Gupta, Arun Prokas Chatterjee and others appeared for the victimised railway employees.

Successful All India Strike By Provident Fund Employees

AT the call of the Progressive Provident Fund Employees' Federation of India (PPFEF) and the A. I. Employees' Provident Fund Staff Federation, Provident Fund Employees all over India observed a one-day strike on September 5 last for the settlement of their Charter of Demands including immediate implementation of the revised pay-scale recommended by the Central Board of Trustees, need-based minimum wage, Bonus, reduction of work-load etc. The strike was completely successful and paralysed work in all units.

Earlier, in June last, the Employees P. F. Staff Union, Kerala (affiliated to PPFEF) observed protest demonstrations for five days to pressurise the Government to implement the revision recommended by the Central Board of Trustees.

The Central Board of Trustees of the E. P. F. Organisation, in which there is a representative of the Union Finance Ministry, unanimously recommended a pay-revision of P. F. Employees quite some time back and the Union Labour Ministry also approved it. Although the pay rise recommended falls far short of the employees' demand, the Union Finance Ministry has adopted a delaying tactics and is denying the employees even this meagre pay rise.

Although the P. F. Organisation is an autonomous body the Government of India, by the recently passed compulsory Deposit (Additional Emoluments)

Bill, has made the EPF Organisation the implementing authority of the Compulsory Deposit Scheme, thus imposing additional work-load on the employees. Both the Federations have protested against this and have declared that the employees will not undertake this work unless additional staff is sanctioned for the purpose.

Dr. Mathew Kurian, M. P. President of the Progressive P. F. Employees' Federation while speaking on the compulsory Deposit Bill in Parliament protested against the delay in implementing the pay-revision as well as the imposition of additional work-load on the P. F. employees under the Bill.

First Conference of Progressive P. F. Employees' Federation

The first Annual Conference of the Progressive P. F. Employees' Federation of India was held in New Delhi on July 27-29 last. It was inaugurated by S. K. Vyas, Secretary General of Confederation of Central Government Employees' and presided over by Dr. K. Mathew Kurian, M. P., President of the Federation.

The concluding session of the Conference was addressed by Samar Mukherjee, M. P., Treasurer CITU.

The Conference adopted several resolutions on issues facing the P. F. Employees as well as the working class and the people in general viz. on need-based minimum wage, Bonus for all, wage-freeze ordinances, Price

AIPWF Greets Solidarity Conference On Chile

On behalf of the All India Plantation Workers' Federation, Vimal Ranadive, Secretary has sent the following telegraphic message of greetings to the "World Trade Union Conference of Solidarity with the workers of Chile" held in Lisbon (Portugal) from 11 to 15 September.

"All India Plantation Workers" Federation express warmest greetings to the World Conference of Solidarity with the Workers and the People of Chile. Over one Million Plantation Workers observing Eleventh September. Wish Conference all success.

Long Live the Struggle of people of Chile against Fascist Military Junta !"

Rise, victimisation of Railway workers and other Central Government employees, mismanagement of the EPF scheme, work-load, etc,

In a separate resolution, the Conference renewed the unity call given by the Federation to the Staff Federation and regretted the negative response of the other Federation on this matter. The Conference reiterated its call for united struggle and urged the other Federation to do away with their conservative attitude and work for the genuine interest of the employees. It also pledged full support to all sectors of employees in their fight for their demands.

In another resolution, the Conference decided to affiliate the Federation with the Confederation of the Central Government Employees and workers.

The Conference elected a new Executive Committee with Dr. K. Mathew Kurian, M. P. as President, R. V. Sachan as Vice-President and R. Thulsingaraj as General Secretary.

Resolutions Adopted At The All India Convention Of Working People Against Wage-Freeze

AS PER THE DECISION of the meeting of Central Trade Unions and National Federations held in New Delhi on July 21, an All India Convention of Working People against wage-freeze was held in New Delhi on August 28 last. (A report of the Convention has been published in September 1974 issue of **The Working Class**).

The texts of the main resolution and resolution on Victimisation of Railwaymen and other Government Employees, adopted unanimously at the Convention, are given below :

The All India Convention of Working People against wage-freeze held in New Delhi on August 28, 1974 emphatically condemns the ordinance impounding all wage increases and half the D.A. increase for a period of six to seven years. The ordinance is now before Parliament in the form of a Bill. At a time when the sky-rocketting prices are daily lowering the living standards of the working people, this measure will make further inroads into their wages. It will seriously affect not only the working class in all industrial establishments both in the public and private sectors, but also salaried employees in Central and State Government services, municipalities, local boards and commercial establishments, teachers, professors, doctors and other professional employees. It has virtually imposed a wage freeze on lakhs of workers in industrial establish-

ments where wage and D.A. revision is long overdue and is under negotiations.

The Government seeks to justify this attack on the plea that the impounding of Rs. 500 crores from circulation through this measure is necessary to curb inflation and price increases. It is also stated that any increase in money wages of the workers and employees leads to automatic increase in prices. The Government spokesmen also seek to pit the workers in the unorganised sector and agricultural workers against the working class and employees in the organised sector by trotting out the theory that this measure is necessary in order to increase the wages of the former. It is further argued that any increase in wages will eat up the resources needed for development and hence would aggravate unemployment.

This Convention rejects all these contentions of the Government as hypocritical and utterly false.

The ever-increasing prices are not due to the increase in wages ; on the contrary the working class has been fighting hard to maintain its real wages against the rising prices. Official statistics themselves show that wages are lagging far behind prices.

The abnormal increase in the prices of foodgrains and other essential articles of consumption in the last four months since March 1974 which in some cases has been 50 to 75 percent clearly vindicates the stand of the trade union movement that the

price rises are entirely due to the policies of the Government and have nothing to do with the increase in D.A. or wages.

The policies that the Government has been pursuing since Independence have been deliberately designed to build capitalism. It has relied upon the Indian monopolists and their foreign collaborators for building industries.

The Government has refused to attack the big landholders and in the name of the Green Revolution have poured thousands of crores into the pockets of the big landholders.

The Banks both before and after nationalisation have placed their resources at the disposal of the speculators, who in league with the big landholders have robbed the people and fattened themselves by increasing the prices of foodgrains and other essential articles of consumption.

These monopolists and speculators have cheated the exchequer of thousands of crores of rupees of taxes due from them and are running a huge parallel black money economy. This huge black money finances speculation, smuggling, and corruption at all levels.

Having thus failed to mobilise the resources of the country, the Government has depended upon investments by foreign monopolists in collaboration with Indian monopolists and on huge foreign loans from imperialist

countries. The annual debt charges have grown to the huge amount of Rs. 500 crores this year.

The Government has further resorted to huge taxation on the common people by way of excise duties and other indirect taxes and to colossal deficit financing.

This dependence on foreign aid and foreign investments has led to a huge drain on our resources forcing the country to import at heavy prices spares and industrial raw materials and sell at throw-away prices our exportable commodities.

The galloping inflation and price rises are directly traceable to these policies in favour of big landholders and monopolists and to the fiscal and taxation measures stated above.

Further, these policies, with which the working class had nothing to do and against which it has been continuously raising its voice, have landed the country in the morass of a very deep crisis. Stagnation in industries and agriculture, ever-increasing prices, ever-widening balance of payments gap, impoverishment of the rural poor and agricultural labourers, on the one hand and colossal growth of wealth in the hands of a handful of monopolists, speculators, smugglers, landlords and their hangers-on on the other are the direct results of these policies, which have landed the country in this abysmal crisis.

The bankruptcy of the Government's policies can be seen in the fact that the 5th Five Year Plan which provided for a pitiable rate of growth has been a non-starter and had to be completely abandoned.

Despite the very deep crisis of the economy, the Government refuses to attack the positions of these anti-social and anti-national forces and mobilise the resources accumulated in their hands for repairing the ravages they have inflicted on the country and for rebuilding the economy on democratic lines and lay the basis for a Socialist and prosperous economy which alone will free the masses from the scourge of hunger, poverty, starvation and unemployment.

On the other hand, the Government relies on these very forces and goes on appeasing their insatiable greed for more profits, as is seen by the innumerable concessions it has given them in the recent times in the name of incentive to production and investments. It refuses to take effective measures to unearth black money and end speculative trading. It continues to heap new burdens on the people as was seen in the General and Railway budgets of March last and the supplementary General and Railway budgets presented to Parliament this month.

Equally hypocritical are the tears that the Government sheds for the rural poor, agricultural labourers and workers in the

unorganised sectors. This is abundantly clear from the fact that its land reform measures have remained a dead letter. On the other hand, evictions of peasants have taken place on a colossal scale and struggles against evictions are put down with heavy repression. The Government has refused to utilise the Minimum Wages Act to fix equitable wages for the workers and enforce them. In fact, the Minimum Wages Act has become Starvation Wages Act. And on top of it, struggles by the agricultural labourers and workers in the unorganised sector are also put down with a heavy hand. The recent imposts, deficit financing, refusal to compensate fully the working class and salaried employees for the rise in prices, are all attempts by the Government to transfer the burdens of this crisis to the working class and the common people. The ordinance freezing wage and D. A. is a further diabolical attempt in the same direction of shifting the burdens of the crisis to the working people.

These anti-working class policies have met with growing united resistance, despite the attempt of the Government to disrupt the unity of the working class.

Faced with this growing resistance, the Government has armed itself with further draconian repressive laws such as MISA and DIR, used them increasingly to ban strikes and intensified its repression on the

struggling workers. The IAC employees' strike was suppressed with a heavy hand. Heavy victimisation was meted out to the Central and State Government employees. The high watermark of the repression was witnessed in the recent All India strike of Railwaymen. Tens of thousands had been arrested; the police, the CRP, and the Border Security Force were used to raid workers' colonies, beat up and even raped women members of workers' families. Hordes of goondas, aided by police were let loose on workers' colonies. And yet the workers fought for three weeks. At last when the workers withdrew their strike, tens of thousands have been removed from services and hundreds of thousands have suffered break in service. Such savage repression of striking workers and victimisation are unknown in any civilised country.

Emboldened by this suppression, the Government has now come forward with this wage-freeze ordinance.

This Convention declares that the Trade Union movement and the working class are deeply exercised over the pitiable conditions and the crisis of the country's economy and are vitally concerned and anxious to take the country out of this economic crisis.

This can only be done if the Government reverses the policies and adopts the following measures :—

1. Immediately taking possession of all the stocks, hidden and open, of foodgrains and essential com-

modities from the big landholders, and wholesalers and their distribution through a public distribution system supervised by people's committees.

2. Take-over of the wholesale trade of foodgrains by compulsorily procuring all the marketable surplus from big landholders and of essential commodities from their producers and arranging their equitable distribution at controlled rates through a Public distribution system supervised by People's Committees.
3. Demonetization of currencies of higher denomination and freezing of Bank deposits above a certain limit.
4. Abolition and drastic reduction of excise and other imposts on articles of mass consumption and an end to deficit financing.
5. Take over of big business and monopoly Houses both Indian and Foreign.
6. Moratorium on all foreign debt repayments.
7. Re-opening of all closed factories and units and full utilisation of installed capacity.
8. Immediate steps to abolish landlordism and distribution of all lands of big landholders to agricultural labourers and poor peasants through Committees of Poor peasants and agricultural labourers.
9. Fixation of equitable wage for workers in the unorganised and agricultural

sectors and its implementation.

10. End of corruption and bureaucratism at all levels.
11. Immediate withdrawal of wage freeze measures and conceding the demand for a need-based minimum wage.
12. An end to the anti-working class policy, repressive measures and laws and victimisation and establishment of industrial relation on a democratic basis.
13. Jobs for all or unemployment relief.

The Convention is convinced that persistence by the Government in its present policies will further intensify the crisis, accelerate the price spiral, inflict more misery on the working people, still more fatten the monopolists, big landholders and speculators and will lead to further drain of the country's wealth by the foreign monopolists and to still greater dependence on foreign loans and monopolists.

The Convention therefore declares that it is a crime not only against the working class but also against the country to co-operate in the implementation of the present policies of the Government noted above. On the other hand its responsibility and class and patriotic duty is to close up its ranks and unite with the broadest sections of the people including the peasants, agricultural labourers, middle class employees and unemployed to resist unitedly these policies of the Government and fight for the adoption of the policies and measures put forward above.

Above all, it has become urgent and imperative to meet the challenge thrown up by the Government through this wage freeze ordinance and force the Government to withdraw the measure.

Despite the firm determination of the Government to push through this offensive, the working class and employees can force a retreat provided they overcome the dissensions in their ranks, forge the broader unity of the working class and middle class employees, teachers, professionals and give a sustained and determined struggle. Not to do so would embolden the Government to launch upon further attacks on the working people.

The unpublished Report on wages and income policy prepared by Sukhamoy Chakravarty, a member of the Commission at the behest of the Commission is an indication of the further offensives the Government is planning. (This Report has now been made public by a Member of Parliament). Every dissension among the working class and employees' organisation will have to be overcome and the challenge met with the working people.

The Convention regrets that the AITUC has chosen not to participate in this Convention and join in the endeavour to devise ways and means of forging mass actions for beating back this offensive.

The Convention notes with satisfaction the response of the workers all over India to the call of the meeting of the National

Trade Union Centres and National Federations held on July 21, last in New Delhi to resist the ordinance. In several establishments the workers have already started resisting the imposing of D. A. The workers of the Wagon Factory of the Birlas in Bharatpur, Rajasthan had to face firing in resisting the ordinance.

The Convention also notes with appreciation the urge for unity among the workers throughout the country. The Trade Unions of Kerala have united and given the call for a statewide strike on the 10th September.

In Maharashtra, Trade union organisations including the AITUC and HMS have held conventions in Bombay and Nagpur which have decided to carry out the programme of action chalked out by our Convention today.

In Karnataka also the Trade Unions, including those affiliated to the AITUC, have held a similar convention and decided to carry out the decisions of today's convention to resist the ordinance.

In Tamilnadu, the CITU and AITUC have decided to jointly convene a meeting of all trade unions to chalk out measures to resist this offensive. Similar unity has been forged in a number of industrial centres.

However, the Convention appeals to the working class to realise that the battle is going to be a bitter one and calls upon the Trade Unions all over the country to forge the broadest unity of the organisations of the

working class and middle class employees and professionals, and carry on a sustained struggle. The struggle in the first phase should include the holding of Joint Regional and State Conventions, morcha and demonstrations, strikes—factorieswise regionswise and stateswise, on dates suitable to the conditions in the states and regions, and other forms of resistance.

On Victimisation Of Railwaymen And Other Government Employees

This National Convention of Working People Against Wage-Freeze held in New Delhi on 28th August, 1974, notes that contrary to public assurances and commitments by the leaders of the Government including the President of India, the Prime Minister, and the Home Minister in Parliament and outside, repression against the railwaymen and the central and state governments employees in connection with their recent strike-actions, continues unabated.

In order to browbeat the striking employees, they are being subjected to various kinds of penal measures in a very massive way. Thousands have been dismissed or removed from service. Several of them have been placed under suspension and are being proceeded against either in the court of law or departmentally. With a view to dislocating their normal trade union functioning, thousands of activists are being transferred from their work-places to the distant spots and are being harassed and humiliated. Over

one million striking employees in railways and other central and state government offices have been given a break-in-service for mere participation in the strike. Several unions have been given notices asking them to show cause as to why their recognition would not be withdrawn for participation in the strike.

This Convention strongly condemns this suppression of trade union and democratic rights of the railwaymen and other government employees and demands that they should be immediately restored. It further demands that the Government should immediately enter into negotiations with NCCRS and representatives of the Central and State governments employees so that settlement of all their outstanding disputes is arrived at without any delay.

This Convention calls upon the entire working people of the country to unite and build a powerful broad-based unity for a sustained struggle in defence of the trade union and democratic rights and for securing complete vacation of all kinds of victimisations of the railwaymen and other government employees.

In Marathi

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Consumer Price Index Numbers

(Industrial Workers/1960 = 100)

State/Centre	1974			State/Centre	1974		
	May	June	July		May	June	July
Andhra Pradesh				Orissa			
Gudur	298	308	313	Barbil	284	284	302
Guntur	298	315	318	Sambalpur	287	286	297
Hyderabad	277	284	291	Punjab			
Assam				Amritsar	306	316	328
Digboi	273	282	297	Rajasthan			
Doom Dooma	280	269	287	Ajmer	304	311	325
Labac	257	281	299	Jaipur	309	317	326
Mariani	250	258	279	Tamilnadu			
Rangapara	276	282	290	Coimbatore	269	272	280
Bihar				Coonoor	301	307	314
Jamshedpur	307	311	317	Madras	268	271	280
Jharia	323	330	348	Madurai	282	298	311
Kodarma	371	398	419	U. P.			
Monghyr	337	360	378	Kanpur	296	305	312
Noamundi	332	341	369	Saharanpur	311	318	333
Gujarat				Varanasi	333	345	364
Ahmedabad	284	290	295	West Bengal			
Bhavnagar	306	302	310	Asansol	298	301	312
Haryana				Calcutta	272	276	282
Yamunanagar	309	316	323	Darjeeling	267	269	272
J & K				Howrah	280	285	291
Srinagar	234	236	240	Jalpaiguri	280	279	283
Karnataka				Raniganj	322	325	337
Ammathi	300	313	332	Delhi	325	330	335
Bangalore	292	299	306	Other Centres			
Chikmagalur	301	309	324	Berhampur ('49)	365	368	374
Kolar G. F.	296	301	309	Cuttack (1949)	329	331	346
Kerala				Jabalpur (1949)	377	402	396
Alleppey	363	372	377	Beawar ('51-'52)	324	343	358
Alwaye	312	322	338	Tripura (1961)	260	257	266
Mundakayam	309	323	333	H. P. (1965)	217	226	226
M. P.				Goa (1966)	198	201	202
Balaghat	305	318	341	Bhilai (1966)	180	186	188
Bhopal	289	295	311	Kothagudam('66)	179	186	188
Gwalior	329	339	342	All India ('49)	357	366	378
Indore	326	344	351	do ('60)	294	301	311
Maharashtra							
Bombay	269	277	282				
Nagpur	295	299	308				
Sholapur	295	302	314				

* Figures in bracket indicate base year.
(Labour Bureau, Simla)

NEWSLETTER

Tamilnadu

T. U. Joint Committee Against Wage Freeze Formed

A meeting of representatives of all Central Trade Unions, except INTUC, was held at Madras on August 28 last to consider joint action against wage freeze Ordinance and rising prices, for reinstatement of victimised Railway employees etc. K. M. Sundaram (AITUC) presided.

Among the participants were representatives of Railway Labour Union, S. R. Mazdoor Union, NFPTE, AIIEA, Indian Oil Employees Union, Simpson Employees' Union, Central Organisation of Tamilnadu Electricity workers besides those of CITU, and DMK Unions.

The meeting decided to form a Joint Committee of T. U.'s consisting of representatives of participating Trade Unions and with K. M. Sundaram (AITUC), V. P. Chintan (CITU) and R. Kuchelar as Conveners.

It was also decided to form similar Committees at district and local levels. A programme of campaign and agitations throughout the State including joint meetings at factory gates to mobilise workers was drawn up. The meeting also decided to approach other fraternal trade unions, irrespective of political affiliation, to join the movement.

Joint Movement by T. U.'s at Trichy

At the initiative of All India Insurance Employees Associa-

tion, a joint meeting of representatives of CITU and DMK unions, NCCRS and AIBEA was held at Trichy recently. The meeting decided to fight jointly against the Wage Freeze Ordinance, rising prices, reinstatement of victimised Railwaymen. As the first joint action, a demonstration was staged before the Head Post Office on August 30 which was joined by more than thousand workers.

Madurai Trade Unions Stage Dharna

Under the auspices of the Joint Action Council of Madurai T.U.'s a massive Dharna was organised on August 29 before Madurai Railway Station to protest against wage freeze and soaring prices and on the demands for reinstatement of victimised railway workers and supply of essential commodities and rice at cheap rates. The participants were addressed by A. Balasubramaniam (CITU), D. Phandian (AITUC), S. Rajarathnam (NCCRS), V. Karmegam (CITU) and others.

United Strike by Hosiery Workers

More than 15000 workers belonging to 1100 Hosiery factories of Thirupur went on strike from August 19 to realise their demands for 50 per cent wage rise and D.A. at 30 paise per point of rise in CPI. The strike was led by a Joint Action Committee composed of CITU,

AITUC, DMK and ADMK unions. The strike is continuing.

United Struggle by Handloom Workers

Led jointly by the CITU and DMK unions, 5000 handloom workers of Nagercoil went on strike from August 24 in support of their 9-point Charter of demands including 50 per cent wage rise and 25 per cent Bonus.

To press for the demands the unions organised a hunger strike. The electricity and textile workers took out a joint rally on August 28 and 30 in support of the striking handloom workers. 31000 rubber and plantation workers went on a solidarity strike on August 31.

TANSI workers issue Strike Notice

The workers of the factory units managed by the Director of Industries, Tamilnadu Government have been demanding revision of wages and D. A. at Rs. 1.30 per point of rise in CPI over 200. The refusal of the authorities to come to a settlement has forced all unions affiliated to the Tamilnadu Small Scale Industries Federation to issue strike notice on August 30. The Federation has appealed to other fraternal organisations to support their struggle.

Wavin India Employees on Strike

About 141 workers of Wavin India's Chemical and Plastic Products unit in the Ambathur Industrial Estate are on strike from July 17 in support of their

demands for revision of wages and D. A.

The management declared an illegal lock-out and sought Court injunction to curb the legitimate T. U. rights of workers. In support of the striking workers, the Madras City Ambathur Industrial Estate Engineering & General Workers Union has issued strike notice on the managements of all the units in the Industrial Estate.

Goa

Struggle for Food and Against Price Rise

Led by the Goa State Committee of the CITU and the Action Committee of Trade Unions and Organisations, the working class and other toiling people in Goa are conducting militant agitations against the spiralling rise in prices, for full quota of rations against wage-freeze and in support of the Railway workers.

More and More Workers Join CITU

Since the historic Goa Bundh of 18th February 1974, the leading role of the CITU in the mobilisation of united struggles of workers and people in Goa have given rise to a new consciousness among the working class. More and more workers are leaving the reformist and revisionist unions and are joining the CITU. Recently the workers of Chowgule's Power House at Murmagoa Harbour left the INTUC union to join the CITU-led Chowgule Employees' Union. Similarly, 200 workers of the

Engineering Workshop at Dabolim Sancoale region joined the Goa Engineering Workers' Union (CITU). 200 mining workers belonging to the mines owned by the late Chief Minister Bhandodkar, recently left the INTUC Union and joined the All Goa General Employees' Union (CITU).

Upsurge among Mining and Engineering Workers

The workers under a contractor of Sesa Goa, an Italian Company, are on strike demanding re-instatement of a victimised worker-leader, wage rise and payment for leave under Factories Act.

Workers of Agarwal Mines in South Goa, led by the All Goa General Employees' Union (CITU), have threatened a strike unless their demands, including revision of wage scales, are conceded.

Workers of Dempo Mining Corporation and Bhandodkar mines in Bicholim region are agitating against harassment by the management and for settlement of pending demands.

The engineering workers of Jain Shipping and Shipbuilders (P) Ltd. at Dabolim, led by the Goa Engineering workers' Union (CITU), recently gained a wage increase of Rs. 50 to Rs 75 per month and some other demands.

Struggle for Bonus

As per the decision of the Goa Engineering Workers' Union (CITU), the workers of Empreiteiros Gerais Ltd. have rejected the Bonus of 8.33 per cent offered by the management.

1500 mining and engineering workers of Chowgule Company are also boycotting the Bonus of 12% (including 3.67 per cent ex-gratia) offered by the Company, at the call of Chowgule Employees' Union (CITU). The Chowgule workers are also carrying on agitation against the criminal cases against 150 workers and departmental enquires against 18 workers instituted by the management after the 18-day general strike of March 1973.

Port and Dock Workers

Recently, the Marmagoa Dock workers gained some of their outstanding demands after prolonged agitation.

The collusion of the INTUC-leadership in Goa with the employers was completely exposed and they were thoroughly isolated during a 4-day general strike by the Marmagoa Port Trust workers at the call of Marmagoa Waterfront Workers' Union (CITU) and Marmagoa Port & Railway Workers' Union (HMS). They were demanding the removal of Mohan Nair, INTUC leader, as Trustee representing the workers.

Conferences and Conventions

The Chowgule Employees' Union (CITU) will hold its 3rd Conference at Sirigao on October 5-6 next. Ahilya Rangnekar has been invited to inaugurate the Conference.

The 3rd Conference of the Goa State Committee of CITU is expected to be held in the second week of October. B. T. Ranadive President, CITU has been invited to inaugurate the Conference.

Kerala

Victory for Plantation Workers in Kerala

The 38 day old strike of 3 lakh workers in tea, rubber, cardamom and coffee plantations in Kerala, which started on August 1 on the demands for minimum wages and DA, has been settled and workers went back to work victoriously. The settlement was arrived at a tripartite meeting of representatives of Trade Unions, plantation owners and the Government.

The planters agreed to implement the notified wages of workers with effect from April 1st 1974. Under the notified wages, workers in Tea plantations would benefit by Rs. 1.20 per day, rubber Rs. 1.68, Cardamon Rs. 1.34 and Coffee Rs. 1.32.

Manoranjan Roy M. P., General Secretary of the All India Plantation Workers' Federation visited the plantations during the strike and congratulated the workers on their victory.

Other Struggles

About 300 workers of British Physical Laboratories, Palghat, resorted to strike on 16th August demanding increase in wage and 25% bonus.

Loading and unloading workers of Quilon Town went on strike on 17th August demanding increase in wages, bonus, etc.

Workers of Trichur Cotton Mills, Nattika, started an indefi-

nite strike from August 18th demanding bonus. The strike was being conducted under the joint auspices of three unions.

2,000 workers of Thazhattala, Adichanullur and N.S. Cashew factories struck work on 19th August under CITU leadership protesting against the unjust transfer of two workers.

60 workers of Anachhal Nursery under the Cardamom Board went on an indefinite strike from 19th August in support of their various demands.

Coir workers of Trivandrum Dist. started an indefinite strike from August 20th demanding Onam bonus.

Workers of engineering factories of Trichur went on an indefinite strike from 20th August demanding bonus, increase in wages, D.A. etc.

Workers of Kottakkal Arya Vaidyasala went on a one day token strike on 22nd August demanding 30% bonus.

75,000 handloom workers of Cannanore Zone went on an indefinite strike from 22nd August protesting against the intransigent attitude of the management on Bonus issue. This strike was called under the joint auspices of CITU, INTUC, and AITUC unions.

400 loading and unloading workers of Chalsi market of Trivandrum started an indefinite strike from 22nd August demanding Rs. 400 as Onam bonus.

2,500 textile workers of Ashok, G. T. N., Kathai and Chakkolai textile mills of Alwaye industrsal zone resorted

to a one-day strike on 21st August demanding bonus.

Trading establishments in Trichur town were paralysed on 24th August by a strike of shop employees protesting against the refusal of the owners to meet their demands and the lock-out declared by the owners.

Employees of Kerala Urban Development Finance Corporation, Calicut g h e r a o e d its Managing Director on 26th August demanding 20% bonus.

5,000 textile workers of Alwaye zone began an indefinite strike from August 27 following failure of bonus negotiations. The strike was being conducted under the joint auspices of the INTUC, AITUC, CITU unions.

Protesting against the retrenchment of 1,200 workers of the Idikki Project by the Hindusthan Construction Company, 4500 workers of Idikki went on one-day strike on 27th August. The strike was conducted under the auspices of the HCC Employees' Union, Idikki Project Construction Workers' Union (CITU), HCC Staff Association and KCL Union.

In protest against the police repression on the participants in the anti-bus fare rise struggle in Cannanore, workers of Fibre Foam factory, Western India Plywoods, Hard Board Saw Mills of Valapattamam struck work on 6th September.

Cannanore Dist. observed complete general strike and hartal on 5th Sept. in protest against the police firing on people picketting transport

at Pallikkara, Northern Neeleswaram and arrest and beating of M.V. Raghavan, C. Kannan, President, Kerala CITU, O. Bharathan, etc.

Maharashtra

Bombay Women demonstrate for Foodgrains

More than 10,000 women, including hundreds of muslim women, held a massive demonstration in Bombay on September 11 demanding increase in sugar ration, minimum 6 kg. of foodgrains etc. Joined by women employees of Government offices, they squatted near the Churchgate station for two hours bringing transport to a standstill. The demonstrators were addressed by Mrinal Gore, M. L. A., Ahilya Rangnekar and other women leaders.

Later, on September 13, forty women volunteers of the women's Anti-Price rise Committee, led by Mrinal Gore, Ahilya Rangnekar and others, gheraoed the car of Union Finance Minister Y. B. Chavan near the Reserve Bank Office in Bombay demanding adequate supply of sugar, vanaspati, maida and other necessities through ration shops. A deputation of women met him the next day when he promised to increase the quota of sugar.

One-day strike by P. F. Employees

The Provident Fund employees in Bombay observed a one-day strike on September 5 at the call of the E. P. F. Staff Union. A rally was held in Bombay on

the same day addressed by S. R. Kulkarni, President of the Bombay and Goa Unit of the Union. He warned the Government that the employees will be forced to go on indefinite strike if the wage revision recommended by the Board of Trustees was not accepted immediately.

Demand Day Observed by State Govt. Employees

State Government employees all over Maharashtra observed Demands Day on September 5

at the call of the Maharashtra State Government Employees Confederation. Two big processions were taken out in Bombay which ended in a mass rally at the Oval maidan addressed by M. V. Gubbi, President and R. G. Karnik, General Secretary of the Confederation and other leaders. They asked the employees to prepare for continuous agitation if the Government does not concede their demands for increased D. A. and revised pay scales.

CITU Fund For Railwaymen

(Contributions received from 18. 7. 74 to 18. 9. 74)

	Rs.
Koila Shramik Sangh, Surguja	101.00
Democratic Youth Federation, Andal	25.00
Alumny Association, ABTT College	25.00
Tripura State Committee of CITU	467.00
Calcutta Mess, Bilaspur	40.00
Tripura Student Federation	200.00
A. N. Chatterjee, Orissa	20.00
Kalinga Tube and Allied Concerns Employees Union	126.00
Darjeeling District Chia Kaman Mazdoor Union	71.00
*West Bengal State Committee of CITU	12,000.00
	<u>Rs. 13,075.00</u>

*(Total collections through West Bengal State Committee of CITU Rs. 35,000 and total receipt in the CITU Central Office Rs. 39,472.45)

Expenses up to 18. 9. 74

Typing and Printing Charges	571.75
Stationery	3884.90
Stamp & Court Fee and Costs	2142.00
Conveyance & Misc.	1172.51
Repairs	61.50
Relief to Railwaymen	9315.00
	<u>Rs. 17147.66</u>

Convention of Power Workers To Plan Bigger All India Struggle

SIX and a half lakh power workers of India were preparing to go on a one-day All India Strike action on September 18 to protest against the attitude of the managements, both in private and public sectors, as well as to protest against the Wage Freeze policy of the Government. However, the strike had to be deferred due to inadequate preparations in some States.

This was announced in a joint statement issued from Delhi by the representatives of Electricity Workers unions affiliated to AITUC, HMS and CITU. They had gone to Delhi to attend a meeting of the Wage Guidelines Committee convened on September 12-13. But the meeting failed to bring about any result due to the deliberate absence of the management representatives. The employers' representatives also did not attend an earlier meeting of the Committee.

The workers' representatives in the Wage Guidelines Committee adopted a unanimous resolution condemning this attitude of the employers, which stated—"The employees' side in the Committee wishes to point out that this attitude on the part of the Public Sector managements betrays an utter disregard for maintaining and strengthening sound industrial relations in the most vital electricity industry which is already in the throes of a crisis, and reduces talks and negotiations to a farce. The

employees' side goes on record that this trend, if allowed, will create dangerous precedents in the sphere of Industrial relations, and make the setting up of such Committees for different industries an exercise in futility".

A deputation of the employees' representatives on the Committee consisting of A. B. Bardhan (AITUC), Sukhomy Pal (CITU), D. Maurya, S.C. Krishnan and Pathak among others, also met the Labour Minister Sri Raghunath Reddy on September 13. They conveyed to him their

strong resentment at the attitude of the Public Sector employers and urged that the Government should direct the managements to join the next bi-partite meeting and settle all outstanding issues of the power workers without any delay.

The joint statement announced the decision to hold a National Convention of the representatives of all electricity workers' unions, irrespective of affiliation, in New Delhi on October 19 and 20 to plan a more broadbased and bigger programme of struggle including strike action which will compel the managements and the Governments to change their attitude and settle the workers' demands.

Chile Day Observed By Workers All Over India

At the call of the CITU, workers and employees all over the country observed September 11 as "Solidarity with the People of Chile Day" through work stoppages, mass rallies, public meetings, gate meetings etc.

In West Bengal, workers and employees all over the State observed 'Cease-work' for 10 minutes to half an hour in factories and other industrial establishments, Government and Commercial offices etc. at the call of the CITU, AITUC, INTUC, two UTUC's and TUCC. Meetings were also held at factory gates.

In Punjab and Himachal Pradesh, the Day was observed by the workers of B.S.L. Project at Talwara, Sundernagar, Nangal and other places through demonstrations and rallies. The Day was also observed by Metal

workers, Rickshaw Body Builders, Textile, hosiery and Iron & Steel workers, Building workers etc. at Jullunder, Ludhiana, Amritsar, Pathankot, Batala, Chandigarh and other centres.

In Assam, 700 workers of National Saw and Plywood Works at Tinsukia stopped work for 15 minutes at 10.45 A.M. and adopted a resolution condemning barbarities by the CIA inspired Fascist Military Junta. The day was also observed by workers of different Tea gardens of Assam, under the auspices of Akhil Bharatiya Cha Mazdoor Sangha, by holding a public meeting at the Borjuli Tea Estate.

Employees of Kalinga Tubes and Allied Concerns in Calcutta, observed cease-work at 11 A.M. and two minutes silence in memory of Dr. Allende and other martyrs of Chile.

Ramamurti's Reply To AITUC's Slander

P. Ramamurti, General Secretary CITU issued the following statement on September 3, to refute the insinuations made by K. G. Srivastava, Secretary AITUC while giving its reasons for not joining the National Convention against wage freeze.

"The Statement issued by Shri K. G. Srivastava, Secretary of the AITUC and published in 'PATRIOT' of 31st August, 1974 stating reason for the AITUC not responding to the appeal by the National Convention against Wage freeze is an astounding one.

The two reasons he advances are : (1) "The Convention has given no concrete programme" and (2) "The Convention has lent enthusiastic support to the proposed C.I.T.U. sponsored General strike which is really a part of the CPM's Liberation struggle against the Menon Ministry". This is a travesty of facts.

Firstly the Convention has given a call to all organisations of the workers and employees throughout the country to forge the broadest unity and to launch a sustained struggle which would include Conventions, marches and demonstrations and strikes in individual factories, region-wise and state-wise according to conditions prevailing and on dates suitable in the next two months. The Convention has thus taken into account

the uneven conditions and sought to unify the entire trade union movement and the charge of adventurism insinuously made later in his statement by Shri K. G. Srivastava is pointless.

Secondly the Convention has taken note of the fact that resistance to the Ordinance has already started in many places, including Bharatpur, Kerala, Karnataka and Tamilnadu. It is in this connection the proposed state-wide strike against the wage freeze in Kerala on September 10, not only by CITU unions but jointly by several other unions, is mentioned. The resolution also appreciated the fact that the AITUC also has jointly participated in the Conventions in Maharashtra and Karnataka.

The CPI M's agitation against the Achutha Menon Ministry is not the issue in the proposed strike of September 10th and in fact efforts are being made to persuade the AITUC in Kerala also to join the strike which is in protest against the wage freeze ordinance.

Is it the contention of Mr. K. G. Srivastava that because his party leader heads the Ministry in Kerala any agitation by CITU and other unions in Kerala against the wage freeze or measures of the Central Government is automatically directed against the State Ministry ?

The AITUC may have other reasons which it may not like to

make public for not joining the common struggle ; but let it not put up false pretexts.

I hope they have no other and, if so, this statement of bare facts should remove all misapprehension. I expect that the AITUC will reconsider its stand."

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list of membership for verification for 1972 the verification was given up to please the AITUC and HMS leadership.

If this situation continues, the Trade Union movement will have to ask, "Why should there be a Labour Ministry at all ; the earlier it is dissolved the better". Never before the Labour Ministry functioned in India so openly as a handmaid of employers.

If the Govt. considers that the calculated inaction will be accepted by the Indian workers meekly it is greatly mistaken. The united resistance that is growing all over the country against the anti-labour policies of the Govt. will not allow those diatry tactics to continue. The success of the anti wage freeze convention in New Delhi on 28th August and the unity achieved in it should serve as a warning to the Government.