Struggle in Kanak Garment Industry

A struggle in Kanak industry of 850 women working in garment export industry is important, the way they fought against the goondas of the management. The tenacity with which they continued the struggle for years demanding Rs. 300 as minimum wages and right to form the union they choose. After the formation of CITU union, the factory was closed, locked out. Women sat on Dharna day in and day out to keep watch not to allow the garments to go out. The court cases continued and there is no settlement as yet.

Bhilai Contract Women Workers

Women contract workers in Bhilai always take lead in the struggles in Bhilai Steel Plant. Jogabai a tribal woman is the leader. The last struggle was launched in October, 1982, when hundreds of police with guns entered the cold Pig Yard Blast Furnace. They started lathicharges on men and women sitting peacefully in Dharna demanding wages. Out of 500, about 50 were women, some of than were arrested alongwith their children who were released on 15th October. They came out of jail and started hunger-strike in front of Ispat Bhawan. The daily demonstration of men and women continued.

Women Workers in Delhi and Faridabad Small Scale Factories Joining Struggles

There are about 800 piece rated women tailors, working in 300 welfare centres run by Delhi Administration. The payments range from Re 1 to Rs. 15 a piece, which comes to average Rs. 7-8 per day. The working conditions of these women are horrible, with long working hours, no pension, with deduction of 25% from their megre salary. These long-sufferer women on their own approached CITU requesting to form their union with whatever consequences. On April 27, 1982 these women workers went on Dharna at Cannought Place which continued for more than two months demanding regularisation of all piece rate work alongwith other demands. The union is led by our women comrades. The struggles for their demands continue.

The struggle of 400 women workers in HCL was carried on for more than 2 months very courageously when the management closed down the unit, dismissed a number of women workers. A successful struggle was fought in J.V. Electronics employing 259 women workers and 70 men, the Dharna continued for 57 days and they had to fight against police atrocities. In the Le Mount Factory in the morning of September 16, 1981 about 80 women and men found themselves locked out and police in occupation of the premises. The whole day the workers sat on Dharna outside the factory gate, when management called for two truck loads of police. Till 1 in the morning women refused to allow the onwer to leave. At 1 A.M. the employer agreed to accept their demands. They fought against an attempt to remove the machines from the factory.

Sivakasi Match Factory Women Worst Suffers

Sivakasi Match Factory women and children are the worst suffers. With repeated accidents and deaths of women and children who are taken by trucks early in the morning by the employers, sivakasi has become a scandal in the International World now. After the last explosion when a few women and children died, the Tamilnadu Co-ordination Committee visited the factory, had taken up the issue by leading deputation to the Chief Minister, demanded one representative by taken on the committee. In the Balu garment factory where 500 women are working, we are able to take up their problems of closure and organise them under CITU.

Rajasthan Kuchi Women Fight against Police

In the 5th Conference of Kuchi Basti Federation in Udaipur, Rajasthan held in February, 1983 women were ahead in all the struggles and they fought for water, electricity, houses and so on. They were the leaders of Dharnas and demonstrations, faced lathi-charges and bullets when police tried to demolish the structures built by workers. Inspite of the disruption in the trade union in Rajasthan, about 100 women joined 23rd November Rally in Delhi. Lately we were able to take up the problems of women workers in Beawar.

Adivani Women in Textile Mill in Orissa Protect the Leaders

Women in Bhaskar Textile in Jharsuguda were very millitant and fought struggles to protect the CITU leadership and wrenched their demands. These backward tribal women coming from villages to attend the work in the mill in Jharsuguda in Sambalpur district when convinced about the demands by CITU, protected the leadership of CITU when attacked by the goondas of the management. They regularly started coming to the office, sat for Dharna demanding intervention, went for collection of union subscription and attend the executive meetings. The CITU leadership guided them and educated them in every respect giving them opportunity to develop. The leadership also elected them to the executive body of the union.

Women Workers in Orissa put Blocade in Front of Machine

Women worker in Roksy Iron Ore in Sundargarh District in Orissa an important loading Centre for export of Iron Ore fought against the Pay loader Machine brought by the management to mechanise the wagon loading in 1986. Women sat in front of the machine for days together and did not allow the machine to be installed. It was sent back and victorious procession of men and women workers taken out. Marsa Samad 40 years old Wagon loader in fact became a leader here after working in this mines for more than 20 years. She is an active member of Orissa CITU and Co-ordination Committee of Working Women.

Contract Workers in Kanpur – U.P.

Only 45 women contract workers for Kanpur and a Dharna held continued their struggle for 4 months with a tenacity and achieved their demands. Hundreds of girls and women volunteered at the 5th Conference of CITU without whom, the conference could not have been held.

A Massive Demonstration of Women in West Bengal

Thousands of Women held a huge demonstration in West Bengal on 3rd April 1982 in observance of Employment Day at the call of AIDWA. Only women activists in West Bengal can gather thousands of women at the call of CITU, AIDWA or party.

The heroism of women workers in Asansol, Raniganj is welknown who braved the terror of goondas of the management to protect the CITU in 1971-72. The 18th Conference of West Bengal Gantantrik Mahila Samithi held in the month of June 1986 was attended by a large number of delegates from ICDS, Panchayat Samithi, agricultural and peasant women. The mass rally of thousands attended from down-brodden who came in processions. Adivasi women. Sarunashi in her brilliant speech in the conference said "land was not given to us by the landlords under Congress rule which we tilled. But the Left Front Government helped us to get it. If you give us politics we will be able to do much for our state...We are illiterate but we want our children at least to be educated". This is how the women workers react and learn in the class struggle, if they are guided properly.

Bihar Gramsevikas—Court Arrests

The magnificient struggle of Gramsevikas in Bihar in September 1985 when more than 7,000 women all over Bihar demonstrated and held a Dharna for the demand of regularisation, Rs. 3 per delivery and Rs. 100 as honourarium. Important point to be noted here is they are all from the backward communities and face discrimination from their own people. These women constitute a big contingent of NGO's and the one of their leaders Rampukari Devi, and the member of AICCWW was elected on the Bihar NGO's committees. Again in the month of January 1987, thousands of these Sevikas courted arrests in Patna and other districts for their demands, thousands went to Jail, convicted for 8-15 days while one woman worker died due to tortures by police lathicharge.

Middle Class Employees in Struggles on Large Scale

Delhi has become a "capital of Rallies, Dharnas, hunger strikes" one of the paper reported. In almost all

the struggles of professors, teachers, nurses, Angamradis, NGO's, Central Government, women's participation was magnificient.

The strike of Delhi University Teachers which continued for their demands for nearly 3 months in 1982-83 and for 74 days in 1985 on promotion scheme was unprecedented in the history of the University. A new feature was the leading role of women teachers, in women's colleges who came forward to defend the actions. The leading role in this struggle originated from the bold decisions of the staff associations of leading women's colleges. There was active participation of women teachers in Dharnas and demonstration. These women's colleges have given the lend in holding frequent and regular staff association motings to discuss the major issues focussed by the strike. They also took steps to call meetings of their students to explain the issues. This was a new feature to have a sort of political understanding of the common problem of the teachers and the students which the bourgeois press always wanted to point as opposite to each other. Again these teachers launched struggle in 1986-87 for this demands.

Women Teachers in Tamilnadu too take lead

Women teachers launched struggles for their specific demands in the colleges in Tamilnadu against the haughty attitude of their management, corruption and for improving the living standard and condition of services. The teachers in Avinashi College in Coimbatore, Sarada College in Salem, and SIET a minority college of women in Madras launched struggles for a long duration, just after forming their association for the first time The teachers of the first two college joined in struggle also for the first time.

Women Government Employees take Lead

The women employees of the State Government of West Bengal, NGO's in Kerala and Maharashtra and in Andhra are in the forefront of their struggle, participate in all the conferences, demonstrations on equal footing.

Working women in West Bengal, Central Government Employees held demonstration throughout the day on May 6, 1982, at different places to press for their demands. At the call of the Co-ordination Committee of Central Government employees unions and Associations women employees from Telephone, Income-tax, A.G. Office nurses, Postal, Geological Survey, GPO and others participated in the demonstration with the result the office work was affected by their absence.

A first convention of Post & Telegraph Women and the wives of the workers, a new feature in the struggle no doubt, was held in the month of April 1983 in Udaipur, Rajasthan attended by 300 women, it gave the call to fight for the joint struggles launched by the union.

The middle class employees from NGO's A.G. Office, Nurses, Teachers, Electricity Board, Bank are launching their struggles, conferences are held under their own unions, co-ordination committee participating wherever advisable and possible.

Nurses everywhere Demonstrate in Thousands

The Nurses in Hyderabad, Kerala, Delhi, Patiala, Bombay, Jaipur are on the war path demanding revision of yard stick with 3 : 1 ratio between patients and nurse, as at present a nurse has to look after 60-70 patients at a time. A total strike in Hyderabad by 4,000 nurses compelled the last Andhra Pradesh Government to accept a few demands. More than 5,000 nurses in Kerala held dharna meetings and demonstration, hunger-strike and went on General Strike, from 24th March, 1982. On the sixth day, the strike was withdrawn on the assurances of the Health Ministry that they would consider their demands. The recent strike of 4,000 nurses in Delhi in March 1987 continued for 20 days for upward revision of the wages, hostels for working women and transport facilities. 780 women telephone operators launched a struggle in the months of January 1987. Even after years of working, they are still not regularised.

19th January 1982—All India Strike at the Call of National Campaign Committee

The participation of working women in the 19th January was as notable as in the grand "March to Parliament" on November 23, 1981. Inspite of lathicharge "shoot at sight" order, arrest of thousands of people men and women joined the strike in thousands. In Simco Meters Factory at Trichy mostly women workers joined the strike. Municipal workers, who constitute mostly of women, in Gujarat came on strike. Women in LIC Banks of course joined the strike. Processions of women were brought out in Kerala, West Bengal and Tripura on this day.

The same enthusiasm was seen in the March to Parliament on 23rd November, 1982. Thousands came from Rajasthan, Bihar, M.P., Haryana, U.P., Maharashtra, Tamilnadu, Kerala and Punjab. Many of them wore Red Saries with flags fluttering in their hands.

The participation of working women in the Convention on 22nd and in March to Parliament proved that working women are joining in the main stream of struggle, on a large scale at the call of the National Campaign Committee. Large sections were under the Flag of CITU.

The 5th conference of CITU at Kanpur was attended by 50 delegates, from different industries and occupation. This is surely a step forward to bring women in the forefront.

The reports or various struggles so far received by the Centre and reported in the Voice of the Working Women are given here. There are a number of struggles of women workers and middle class employees reported in the press. A continuous fight for a creche in Shastri Bhavan in Madras Tamilnadu was secured by the working women with meetings, gheraos etc., along with their children after nearly 2 years of struggle. The transport facilities for working women in Kerala Tamilnadu was the result of continuous struggle of working woman under the co-ordination committees. There are many struggles launched by women. The CITU and our co-ordination committees should be in a position to help these struggles with the result the total movement of the working class would get strengthened.

Unionisation of Working Whmen

It is to be noted that the issue of unionisatian among women workers is now being taken by the Labour Ministry. They found it lately that the percentage of membership is very much low among the women workers. In different surveys made by the Labour Ministry, they have made it a point to draw the attention of the trade unions saying women workers have no trade union consciousness, they do not know about the legislations concerning them, they do not have the knowledge of organisation, they are totally ignorant and so on. The question should be asked on the other way round what has the Government done for women workers so that they should be aware about their rights ?

Whatever it may be, the present position of the women workers, their rights, the legislations concerning them is bad. The CITU was the first trade union, taking note of it gave a call from their 1979 Convention to their Unions to strengthen their participation in the unions, to promote them on the executive bodies. The CITU formed an All India Co-ordination Committee at the Centre and in the States to fight against the continuing feudal tendencies among the leadership of CITU, to bypass the working women, their problems and their promotion on the committees. In the first Convention itself it was stated that "the trade union movement has to fight it (feudal tendencies) as part of the working class struggle. Our leaders and cadre besides must see that the union leadership does not become a male preserve, that women are trained and quickly promoted to leading positions." It further said, that the "trade union movement cannot attain its full stature unless the women's contigent plays its role in organising and leading the unions ..." The statement was based on the experience of the movement in trade unions and the significant role played by women workers in various struggles. The women in thousands participated in strikes, faced jails and repression, went through all the privasions along with men and employees.

Unfortunately, the working class and their unions did not pay attention to their specific problems, nor fought for their demands like retrenchment, provision of Creche. It was a correct step therefore taken by CITU, though belatedly no doubt, to note the weaknesses in the trade unions and try to remove them.

At the time of the 1st Convention, our report quoted the figure of membership of women workers in the trade unions which submitted returns to the Government as 6.2 of the total Trade Union membership in India. In 1979, the total strength of women workers in the organised sector in India was 21.88 lakhs. This low percentage pointed out sharply the tasks lay ahead.

CITU tried to take review of our own unions in this respect, and had a sample survey of 336 unions in Maharashtra, Tamilnadu and Kerala registered in 1979. It was found that women members of the union made up just 8 per cent of the total union membership ; women office bearers were only 34. In Maharashtra 13, in Tamilnadu 8, West Bengal 6. In the industries where women constitute the overwhelming majority of the work force plantation, Coir, bidi, tobacco, the executive of the unions consisted mainly of male members, and at conferences, they made up hardly one to two per cent of the delegates. In Durgapur Steel Plant in 1979 out of 900 women employees only 200 were enrolled as union members in a total membership of 15,000. Two women were represented in the 220 council of Steel Plant Union.

Trade Unions, The Schools of Class Struggle

The trade unions are the schools of class struggle. This is what Marx said. The strength of the membership of women in the unions under all the Central Trade Unions is very poor. The membership of women under CITU as is mentioned earlier is not at all satisfactory. The Union is her basic unit where she should get herself enrolled. Taking up their problems, bring them in the union to fight for their demands and enrol their membership is a task before our co-ordination committees. The Co-ordination committees do take up their problems, but to create the elementary consciousness of the union is hardly done as per the available reports. There are difficulties because of her double burden, at home and at the work place. It requires therefore a sustained efforts on our part to bring her in the union. Once she is an active member, then the interest continues to increase, any demand achieved due to their united efforts, she becomes a part and parcel of the union. Her loyalty towards the union has no limit. A few example given elsewhere shows how much pride they have far their unions and how much sacrifice they are prepared to do for their union. When a struggle is on then they come out, attend meetings, keep watch day in and day out against the strike breakers in spite of the difficulties at home. Not literate but she knows who is her enemy, the employer and the anti-socials, police. She comes to know the role of the bourgeois government. These schools of class struggles are very important to lead them to further class and political consciousness, the necessity to abolish the system which keeps them in bondage, and denys the rights. The AICCWW and our co-ordination committees have not thought much about the question of unionisation and participation of women workers in their unions.

Working Women's Participation In Trade Unions Under Socialism

The membership of the women in the union under socialism is about 45 to 50 per cent of the total. They actively take part in their trade unions, decide what steps should be taken to improve the conditions of women employed. If they think a particular legislation is to be changed in the intesest of women wrkers, after discussion in the factory committee they come with the new proposals to the management. This is the role the women Trade Unionists in Soviet Union, in GDR in Checoslovakia in China, in Viet Nam and in other socialist countries play for better conditions for working women. In Viet Nam, a small socialist country, women account for over 60% of the total work force in different industries. The active participation of women in leading position within the trade union movement is continuously increasing. At present over 20 per cent of the members of leading bodies of trade unions at various levels are women and steps are being taken to further enhance unions participation and

contribution to the organisation. In GDR the total trade union membership is 51.5% to the total and proportion of offices held by women in total is also 51.1%. These facts must be brought forward for the knowledge of our women workers, so that they will understand better the difference in the two systems of the Government.

Women Defend their Organisation

Comrades,

We should know, how some of our women workers fougnt for their demands how, much repression they had to go while in struggles. Many times, after the formation of CITU unions they were attacked, retrenched. Despite all these they continued to fight under CITU. It was of course a struggle to continue with the suffering under the present economic strains. One such example is of women workers of social welfare Mahila Karmachari Unions. Most of the women have grown old, refugees from Pakistan, wages were low, and working conditions bad. But in the first conference held in Delhi under CITU in April 1984, one of their active workers, while describing poor conditions said "after joining the CITU union, now we are human beings and not afraid of any big bosses. On the contrary the big bosses are avoiding to face us " This confidence came through their struggles, fighting for their demands and full trust that CITU was their real organisation.

Another example of women workers in Tamilnadu from hosiery, India meters etc. can be quoted here. In the conference held at Coimbatore on 27th December, 1984, Shremani from Tannary, Vimla from India meter and others were explaining how proud they were of their union CITU and why. Their loyalty to the union was expressed when they spoke and said "because of this union, we achieved our demands of wages". Women in Saltfield were insulted by management as "rotten women" because they were fighting under CITU flag. They replied proudly to the management "Yes, we will fight under this flag only". Women in Rajpura Textile, Punjab had to go through all types of repression including molestation by goondas, but even after months of starvation they stuck to the CITU union.

Women workers in Coir in Kerala launched struggles many times. Women workers in Bengal and Kerala are always in the forefront. The loyalty to their unions is something to be proud of. The various struggles launched by working women under their own organisations including teachers and nurses, telephone operators and Anganwadi also speak the same story, the tenacity with which they all fought.

The AICCWW and our state committee have to play a big role to bring these women to their unions, enrole them and put the militant and fighting women on the committees.

Participation of Women Workers In Trade Union And the Role of CITU

In the foreward to the report of the 1st Convention of working women held in 1979 at Madras, the President CITU stated the following reasons for convening the special Convention. The CITU had to take the decision because it was found that the grievances of working women were unattended, the Government was indifferent, the employers were hostile, and even the trade unions were not very enthusiastic about their demands. It was also found that women, even in the industries and occupations where they formed a sizeable section were hardly represented in the leading bodies of the unions.

After 7 years we are not in a position to say today that the situation described above has changed considerably. Yes, changes are there to a certain extent. CITU unions have started paying some attention to the problems of working women, conferences have been organised under CITU and other National Federations, Co-ordination Committees and special wings under the unions have been formed in many places, the composition of the executive committees where women constitute the majority is changing a bit, women are being taken on the executive committees. Most significant point is that the leadership of the union is slowly changing their feudal outlook towards these problems. But it is also a fact that the centre, the leadership of the CITU has to remind

repeatedly about this to the states and district committees of CITU. Complaints from the state Co-ordination committees towards the CITU continue to come, and many times intervention had to be made.

Secondly after the initial gains in the beginning after 1979, a stagnation period began during last 3-4 years and the committees formed earier became non-functioning or inactive. In many states the Conferences were held with a large number of working women from various sections, and committees were formed such as in Maharashtra, Kerala, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Delhi etc. In some important states like west Bengal, no information is available whether any committee exists or not even after so many years.

The reports from our state co-ordination Committees are received rarely about their functioning.

But continuous hammering from the centre, the intervention by the leadership time to time in several Conventions and conferences in the states on the issue of working women did help the state commttees of Co-ordination Committees in the states and at the centre. But it was found a hard job no doubt. The feudal tendencies of the CITU leadership in the states and in general, take time to be corrected. They accept the deviations on paper or orally, but very rarely they are found to fight it consciously and help the working women to take up the problems, help and guide them politically. It may be said which is partly true, that our state committees of CITU are also engaged in day to day work of the unions. Despite all these difficulties some states like Tamilnadu or Karntaka did try to take up the programmes decided by the AICCWW in their states, and attempts were made to function the committees.

The following organisational account of the decisions taken by AICCWW and CITU will show as how far the CITU has been able to move in this direction. There are 3 points. One, how far the CITU was able to take up the problems of working women, especially the women workers under our unions and also Federations. Secondly how far we were able to unite them and were successful in bringing them to join our unions and thirdly, which is more important, whether we have taken them on the executive bodies on a larger number wherever they are a considerable majority in the industry.

Tamilnadu state committee took the issue of working women seriously discussing it in their state CITU and holding special conference of women in the unorganised industries, very well attended. Orissa state committee of CITU held 2 conventions and elected a new committee, the first on being defunct. Bihar state CITU held Convention 2 years back elected a committee also which does not function now. But the question of regularisation of midwives and their poor conditions were highlighted and thousands of women demonstrated under the Bihar Medical and Public Health Employees Association, carried the campaign on the employment question. But there is no functioning Co-ordination Commitee. The CITU has decided to hold the 2nd Convention in the month of May '87.

In west Bengal as per the information available there are women's wings is State Government and Central Government Employees Unions. They hold the conventions time to time of working women where the specific questions are being taken up. In Durgapur the SWFA has a women's wing and they observe the calls given by AICCWW. A special emphasis is given on the women contract workers. There is no news whether the functioning of the Co-ordination Committee elected at the first Convention at Asansol in West Bengal is still functioning. The Committee members from Co-ordination Committee attend the AICCWW whenever they are held.

In Maharashtra, a Convention of working women was held in 1979 itself. and a broad based committee was formed. After that no information is available, what steps the state CITU has taken up to function the committee. During May Day centinery week a regional convention of working women was held in Bhandup, a suburb of Bombay and a committee has been formed. In most of other states, committee are not formed. There is practically no work in U.P., Panjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Delhi. In Rajasthan and Delhi, Conventions were held a few years back and committees were formed. Region wise, some work in some pockets of working class is being

done. Delhi Co-ordination Committee does not function according to their report. Some steps are being taken now. In the recent Nurses strike as well as telephone operators, some intervention was there on our behalf, and Delhi JMS and individual members of the committee worked.

In all the campaigns in the states and at the centre, the question of employment as a fundamental right, as well as regularisation of women workers was highlighted, along with some other problems like provision of Creche in Tamilnadu and Karala.

Many State CITU committees in their reports have reported about the activities on Working Women. Despite a large number of women in the different industries under our influence and different problems taken up,we are not yet able to function the Co-ordination Committee in Karnataka, Delhi, Andhra, Maharashtra. Besides the difficulties of women workers due to their double role, the State Committees in their reports said that "feudal attitude of men in many cases are obstocle" "Non-availability of educated women cadres too, to work in trade unions poses a serious problems" this is true to a certain context. "In the Conference of Beedi workers held in Karnataka on 24th November 1986, 28 women were elected on the Council out of 78, and on the State Committee 7 women were elected out of 28 members. In thc Beedi workers State Federation 3 out of 4 are women secretaries". The Committee held a good convention of coffee curing women in 1986 where more than 250 women attended and they spoke. It is to be noted that an All India call for 6-8-1985 given by AICCWW, only this committee held demonstration under CITU at 5 places. This shows the serious attempt made by CITU to promote women on the higher committee. But it is also a fact that in Bel with our leading women cadres and our union, as yet no wing of women has been formed to take up their specific problems which are many. In Bel Engineering there are 4,000 women. A member of our All India Co-ordination and State Co-Co is employed there but we are not yet able to form the women's wing there, nor any meeting of women workers held.

Tamilnadu State Committee has said "on the question of organising working women we have not paid enough attention and this lapse has been taken note of by our state committee. The State level co-ordination committee of working women has not been functioning for the last one year. We have district level committees in 7 and only 2 committees recently formed are active". Despite the self criticism made by the committee, the State level convention of working women as well one Convention in the unorganised industries were held and both were very successful. The Tamilnadu Co-ordination Committee discussed as to why there were lapses and what was to be done. The calls coming from AICCWW were generally observed in Tamilnadu. The Co-Co of Tamilnadu did work about the creche problem in Shastri Bhawan with the active participation of women empleyees 2 years back. They also took up the question of transport facilities of working women. There are active cadres in the districts and they are working in hosiery, handloom, Garment industries. There are good posibilities to work among the unorganised sector in Tamilnadu.

On the question of promotion of working women, the report said "women workers are working as office bearers of some unions." The report did not give full details, as they were not available.

In Orissa the state level Convention was held on 27th April 1986 and a Co-ordination Committee was formed. The committee could not function. Again very recently at the working women's conference held at Barbil on 8-9 December 1986 a new committee was formed. New Young Cadres are coming up in Orissa which was noted in the Conference. The State CITU committee in their report has expressed difficulty about comrades working as parttimer in the co-ordination committee. Very militant and experienced, capable women workers in the manganese and iron ore as well as in other industries are our firm supporters.

In Kerala, the co-ordination committee elected at the 1st convention slowly became defunct. And after repeated attempts from the Kerala Co-committee and from the CITU Centre a new committee was formed in the Convention held on 26th January, 1987. Delegates from all industries under CITU and other employees Federations represented. Even though there was no functioning of co-committee, women workers under CITU like Coir,

Cashew, etc., were holding their conferences, struggles were launched althrough these years, one or another convention of working women under the women's wing of the Federations was held as per the reports, Unions in NGO, Teachers, Road Transport, Electricity, NEPTE and many others had their conferences of women employees. The demand of provision creche and transport was consistantly made. The Voice of the working women was sold among the women employees. What the comrades in the Co-ordination Committee were complainting about was that the CITU was not trying to Co-ordinate the work, not calling the meeting of the Kerala State Co-ordination Committee and the women workers under CITU like Coir, Cashew industries are not being associated with the committee. A powerful union of women workers in Anganwadi (ICDS) has been formed, guided by the Mahila Federation. It should be affiliated to CITU or guided by the CITU leadership as soon as possible.

In West Bengal too, the Federations of State and Central Government employees held their Conferences. In the 6th Conference of AISGEF held in Bombay on 3-4 November 1985, the conference gave special emphasis on the problems and elevation of working women on the higher committees due to initiative of our comrades. In the report of the General Secretary it is said that it is not possible to function the union "without paying special attention to bring progressive and forward looking women". The Co-ordination Committee of Central Government employees held a Convention of Working Women with 384 delegates at Calcutta on 29th January, 1984. The Co-ordination Committee of West Bengal Government Employees in their Journal "Sangrami Hatiar" highlights the problems of working women. In Durgapur, a convention was held on 28th March, 1985 with 300 delegates, took a deputation with a memorandum to the Steel Authorities.

In West Bengal like Kerala, the activities of women employees and women workers in general, continue under their unions and Federations.

In Andhra Pradesh, the State CITU held one convention each in Vijayawada and Vazag years back, committees were formed. Andhra State Co-ordination Committee did not function for a long time while at Vazag some work was going on by taking up some problems of transport, creche and so on. One of our women comrade and an advocate is the president of fisheries union. In Hyderabad too attempts were made to function the committee formed on 19-11-85. The 2nd Convention of working women held at Kothakudam on April 2, 1983 was not successful. The committee formed there is still in the elementary form and not active. A convention at Kurnool held on 21-11-85 was good as per the report.

In Maharashtra the report of the CITU Secretary states : "Actually it has never occurred to us to collect such information in the industries in which, the women workers are in CITU. I mention this as an example of our general attitude to the questions of women workers ..". After giving the figures of women employment in Maharashtra, and describing the working conditions, the report states at the end "In Maharashtra a Mahila Kamgar Karamchari Parishad was set in 1979. It was not only CITU organisation. But due to reasons given in the last conference reports, this organisation did not remain active. Later it was decided to make it a sub-committee of CITU. But the last 3 years even this sub-committee did not function ..". In Maharashtra, there are a large number of women in the industries and offices, some attempts were made in 1979-80 to form the committee of women employees in Government services, Costom and so on with our initiative. Later on it stopped functioning."

Assam CITU report said "practically nothing so far could be done" on this issue. Punjab held a Convention of State Government Women Employees on 17th April, 1987 and is going to have their 2nd Convention respectively in July, 1987. In Rajasthan, in some pockets we have formed committees in the unorganised sector like Beedi and in small scale industries. One such committee is formed in Bewar. Here also a question of not paying attention to working women by CITU had come up.

In Tripura, the Centre was informed that a convention of working women would be held soon. But nothing has yet come out. The CITU and other Federations can hold the convention easily. A meeting of working women was held at a short notice of one day and was very successful in 1985.

The first convention of Delhi Co-ordination committee was held in February, 1981 at Faridabad, attended by 108 delegates from more than 11 factories and was well attended. During last 2 years, nothing much has been done except some individual work by comrades. Meeting of the Co-ordination committee has not been held since long. After the Delhi state CITU conference in April 1986, the committee met only once.

Recently the comrades in the committee tried to intervene in the Nurses struggles in hospitals in Delhi for their demands. Some contracts were made with the lady telephone operators too. We were able to speak in the meetings called by their union. Beyond this, as yet regular work of the Delhi Co-ordination committee has not yet started.

Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, U.P., Gujarat, Bihar, Assam we have yet to start work of organising women workers by forming Co-ordination Committees.

Membership of Women Workers in Trade Unions

It is already mentioned earlier that the percentage of membership of women workers is only 6.4 in 1974. The Labour Ministry has yet to provide the trade union membership as per the claims of Central Trade Unions. Some data has to be collected to know what is the position on the membership of women. We could gather some information on this subject from the returns of the Unions for the year 1985 and 1986 received by our Central Office, which show the following picture.

TABLE No. 9

Statement showing the position of membership according to annual returns as on 15-4-1987 for years 1985 and 1986

(Figures in bracket indicates female members)

State	*Position of Membership According to Annual Returns*	
	1985	*1986*
Andaman & Nicobar	521	—
Andhra Pradesh	61,501 (5,124)	5,012 (432)
Assam	26,558 (5,684)	2,959 (14)
Bihar	62,801 (2,859)	—
Delhi	27,575 —	600 (70)
Goa	3,450 (129)	—
Gujarat	15,301 (662)	—
Haryana	6,992 (10)	—
Himachal Pracesh	1,625 (55)	5,438 (1,288)
Karnataka	54,777 (15,410)	2,925 (751)
Kerala	2,92,876 (79,339)	—
Madhya Pradesh	14,453 (476)	10,215 (182)
Maharashtra	30,191 (1,584)	3,705 (240)
Orissa	31,669 (5,266)	21,537 (1,002)
Punjab	27,804 (1,645)	6,486 (1,168)
Rajasthan	14,587 (103)	7,042 (2)
Tamilnadu	1,07,068 (6,079)	20,687 (962)
Tripura	17,506 (4,795)	11,525 (405)
Uttar Pradesh	9,313 (115)	170
West Bengal	7,45,558 (40,561)	29 (5)
TOTAL	15,50,839 (1,70,700)	98,330 (6,539)

From the above it will be seen, the three states, namely West Bengal, Kerala and Karnataka have got the large membership of women workers to total membership in 1985. West Bengal has 40,561 out of the total 7,45,538, Kerala has 79,339 out of 2,92,876, Karnataka has 15,410 out of the total 54,777. Tamilnadu has 6,079 out of 1,07,068. Altogether the data so far received from the states, the total membership of women workers is 1,70,777 out of the total membership of 15,50,839, *i.e.*, it is above 10 per cent of the total. The strength of women workers in Industries like Coir, Beedi, Transport, Garment, Cashew construction, plantation is considerable in these 3 states and with the influence of CITU the membership is bound to be more. The total strength of all the central trade unions and the percentage of women workers, is yet not available.

Now with regard to the women members on the executive committee a sample examination of some annual returns has been made on annual returns received in the office.

TABLE No. 10

Statement—Kerala

	Name of the Union	*Membership 1985*		*Office Bearers*		*Remarks*
		Male	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	
1.	KSEB Worker Association Taminadu	7,171	932	16	2	
2.	Kottarakara Taluk Cashew Workers Union	499	6,884	5	1	
3.	Kollam Jaluk Kasu Andi Workers Union	1,135	10,695	7	1	
4.	Alapuzha Tilla Private Hospital Emp. Union	35	102	5	1	
5.	Kannath Textile Workers Union Trichur	10	70	4	—	
6.	Quilandy Taluk Chakiri Vyavasaya Thozilali Union	80	4,074	4	1	
7.	Kozhikode Taluk Coir Vyavasaya Thozilali Union	125	1,263	No woman office bearer		
8.	Garment Workers Union	—	91	3	2	

TABLE No. 11

Statement—West Bengal

	Name of the Union	*Membership 1985*		*Office Bearers*		*Remarks*
1.	Mushridabad Jilla Biri Mazdoor & Packers Union	6,075	5,965	32	3	None as office bearers
2.	Kalichack Thana Biri Workers Union	3,000	1,950	9	—	
3.	Cha Bagan Mazdoor Union	25,247	17,680	46	5	
4.	Hili Biri Mazdoor Union	400	350	15	—	
5.	Dal Mill Workers Union	183	57	12	—	
6.	Bankura Jila Biri Karigar Union	2,304	701	20	—	

In Kollam Taluk Kasuandi Union in Kerala the number of women members are 10,695 while men are only 1,135. But among the office bearers,, men occupy 7 seats while only 1 by a women workers. The Chart No. 2 shows the same position in West Bengal. The Colliery Mazdoor Sabha has no woman Member in the committee.

This is the position at present. If we take review of the last 6 yaars of our work on the question of unionisation of women workers in our trade unions as well as their promotion on the higher bodies, it appears, we have gained to a certain extent despite our committees not functioning well. Some more clarification is necessary to clinch this point.

The Table No. 1 shows the position is not very satisfactory. In one of the Coir Workers Union at Kozicode, the female members number 1,263 and male only 125, and no woman office bearer is on the Unions Committee. Another union Quilandy Taluk Women members are 1,074 but out of 4 office bearers, there is only 1 woman.

Our progress on this direction is not as it should be considering the long period of more than 7 years after our decision. Most of the committees have criticised in their reports that they were not able to do much in the respect, feudal attitude persists and so on. It should also be admitted that without constant hammerings from the Central and guidance from the leadership of the CITU, even these results would not have been there.

In the 5th Conference at Kanpur, in 1983 the President and the General Secretary both, criticised sharply the attitude of the CITU leadership. Com. BTR said these deviations (feudal) reflected a feudal outlook in the movement which sought to divorce the struggle of women workers from the main stream of class struggle. If conscious efferts are not made in this direction, reactionary forces will snatch the opportunity to pit women against men, in order to divide and break the unity of the class and movement. He further said "the slogan, workers of the world unite, was not meant to be a slogan only for men workers leaving behind the other half of the working class and perpetuating feudal tradition. CITU is against this and must struggle against this. CITU nnions must realise that the trade union movement is not a preserve of men alone—and to divorce working class women's struggles from class struggle is a deviation—a feudal outlook." He clarified that the retrenchment of women workers cannot be taken up by women's organisations alone. These are trade unions issues and it is essential to encourage the involvement of women workers in the trade union movement and ensure their promotion to responsible position..." He advised women comrades in co-ordination committees to inspire the women to work through their union. Com. P. Ramamurthi the General Secretary of CITU also spoke on this issue.

In November 1982 while addressing the Railway Mail, Motor service class III Emplyees Union, Com. BTR said there were a large number of women in P & T. But there was no demand or response to the demands of women here. Ours is not a Men's organisation but common organisation. He asked the leaders present to appoint special women's Committee to work among women. He said "the dual role ef a husband in the house and trade unionist in the unions office must end".

The guidance from the leadership was so clear and outspoken that the work among women should have been speedier and positive.

The delegates for the Conferences held in plantation, Coir cashew industries where women Constitute a majority are attended in a large number by men, women are just a few or even one where they are predominantly in the industry. Here again the criticism was made by CITU as to why the CITU state leaders do not give proper representation to women. In some conferences some women delegates spoke frankly about not sending the delegation of women under the plea "they have to look after the home and children." In every conference, the AICCWW and the CITU took these issues and pointed out the feudal out look of the leadership.

As mentioned in the beginning, the Labour Ministry is publishing surveys on different industries where women constitute a majority. The pressure from the trade unions especially of CITU and women's organisations and the discussion on women's question in Niarobi Conference held in 1985 demanding equality, equal remuneration and so on is forcing the Government to say something. The organisations like ILO and WFTU are also intervening time to time in the confernces held in Geneva where our country is represented and sometime by the representatives from the trade unions. They raise the question of equal remuneration and the application of convention of ILO. The present economic crisis, invitation to multinationals and foreign capital, a vast sections of workers are thrown out, industries are being closed, and now computers are being introduced, women are first to be victimised. These lakhs of men and women now in the labour market, Central Govt. has no other programme for them but self employment and part-time jobs. Therefore, some face saving formulas are being brought. In many

articles in Indian Labour Journal the question and problems on working women are highlighted. In almost all these survey it is said "women worker's speccial needs have to be taken care of by the trade union." The article published in ILJ July 1984 states "Today working women are increasinly questioning the whole of trade union world that has been organised independently of them. How is the trade union world to be recast in such a way that working women can find a new and rightful place in it for themselves, this is a challenge posed to the genius of the Union leadership of coming years." The way it is put here, it appears that trade union leaders are putting these views.

But from this, one dangerous conclusion has been put forward was of "separte trade unians for women workers". Labout Ministry circulated a report on the subject. (Social Economic conditions of women worker in manufacture of chemicals and chemical products). In this report is was said "It is felt that unless and until women workers actively participate in trade unions it may not be possible for them to fight for and protect their interests. They must be made to realise the usefulness of trade unionism. They must also be oncouraged to form trade unions exclusively for themselves, which, inter-alia can resolve their special problems very effectively." CITU replied, that to accept this position means "to take tne women workers out of the mainstrean of the movement and it may divide the workers..."

CITU explained, that the problems of women workers are neglected and they are not promoted to take up the offices in various unions. For this purpose only, the CITU has started the AICCWW and state committees to cater their grievances.

This is what the CITU leadership has warned, would happen. Already the question of reservation for women is raised by some trade unions and women's organisations. We have made our position clear in the last convention in 1979 that "Job reservation, in practice is a demand for distribution of unemployment and not for solving unemployment, the demand for the reservation for women will only help to sidetrack the main issue of unemloyment and the struggle against unemployment..."

The suggestion for separate cell, or unions for women is quite disruptive for the trade union movement and we have to fight against this separatist tendencies.

TABLE 5·1

Number of Registered Trade Unions (Workers and Employers and Membership of such Unions submitting returns during the years 1947-48, 1951-52, 1956-57 & 1961-62 to 1977

Year	*Number of Registered Trade Unions*	*Number of Unions submitting returns*	*% of Unions submitting returns to Regd. Trade Unions*	*Membership of the Unions submitting returns (in 000's)*			*% of women total membership*
				Men	*Women*	*Totai*	
1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*
1947-48	2,766	1,629	58·6	1,561	102	1,663	6·2
1951·52	4,623	2,556	55·3	1,847	136	1,996	6·8
1956-57	8.554	4,399	51·4	2,097	208	2,377	11·8
1961-62	11,614	7,087	61·3	3,607	370	3,977	9·3
1962-63	11,827	7,251	61·3	3,335	347	3,682	9·4
1963-64	11,984	7,250	60·5	3,628	349	3,977	8·8
1964-65	13,023	7,543	67·1	4,113	353	4,466	7·9
1965	13,248	6,932	52·3	3,565	223	3,788	5·9

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Apr.—Dec.)							
1966	14,686	7,244	49·3	4,078	314	4,392	7·1
1967	15,314	7,523	49·1	4,197	329	4,525	7·3
1968	16,716	8,851	52·9	4,700	421	5,121	8·2
1969	18,837	8,423	44·7	4,545	355	4,900	7·2
1970	20,879	5,357	40·9	4,699	421	5,120	8·2
1971	22,484	9,029	40·2	5,083	387	5,470	7·2
1972+	23,628	9,074	38·4	4,889	451	5,340	8·4
1973	26,788	9,853	36·8	6,103	477	6,580	7·2
1974	28,648	9,800	34·2	5,715	375	6,190	7·7
1975 (P)	29,438	10,324	35·1	6,063	488	6,550	7·5
1976 (P)	29,757	9,102	42·6	5,751	400	6,152	6·5
1977 (P)	29,996	8,286	55·8	5,092	379	5,471	6·9

Note : 1. Figures for 1947-48 relate to part 'A' states and part 'C' State of Ajmer and Delhi territory and thereafter to entire Indian Union except Jammu & Kashmir. They also execlude Manipur for 1961-62 Chandigarh for 1966 to 1970, Jammu & Kashmir and West Bengal for 1975, Jammu & Kashmir, Kerala, Nagaland, Rajasthan, and West Bengal for 1976 and Assam, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir Kerala Madhay Pradesh, Rajasthan and West Bangal for 1977.

Activities at the Centre-AICCWW

After the first Convention held in 1979 at Madras the AICCWW held two more All India Conventions and one extended meeting of working women in Delhi. The 2nd Convention was held on 22nd November 1981 attended by 300 delegates from 16 states. 25 delegates from different industries participated in the disscussion explaining their working conditions. Besides the report submitted by the Secretary, Vimal Ranadive; Susheela Gopalan and Ahilya Rangnekar were the main speakers. Women delegates from Hindi speaking states attended on a large number. The credential committee report showed that out of 299 delegates who filled the forms, 29 were office bearers of the unions as president, General Secretary or treasurer, 26 were executive members and others ordinary members of the union. Out of 300, more than 133 women participated in the struggles and 44 courted arrest, for shorter or longer period. The women workers from the mines, rice-mills, plantations Coir, as well as teachers and nurses also spoke very well. The speeches of all the delegates were enthusiastically received.

The 3rd Convention was held on 17th April, 1984 in Delhi with 184 delegates from 17 states. The significent part of the Convention was it represented near total-all India representation, although slightly lower number of delegates than last time. 29 women came from violence torn Punjab where some of them faced threats of murders.

Nirupama Chatterjee, Minister for Relief, West Bengal was the Chief guest who delivered her speech by giving facts of how much employment for women was given during last 2 years in the ICDS scheme. Before closing the session the President CITU addressed the delegates for a short while. The credential forms showed, that at many places even the toilet facilities were not available. What to speak of creche and restrooms for women workers. The Conuention, unfortunately had not much time to discuss their problems in detail. Many women

workers in Ranchi who came in a good number from small scale industries could not get time to speak. The participation of women in the rally on the next day at Boat Club was notable.

All India Calls Given By AICCWW

There were three all India calls given by the AICCWW. The first one was from the 1st Convention itself from Madras to popularise the charter of Demands passed in the Convention. This day was observed on 28th April 1980 in almost all the states, very enthusiastically by handbills and posters, by taking deputations to the concerned athorities. This day was observed in offices of women employees by holding gate and lunch meetings. For the first time the All India Co-ordination Committee of working women came to be known in various states, as a champion of the working women's cause.

The meeting of AICCWW held on 2-6-1985 at Trivandrum gave a call to observe the 6th of August 1985 for the demands for Protective ligislations, for implementation of the legislations concerning women, provision of creche etc. This meeting also gave a call to hold Convention of women in the unorganised sector where ever possible. By this time the process of retrenchment of women from organised to unorganised sector started repidly. This call however was not observed at all places in tne states. The delegates on behalf of AICCWW went to meet the Union Labour Minister to place the Charter of Demands. The Charter included one of the main demands, *i.e.*, to stop retrenchment due to various reasons including mechanisation. It also demanded implementation of Equal Remuneration Act strictly. It insisted that the representatives of AICCWW and women's organisations should be associated with the enforcement machinery, they should be taken in the Advisory Committees so that the implementation of the various Acts will be easy. One of the women employees of LIC also raised the question as to why there was no provision of creche in LIC, which was an urgent necessity for women. The reply by the Government was received by AICCWW after two months of the submission of the intervention of our MPs in the consultative Committee. There was no definite answer on any question raised from the Government.

The last meeting of AICCWW was held on 2-4-86 at Calcutta. The CITU took up the programme for May Day Centenery. Along with them the programme was taken to popularise demands of working women, participation of women in Trade Unions and the Convention of women in the unorganised industries wherever possible. This call was not observed unfortunately as it should have been, as mentioned earlier. Tamilnadu State Committee held such Convention later.

There were same more meetings of AICCWW held at Hyderabad, Delhi, Jaipur, and Calcutta. Delhi meeting was turned into an extended meeting and a report on the varioue struggles launched was placed before the extended meeting.

Many comrades from the AICCWW felt that more meetings of the committees and detail discussions should take place. Though it is quite correct, it was not possible on our part to hold such meetings as yet. Besides, the state committees of the Co-Co were also not functioning properly.

Statements Issued on Various Problems

The AICCWW issued statements, passed resolutions on various problems concerning their struggles time to time. The statement on Air Hostesses was issued. The serious issue of mechanisation in Tobaccow industry where thousands of women thrown out due to introduction of Green threshing Plant was taken up along with other women's organisations aud Trade Unions. A deputation to the late Prime Minister went to see her. But inspite of our efforts, the machines installed in Chirala, Guntur and other places, threw women workers out. Tqe issue of expulsion of Mrs. Illa Bhatt (Sewa) from their parent body TLA on the issue of Reservation was jointly taken up and a meeting was held.

Notes to International Organisations

The leading role of AICCWW has since been recognised because of taking up various problems of working women, and their participation in trade unions. The AICCWW wrote a note on the question of Equal Remuneration Act, Maternity Benefit Act and their implementation. The notes forwarded to ILO are discussed and remarks sent back by the Government. This exposes the tall claims made by the Government that all legislations were implemented. Important memorandums are sent to WFTU, WIDF etc. on the problems of working women.

Voice of the Working Women

This is the only bi-monthly trade union journal in our country dedicated to the needs of working women. Besides giving coverage to various women's Conventions held in different states, to the grievances of working women, the inadequacy of the legislations concerning them and their struggles it also covers the conditions of women workers in Industries, articles, appeared in the Labour Journal on various questions for discussion. Special articles, reviews, write ups on the subject of women workers in Coir, Planatation, Construction, Cashew, Beedi, fisheries and many other industries were highligted. The speeches of our women MP's on the question of discrimination, unemployment, working women's Welfare Bill, and other speeches on women's questions are highlighted. International news coverage, include the working conditions of women under capitalism and socialism in different countries, on Apartheid and their conditions in South Africa, Latin America, Pakistan etc. The question of peace and war gets priority in every issue, which is very urgent in today's situation.

Despite many weaknesses, such as the question of women in trade unions and raising the T.U. consciousness, their promotion etc. has not been covered as it should have been, the voice of the working women draws much attention from different corners in our country and outside. It is a fact that the International trade union movement pays much more attention to the problems of working women. Therefore there is a constant demand for the bulletin from outside, and from different agencies in our country.

Other weaknesses in running the Bulletin also were explained in the last working committee meeting CITU held on 6-7 February 1987, and also earlier. The sale at present is only 1,200, secondly, it is in English, and it has to be, since it caters to the need of the working women all over India. The price has still been kept at only Rs. 1 depite severe loss. Since the state Co-ordination Committees are not active and unless they try to increase the sale among the women employees, and state CITU committees take up the question, it is difficult to continue with the present sale of the bulletin. Our women cadres too do not utilise the material as they should. Reactions from our readers were asked on two articles published in the bulletin particularly on the question of separate unions for women workers, the question initiated by the Labour Ministry. There was no reply from any state. A few Comrades, anyhow, have expressed their opinion on some issue of V.W.W. Very few reports are received of the struggles from states, especially from West Bengal and Kerala. Women employes in Kerala are interested and they send subscriptions directly. Vaizag Committee discussed how to increase the sale once. Tamil Nadu Committee CITU gave some financial help to run the "Tamil working woman". Till lately it was taken over by the AIDWA Committee. Some special sale of the Bulletin is always there whenever any particular news about their states appear. Our unions in the middle class employees do not help the state Co-Gommittee, nor the state co-ordination committee try to push the sale consciously.

The women in Hindi speaking areas are asking for publishing the Hindi bulletin which is very assential politically, to increase our work in these areas. The organising machinery is required to run the magazine. Unless that guarantee comes from the states, it will not be possible to start the bulletin in Hindi. At present the news from AIDWA also is gived in the bulletin since our Co-Committees are working in close Co-operation with each other in the states.

Another point to be noted here, is the Soviet women's Committee, WIDF, and other International

Women's Organisations send reports, news which is very important. The March 8th greetings are sent to the AICCWW from TUI, WFTU, WIDF, GDR, Soviet Women's Committees, Chinese Women's Federation and many others. This shows, the political significance of the bulletin, the Voice of Working Woman and the need for our working women to understand the issues, if at all they would like to utilise it as an instrument for highlighting the issues of working women in our country with whatever weaknesses in running the bulletin. The great utility of the bulletin was told in a message of greetings from the President published in the 1st issue in July 1980, it said. "It should help to focus attention on the problems of working women, struggles for better wages etc. are common problems for working class. But there are certain disabilities from which the working women suffer under the present social dispension in India. Forced to enter the labour market to support hereself and her family, and inspite of acquisition of required skill, merit and competence, she is treated as an intruder and accepted on sufference. The Trade union movement has generally failed to take notice of this discrimination and wage a common struggle on behalf of the women workers. This weakness can be cured only by women workers taking initiative on their pressing problems."

The role of state level Co-ordination Committees of Working Women

The experience is, the state committees of CITU do not even sit and discuss what is to be done to function the committees. They do not react to the problems of working women arising in their cites time to time, to contact the women in struggle who are not under our influence or to find out ways and means how to approach them. Large sections of women workers and employees are under the reformist leadership. As yet we on our own are not able to bring various sections of women workers for united actions and it will not be possible unless all other Trade Unions agree on this issue.

While criticising the attitude of CITU, Co-ordinatipn Committees in the states too must sit and discuss as to how we can mobilise the women workers under our influeuce.

Recently,, a number of strikes, demonstration, meetings of working women in offices, colleges, nurses, doctors, air hostesses and so many sections ore coming out in struggles almost in all cities for various demands of their own. They come under their own. Tney come under their own Federation or Union. Sometimes we do intevene whereever opportunity occures. Never before such a large sections of women employees joined in their own struggles for their common and specific demands. We have to express solidarity and be in touch with them. After the CITU taking up the issue of women's wings in industries etc. Kerala. West Bengal. and even in Bombay, the federations have formed their wings in the offices and establishments. At many places our co-ordination committees have contact with such wings which helps them and us if proper guidance is given. Because of the formation of these wings the demands of creche, toilet facilities, rest rooms, transport facilities etc. are raised in their meetings and conferences. But such women's wings have not yet started in the LIC, Reserve Bank as per our information. With the support of women employees in the Union, to get the demand of creche is not very difficult though there is no statutory provision.

During last 4-5 years, the calls given by AICCWW after the discussion in the Committee were not responded as the first one on "Demands Day" observed in 1979-80. The call given at Trivandrum meeting was observed at few places in the States, nor the important call given at Calcutta on 2-4-1986 for May Day Centenary observation. Very few reports have been received on this call.

Therefore, while criticising the role of CITU for not paying attention to the cause of working women due to their feudal attitude, the co-ordination committees too should take this work seriously and try to solve the problem of functioning of the Committees, cadres to work etc. discussing with CITU committees, so that the work among women workers and employees will not suffer.

CENTRAL FUNCTIONING OF AICCWW

Perhaps, it is due to our inability to function and guide the State Co-ordination Committees time to time,

the work in states has hampered, Comrades expressed to have detail discussions in the committee meetings on the issues and on the lack of functioning. This has not been done as yet to our satisfactions. One thing we must note that it is convenient to call the meetings of AICCWW accompanied with CITU's working committees or general councils or along with the programmes of All India level. Then it becomes easier for our women to come and attend. This we try to do. Sometimes time is short. Issues on which clarification was needed were discussed and clarified with the guidance of President CITU. How to approach women workers, which sections to give importance through which organisation etc. were discussed a number of times. There need not be therefore any more confusion on this issue. "Women have three aspects, one as women, as worker and as citizen. We are fighting against the feudal tendencies in our unions, where leadershop does not have interest in working women's membership or leadership. We want both. She is attracted to AIDWA as woman, the consciousness is not yet of a worker. Our goal is to make them reach class consciousness also. CCWW is only a devise, we want sub-committees of women and CCWW is a means to get them. One part of the struggle is shah banu, the other is working class problem. The CITU leaders are not giving the direction they should. There is an upsurge among middle class women and we should go to them in whatever form are acceptable to them, whether as individual, AIDWA or CCWW. CCWW should be as wide as possible with unorganised women whereever women work. The main goal is that the working women should fight for their rights in their associations. The task is to rouse their class consciousness, and make her work in her own Union".

After all working women should be active in their unions, and how to do, which way she would be attracted, what issues, should our CCWW to tackle, so that they will be in the fore front of their class struggles against the capitalist system which keep them discriminated, and deprived, the CCWW should decide in consultation with State CITU.

WFTU AND WORKING WOMEN

It was the WFTU which organised the first world working women's conference in Nicosia in 1979. It pointed out the weaknesses in Trade Union movement with regard to the problems of working women and appealed them to promote them in the Trade Unions. WFTU formed a commission on working women. It said in the resolution that "while women's rights have been formally recognised as a result of struggle by trade unions and progressive forces, a major problem is still non-application of these rights by many Governments and employers in capitalists and developing countries. It said further that actions and active struggles of trade unions are needed against such practices as well as efforts to protect rights and demands of working women.

In the latest issue of "World Working Class Movement" (WFTU) while greeting world working women on March 8th the journal pointed out again that "women workers in several countries are not satisfied with the attention given by trade unions to their specific problems and in promoting women to leading positions in the trade union movement. The shortcomings in this respect were also pointed out and critised at the 11th world trade union Congress. The full involvement to strengthen trade union democracy and to strengthen trade union organisation is necessary." This is how the WFTU gave importance to the strengthening of trade unions by participation of women workers.

The AICCWW participated in Peace, Development and Progress" Seminar held in Moscow in 1981 and also 1986.

Fight for Peace

The CITU has asked the State Committees to take up the issue of peace with all seriousness. AICCWW has to do a lot in the campaign of peace and fight against the war policies of Reagan Adminstration. All over the world women are in the forefront of the peace capaign. Our women too have to take lead in this and raise our Voice. The World Congress of women being held in Moscow in June 1987 is a world political event. We have to review our own work in the subject. This is the issue on which all women belonging to any political trend can come together and demand there should be no war, we want peace.

Take up the Stru ggles of Working Women

Increase the Women's Participation in Trade Union

Comrades,

The Nairobi conference held in 1985, has brought our different aspects of inequality towards women in the capitalist world. The question of their employment, equal remuneration, equal status etc. were discussed. These issues have reflected the outlook of the Governments showing the basic difference of the two social systems, capitalism and socialism. Many times, the capitalist Governments were put on the defensive because the ILO Conventions were not ratified by capitalist countries with regard to women, Maternity benefit is not available as a right in USA, equal remuneration Act was passed in Britain in 1984, but unequal wages are persisting, Japan is having night shifts for women. ILO's report informs that the trend of part-timers is more among women, despite their great contribution in employment. The sexual explotiation is utilised on a large scale by employers as a class weapon.

Women in capitalist countries too are fighting against this deviation. In India, the situation is not different from other capitalist countries with regard to workihg women. The report submitted here has tried to point out their bad working conditions, the non-application of the legislations, their struggles and the role they are playing in todays economic and political situation. It has tried to point out their poor partieipation in the trade union activities, the age old feudal deviations in the trade union movement including CITU. This hampers the growth of the total movement of the working class. As the president, CITU has repeatly told us "we should continue to knock at the door", and we are trying to knock it repeatedly. If there are complaints he had asked us to send them to CITU Centre. This struggles inside CITU should continue, if the women are to be brought in the main stream of the struggle. Working women themselves must come forward to take up these issue in the unions.

With the serious attacks on the working women, the responsibility of State Committee of CITU and Co-ordination Committees, have increased many fold. The important point to be noted is increasing struggles of working women, middle class and women workers. The economic crisis, the reactionery policies persued by the Govcrnment towards working women compel all of them to launch struggles. The State Committees must pay attention to the special problems and disabilities of the Working Women, encourage them in the struggle, organise them and bring them in the forefront of the union. Without this the task of changing the present exploitative social order shall continue to be unreal and total emancipation of women will remain a far cry.

——

TABLE No. 1

Employment of Women in Organised Sector During the Years 1981-85

(In thousand)

Year	*Public Sector*	*Private Sector*	*Total*	*Percentage change over the previous year*		
				Public Sector	*Private Sector*	*Total*
1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*
1981-81	1498.6	1,294.2	2,792.8	+3.5	+3.2	+3.4
1981-82	1579.5	1,320.0	2,899.5	+5.4	+2.0	+3 8
1982-83	1690.7	1,305.4	2,996.1	+7.0	−1.1	+3.3
1983-84	1774.0	1 283.4	3,057.7	+4.9	−1.1	+2.1
1984-85**	1863.6	1,298.5	3,162.1	+5.0	+1 2	+3.4

* Consisting of :

(*a*) all establishments in the public sector ; and

(*b*) non-agricultural establishments in the private sector employing ten or more persons.

** Provisional.

TABLE No. 2

Maternity Benefits Paid in Factories, Planations Mines and during the years 1976-77 and 1978-79

(By States/Union Territories)

State/Union Territories	*Year*	*Number of Establishments covered under the Maternity benefit Act*	*Number of Establishments sub-mitting returns*	*Average daily Number of women employed in establishments submitting returns*	*Number of women who claimed maternity benefit during the years*	*Number of claims accepted and paid either fully or partially*		*Number of cases in which special bonus were paid*	*Total amount of maternity benefit paid (in Rs.)*
						Total	*From current year claim*		
1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9*	*10*
Factories									
Andhra	1976	4,806	3,629	84,553	86	84	48	15	31,538
Pradesh	1977	6,251	4,560	1,10,577	84	82	25	17	35,949
	1978	5,587	3,613	72,815	136	136	130	12	41,126
	1979	5,489	3,660	1,42,187	110	110	110	—	45,146
Assam	1976	22	22	N.A.	—	—	—	—	—
	1977	32	32	N.A.	14	9	9	—	2,558
	1978	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	1979	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bihar	1976	455	455	9,482	222	206	206	—	1,72,305
	1977	473	473	9,539	195	195	195	—	1,90,480
	1978	467	467	9,452	165	165	165	—	1,93,548
	1979	429	429	8,523	137	137	137	—	2,01,714
Gujarat	1976	2,232	1,614	26,179	212	447	160	157	73,536
	1977	2,384	1,475	25,191	201	338	150	121	68,296
	1978	2,558	1,771	23,878	152	266	145	18	1,01,106
	1972	2,641	1,047	22,671	185	242	165	38	91,308
Haryana	1976	404	171	510	—	—	—	—	—
	1977	496	143	331	2	2	2	—	3,175
	1978	516	137	375	2	2	2	—	1,805
	1979	547	158	214	—	—	—	—	—
Himachal	1976	17	14	69	—	—	—	—	—
Pradesh	1977	17	4	34	1	1	1	—	1,847
	1978	17	10	118	—	—	—	—	—
	1979	18	15	658	5	5	5	4	3,177
Jammu &	1976	11	11	403	10	10	10	—	11,127
Kashmir	1977	10	10	449	21	20	20	—	2,000

Contd.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	1978	14	14	1,069	41	41	41	32	32,990
	1979	9	9	1,024	28	28	28	—	36,425
Karnataka	1976	1,433	616	15,437	421	273	20	176	92,780
	1977	1,863	786	12,851	220	213	143	91	1,01,411
	1978	2,008	652	15,501	261	261	261	76	1,22,434
	1979	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kerala	1976	1,124	700	73,523	782	782	782	—	2.00,318
	1977	576	552	76,365	1,941	1,941	1,941	34	1,55,395
	1978	788	548	39,455	959	945	942	3	55,722
	1979	1,020	323	9,385	375	366	295	3	90,525
Madhya	1976	2,852	104	1,528	25	25	25	—	27,608
Pradesh	1977	2,967	104	1,306	26	26	26	—	24,803
	1978	3,060	104	1,549	27	24	24	—	31,492
	1979	3,207	142	663	14	14	14	—	26,468
Maharashtra	1976	5,069	1,345	18,606	341	209	209	49	237,300
	1977	3,102	1,094	19,501	204	146	146	7	152,395
	1978	3,118	1,743	28,665	906	228	228	7	328,252
	1979	3,269	2,064	27,173	507	241	241	17	402,413
Meghalaya	1976	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	1977	52	9	4	—	—	—	—	—
	1978	53	11	15	—	—	—	—	—
	1979	53	17	28	2	2	2	—	3,997
Nagaland	1976	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	1977	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	1978	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	1979	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Orissa	1976	355	83	1,035	62	62	62	—	52,265
	1977	356	81	2,221	41	41	41	—	33,511
	1978	356	63	3,086	49	49	94	—	39,264
	1979	356	59	2,535	36	36	36	—	36,379
Punjab	1976	326	197	1,150	1	1	1	—	1,670
	1977	678	268	680	—	—	—	—	—
	1978	811	299	457	5	5	—	—	6,892
	1979	1,031	296	451	—	—	—	—	—
Rajasthan	1976	110	44	36	1	1	1	—	918
	1977	187	57	566	1	1	1	—	N.A.
	1978	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	1979	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Contd.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Tamil Nadu	1979	2,775	2,430	75,047	528	301	161	45	2,89,485
	1977	2,904	2,806	61,375	8,227	262	233	124	84,832
	1978	3,103	2,796	87,914	200	199	192	45	177,341
	1979	2,973	2,658	217,240	136	134	94	92	100,173
Tripura	1976	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	1977	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	1978	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	1979	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Uttar Pradesh	1976	417	427	3,559	45	43	39	131	82,194
	1978	428	428	3,991	43	38	38	96	95,628
	1978	441	441	4,385	40	39	39	13	121,736
	1979	431	429	3,950	34	34	34	129	105,502
West Bengal	1976	357	311	7,017	40	41	40	7	22,735
	1977	391	329	6,463	41	45	41	9	38,974
	1978	375	292	6,334	63	63	63	15	38,017
	1979	393	295	6,165	72	70	70	—	54,279
Andaman and Nicobar Island	1976	1	1	241	—	—	—	—	—
	1977	1	1	120	—	—	—	—	—
	1978	1	1	241	—	—	—	—	—
	1979	1	1	301	—	—	—	—	—
Chandigarh	1976	1	1	9	—	—	—	—	—
	1977	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	1978	1	1	12	—	—	—	—	—
	1979	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Delhi	1976	496	493	3,452	49	44	44	N.A.	39,305
	1977	555	293	3,814	60	60	60	N.A.	48,480
	1978	577	241	2,788	41	41	41	—	27,085
	1979	588	203	2,655	61	61	61	—	64,748
Goa, Daman and Diu	1976	61	47	1,010	11	11	11	5	7,748
	1977	24	16	16	—	—	—	—	—
	1978	1	1	1	—	—	—	—	—
	1979	2	2	3	—	—	—	—	—
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	1976	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	1977	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	1978	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	1979	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Contd.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Lakshdweep	1976	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	1977	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	1978	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
	1978	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	1979	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Pondicherry	1976	13	8	99	—	—	—	—	—
	1975	14	8	95	—	—	—	—	—
	1978	14	9	92	—	—	—	—	—
	1979	12	9	72	1	1	1	—	1,185
Total	1976	21,337	12,713	322,945	2,836	2,540	1,819	585	1,342,903
	1977	23,361	13,529	335,489	4,322	3,470	3,072	500	1,039,733
	1978	23,866	13,214	298,402	2,747	2,464	2,322	221	1,318,910
	1979	22,469	11,816	445,905	1,703	1,482	1,293	293	1,263,439
Blantations									
Assam	1976	459	450	30,557	9,901	9,472	4,585	321	1.902,295
	1977	650	530	35,164	13,410	11,529	10,114	140	4,305,985
	1978	639	497	76,390	19,697	18,229	18,229	102	5,596,763
	1979	664	463	45,661	12,361	10,025	5,217	382	7,041,107
Bihar	1976	9	9	99	—	—	—	—	—
	1977	6	6	156	—	—	—	—	—
	1978	6	6	100	—	—	—	—	—
	1979	6	6	37	—	—	—	—	—
Himachal	1976	13	13	215	—	—	—	—	—
Pradesh	1977	13	13	289	—	—	—	—	—
	1978	13	13	314	—	—	—	—	—
	1979	13	13	375	—	—	—	—	—
Kerala	1976	484	288	44,232	8,371	7,865	3,708	254	1,998,854
	1977	609	322	53,052	7,848	7,787	7,787	512	3,511,354
	1978	473	361	42,583	15,821	15,821	15,821	447	3,448,583
	1879	332	298	40,532	6,537	6,537	6,537	572	2,680,521
Tripuro	1976	39	28	2,378	313	313	313	—	47,048
	1977	41	32	2,650	454	454	454	—	63,799
	1078	49	32	2,305	352	352	352	—	65,231
	1979	48	22	1,973	350	350	250	—	78,136
West Bengal	2976	236	169	47,743	7,413	7,971	7,248	—	1,983,038
	1977	238	158	47,759	6,294	6,783	6,109	10	1,921,891

Contd.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	1978	237	177	52,387	7,778	7,378	6,897	—	2,816,267
	1979	237	165	51,151	7,664	8,329	7,543	76	3,709,610
Andeman and	1976	3	3	560	9	9	9	—	976
Nicobar	1977	3	2	482	11	9	11	—	5,880
Islands	1978	3	2	605	11	11	11	—	4,440
	1979	3	3	521	8	8	8	—	4,258
Total	1976	1,243	960	125,784	26,007	25,630	15,793	575	5,932,211
	1977	1,560	1,1,063	139,552	28,017	26,663	24,475	662	9,808,909
	1978	1,423	1,088	175,684	42,991	41,310	41,310	549	11,931,284
	1979	1,303	970	140,250	26,920	24,949	19,655	1,030	13,513,432
Mines									
Coal	1976	368	75	1,519	1,133	990	N.A.	94	1,052,771
	1967	361	71	1,277	995	921	N.A.	93	969,561
	1978	349	51	1,098	796	683	N.A.	44	788,782
	1979	348	50	981	589	441	N.A.	84	669,161
Others	1976	1,227	137	21,877	4,693	4,693	4,567	1,390	3,705,696
	1977	1,228	130	31,436	3,421	3,421	3,314	1,053	3,110,534
	1978	1,217	165	20,382	2,297	2,287	2,177	754	2,114,250
	1979	1,097	106	22,589	2,991	2,995	2,947	884	2,379,062

Nill. N.A. Not available

N.B. : Workers working in factories are covered under Employees State Insurance Act, 1848 in Assam.

Source : Annual Reviews on the following of the Maternity Benefits Act (Central and States).

STATISTICAL PROFILE ON WOMEN LABOUR

TABLE No. 3

Number of Complaints received and Prosecutions launched in Factories, Plantations and Mines during the period 1975 to 1979

(By States) (Ministry of Labour Government of India 1983)

States/Union Territories	*Complaints Received*				*Prosecutions Launched*			
	1976	*1977*	*1978*	*1979*	*1976*	*1977*	*1978*	*1979*
Andhra Pradesh	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Assam	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bihar	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Gnjarat	22	5	4	22	—	—	—	—
Haryana	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Himachal Pradesh	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Jammu & Kashmir	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Karnataka	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kerala	38	25	12	10	—	—	—	—
Madhya Pradesh	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Maharashtra	4	—	4	—	—	—	—	—
Meghalaya	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Nagaland	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Orissa	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Rajasthan	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Tamil Nadu	3	—	1	8	3	—	1	5
Tripura	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Uttar Pradesh	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
West Bengal	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—
Andaman & Nicobar Island	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Chandigarh	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Delhi	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Dadra Nagar Haveli	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Goa, Daman & Diu	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Lakshadweep	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Pondicherry	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	67	33	21	40	3	1	1	5
PLANTATIONS								
Assam	54	88	45	—	—	1	—	—
Bihar	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Himachal Pradesh	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kerala	56	26	27	1	1	—	—	—
Tripura	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
West Bengal	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
Andaman & Nicobar Island	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	110	114	72	—	1	2	—	—
MINES								
Coal	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Others	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Nil

Source : Annual Reviews Working of the Maternity Benefit Acts (Central and States)

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