



THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITU

RED SALUTE TO MAY DAY

On May Day Centenary CITU General Council's Stirring Call

● Carry Forward the Revolutionary Traditions of May Day

With a stirring call to observe the May Day Centenary, the CITU adopted the following resolution in its General Council meeting held at Calcutta from March 31-April 2, 1986:

THE General Council meeting of CITU held at Calcutta from March 31-April 2, 1986 calls upon all State Committees and affiliated unions to observe the Centenary of the May Day this year in a befitting manner. The meeting expresses satisfaction that West Bengal and several other State Committees have already chalked out elaborate plans to observe the centenary. As decided by the Secretariat, a minimum seven days programme should be taken during the last week of April, 1986, culminating on the May Day.

The meeting endorses the joint communique of CITU and the AITUC issued on February 15, 1986 to hold joint celebration of the centenary throughout the country, and as also appealed by the World Federation of Trade Unions, the meeting calls upon the State Committees and the affiliated unions to observe the day unitedly with other trade unions also on the basis of the revolutionary traditions of the May Day.

The day must project the tasks of the working class to fight the new economic policy of the Government, in defence of employment, livelihood, democratic rights and national independence. It must pledge to fight against the divisive forces for

● Uphold the Banner of Proletarian Internationalism, Struggle against War and for Peace

national integrity.

The meeting calls upon the State Committees and the affiliated unions to mark one day during the celebration against unemployment and demand right to work to be incorporated in the Constitution and for unemployment benefit.

This day of international solidarity of the working class must recall the great advance the international working class movement has made during the last hundred years with one third of the world going socialist, the old colonial system smashed and the enslaved countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America emerging as free countries.

It must uphold the banner of proletarian internationalism and call upon the working class to project itself as the biggest anti-war force, expose and denounce the war designs of the US imperialists and their NATO allies and launch relentless struggle to safeguard the socialist camp, for peace, to save the world from a nuclear holocaust.

The celebrations must convey the appeal of the AUCCTU and extend unqualified support to the new proposals made by Com. M. S. Gorbachov to eliminate the nuclear and chemical weapons by 2000 AD and enter the third millennium without any weapons of mass annihilations. The celebrations of the May Day Centenary must be directed towards this end.

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

Presidential Address

B.T. Ranadive

Comrades,

At the outset on behalf of all of you I wish to pay homage to the memory of Olof Palme, Prime Minister of Sweden who fell a victim to the assassin's bullets. In his death the world has lost a valiant fighter in the cause of peace, a fighter who made significant contribution to the struggle against war and preservation of peace.

On behalf of all of you I offer my greetings to Nelson Mandela, the courageous fighter against apartheid, fighter for the freedom of the African people. His incarceration in the prison for two decades has not daunted his spirit and from the jail itself he has become a source of inspiration to hundreds of thousands fighting against the racist fascist regime of Botha. His voice has broken through the jail walls and prison bars and rings continuously with the challenge to his oppressors who are now openly and clandestinely supported by the imperialist powers. None is so shameful and outrageous in its support as Reagan's US Government which all of us must denounce with anger and indignation. I also wish to convey our greetings to the courageous wife of Nelson Mandela who carries forward the task of fighting those who enchain her people.

Left-Front Governments — Advanced Outpost of Democracy

Before I turn to other subject let me on your behalf congratulate the Left Front government of West Bengal headed by our Vice President Com. Jyoti Basu on its successful defence of the democratic rights of the people of West Bengal and safeguarding their economic interests in the midst of a very perilous economic situation. For more than 8 years since the installation of the Left Front ministry democratic liberties have been completely protected in the State in contrast to what is taking place in Congress (I) ruled States where lathi charge, firing on striking workers and harijan killings go on uninterrupted. Besides, all Cong (I) ruled States are affected by the virus of communalism and the attack of divisive forces, with the administration standing paralysed before them. But in the left front ruled state of West Bengal the divisive forces are checked by growing unity of the people, and the policies of the left front government protect this unity and strengthen national unity. The two left front ministries of West Bengal and Tripura stand as advanced outposts of democracy protecting the unity of the people, the unity of the country and the vital interests of the workers, peasants, the adivasis, and harijans — all down trodden sections,

throwing their weight against the vested interests, using the administration as an instrument of popular will. In these two states the Governments stand committed to protect the rights of Muslim minority and fight communalism coming from the majority or minority community. The working class and its organisations highly appreciate this policy and lend their full support to the ministries against which the Central Government and Cong (I) ruling party continue to conspire with a view to destabilising them.

Comrades on behalf of all of you I greet our valiant working class of West Bengal, our strongest base. I greet the jute workers who recently waged a successful struggle for their demands and whose union, the Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor Union is the biggest union affiliated to the CITU. The working class of Bengal has successfully waged many heroic battles in recent months, organised protest actions and has been able to defend its interests in the most adverse circumstances. In all its activities it is helped by the Left Front Government which ensures complete freedom for its movement.

The working class of Bengal led the great protest against the price hike imposed by the Central Government. Its strike of 11th February became a signal for the rest of the country to take up the fight against price rise.

Hail The Peace Proposal

An outstanding event of recent months in the international world is the successfully concluded 27th Congress of the Communist Party of Soviet Union. In the midst of a capitalist world badly affected by unemployment and unable to reap the fruits of industrial technical revolution for the benefit of society, the CPSU Congress announced the complete superiority of the socialist system which is now embarking upon a new plan of accelerated economic development to raise the living standard of the people to still a higher level. This was being accomplished when huge resources had to be diverted for the purpose of defence because of the war situation created by US imperialism and its allies. The Congress expressed firm confidence in achieving its economic goals and at the same time strengthening the defensive capacity of the Soviet Union. Firmly adhering to the laws of development of socialist society the Congress mapped out further successes for its planning and took steps to bring the relations of production in conformity with the huge development of productive forces

achieved under the rapid growth of industrial technical revolution. It meant heightening the efficiency of centralised guidance of the economy, strengthening the role of the centre, in implementing the main goals of the party's economic strategy and in determining the rate and proportions of national economic growth, and its balanced development. At the same time it meant the practice of interfering by the centre in the daily activities of the lower economic links must be overcome.

Uphold Revolutionary Traditions of May Day

Comrades, the May Day centenary will be observed within a few weeks all over the world. This great day of international solidarity must be observed fittingly by all our trade unions, all our state committees honouring the memories of those who fell victims to the Chicago massacre, those who were sent to the gallows by an enraged capitalist class because they dared to demand 8 hour day and called for a curb on the unbridled exploitation of the working class. The day must recall the great advances the international working class movement has made during the last hundred years with one third of the world going socialist with the old colonial system smashed and the enslaved countries of Asia and Africa emerging as free countries, free from foreign domination.

On this day our unions must remember the revolutionary traditions of May Day following which one third of the world marched to socialism and neglect of which kept the workers of advanced countries enchained to capitalist slavery.

Revolutionary content of May Day consists of raising such partial demands on the Day as have (1) revolutionary consequences; (2) expressing firm determination to end the capitalist system, establish working class power and socialism; (3) defence of proletarian internationalism and international unity of the working class. Confining May Day activities only to raising some partial demands and neglecting the other two aspects takes away the revolutionary content of this historic day. The working class on this day cannot neglect the immediate political task facing it, if it wants to achieve socialism. It also cannot forget its international duty and foil all efforts of the capitalist class to split it.

On all occasions the danger to international unity arises from the wars organised by ruling capitalist classes. It has been the tradition of May Day to oppose all such wars and proclaim the unity of the international movement in the battle to end the world capitalist system.

International Solidarity Against War

Today protection of international solidarity and unity of the working class, has assumed supreme importance. The international situation is marked by US imperialist drive for nuclear war against

the socialist Soviet Union. The war that is being planned is the war of imperialism against socialism, against the working class conquests and achievements over the last hundred years. It is also a war for re-establishing the global domination of US imperialism over the newly liberated countries. The ideological and the military strength of the Socialist camp stands as a deterrent to the imperialist plans of domination and therefore US imperialism is attempting to secure military superiority over the Soviet Union to launch a war against it. The Star War Project of Reagan is part of the offensive preparations.

In contrast to these war plans of the USA, the Soviet Union and Comrade Gorbachov have made several proposals to stop the progress towards war and gradually eliminate all nuclear weapons. But the US imperialists refuse to respond.

In these circumstances international unity of the working class demands constant opposition to war and full support to Gorbachov's proposals for peace. On May Day it must be our endeavour to carry the message of peace to the workers and expose US plans for war. The defence of the socialist camp against imperialist war plans constitutes the essence of internationalism.

Respond to AUCCTU Appeal

Comrades the situation is serious as can be seen from the appeal of the AUCCTU to the working people and the trade unions of the world. The appeal which was sent to our organisation also calls for support to the proposals made by Comrade M.S. Gorbachov for advancing a programme of complete and world wide elimination of nuclear arms before the year 2000. It says "on behalf of one hundred & thirty seven (137) million Soviet trade union members the AUCCTU appeals to the working people of all countries to all trade union organisations to give their all round support to the Soviet Union's large scale programme for the complete elimination of nuclear arms."

It says "It is only through concerted efforts that the edifice of lasting peace can be erected. Further development depends to a considerable extent on how much united the battle front will be in fighting against the danger of war. Extensive opportunities for working people to take joint action in defence of peace are offered by the campaign "Trade Unions and Working People for Peace and Jobs" launched at the initiative of the World Federation of Trade Unions.

The appeal further adds "we are sure that the trade unions must put aside all differences and reject all that divides them when it comes to the struggle for safeguarding peace, against the threat of a new war. In this we must be united just in matters relating to common vital interests of those whom the trade unions are called upon to protect. The Soviet trade unions adhere exactly to these view points.

“Any delay is intolerable. In order to enter the third millennium without the weapons of mass annihilation it is necessary to act today. May 1986 designated by the UNO as an international year of peace must become a turning point in resolving the most pressing issue of our times—that of preventing a nuclear holocaust.”

Comrades, we all must fully respond to this appeal for international unity from the people and the working class which only four decades back sacrificed 20 million lives to save humanity from fascist domination. The appeal should spur us to overcome our weaknesses in regard to the peace movement and urge us forward to move the working class and the people against the danger of nuclear war created by the US imperialism and for maintenance of peace.

Welcome Initiative

Comrades the initiative recently taken by the INTUC leadership to call a meeting of several trade union centres to develop common understanding on the question of war, fight against divisive forces and express protest against apartheid constitute a sign of growing awareness of wider and vital problems facing the working class and the trade union movement. It is a welcome step and every effort should be made to create common consciousness and a sense of urgency among the workers regarding these problems.

It is very satisfactory that all the unions attending the meeting called by the INTUC have agreed on a common draft on the key questions mentioned above. This should lead to joint appeal and campaigning on the vital question of world peace and enable us to make joint efforts to rouse the entire working class to discharge its international responsibility.

Denounce Divisive Forces

Comrades, you all are aware that there is a rapid deterioration in the political situation with divisive forces on the offensive, the Cong (I) Government a helpless spectator unable to combat them and often compromising with them and the mass of people unable to intervene and stop the rot. The deterioration of the situation in Punjab is marked by a growing offensive of the secessionist elements, Akali leadership's fear of confrontation and their surrender before these forces and the complete inability of the Cong (I) party which still wields considerable influence on the people of Punjab to intervene on behalf of national unity. In Assam the new ministry pursues separatist and secessionist aims and its followers run a campaign of intimidation and murder of opponents. The ministry is also preparing for steps which may lead to expulsion of thousands of Indian citizens from Assam dubbing them as foreign nationals. The Cong(I) Government at the Centre and in the States compromises with these elements and in its own

selfish interests take steps which help and encourage the communal and divisive forces. The unlocking of the Ram Janma Bhoomi temple in the midst of the present critical situation can be described only as an act of unmitigated provocation to the Muslim masses which is now being fully utilised by fanatical communal leaders. Simultaneously the Cong(I) government to protect its muslim electoral base compromises with the worst section of Muslim communalists, on the question of the right of Muslim divorcee woman to secure maintenance from her husband. The legislative measure which it has placed before the Parliament is a shameful and treacherous piece surrendering the rights of Muslim women to the jackals of obscurantism. No previous Central Govt. had degraded itself so much and prostrated itself in such a manner before religious bigotry and orthodoxy as the Rajiv Government. The explanation offered by the Prime Minister in justification of the measures is on par with that offered by many Shankaracharyas in defence of untouchability.

As a result the divisive forces are on the attack everywhere and the unity of the toiling people and the working class is being directly affected. The trade union movement and the working class must take a common stand to combat these anti national forces and defeat the game of the imperialists who are supporting them from behind. It is the immediate duty of the National Campaign Committee, all Central Trade Unions and all Industrial Federations to enter the battle to defeat the forces of communalism and casteism and assert the class unity for the working class and protect the unity of the country.

As I have already mentioned, the initiative taken by the INTUC should help the trade union movement to unite for this offensive.

Fight Against all Pervading Corruption

The crisis is affecting all aspects of our national life and in state after state, in city after city, law and administration is crumbling down and is openly used in the defence of vested interest. The stench of corruption pervades the entire social life. From Chief Minister of states to ordinary police officers and jail officials are caught in this web of corruption. In Delhi notorious convicts flushed with money are able to run the jail administration, and escape with the direct help of jail officials. Is it any wonder that in this atmosphere bribery and corruption, foreign espionage should thrive in the country and its tentacles spread far and wide. The recent exposure of CIA net work in Delhi must be taken seriously by all patriotic people. It also shows the danger created by the present administration to the security of our country.

This situation itself is the result of the process of the undermining of our economy that has been going on for the last few years.

People's Answer To Price Rise

Comrades, you all know that the Rajiv Government announced last year its New Economic policy which now reveals itself as continuous depredations on the incomes and living standards of the people and growing attacks on their jobs in the name of modernisation of economy. The last budget saw the first phase of this policy. It gave concessions amounting more than 1000 crores of rupees to the private capitalists and businessmen while just before the budget it levied new burdens of more than 1000 crores of rupees on the common people.

This year again a new burden of not less than thousand crores of rupees was imposed through the hike in administered prices of vital commodities and necessities of life. There have been widespread protests and bandhs against this fleecing of the people. The battle must be carried on and the CITU unions must continue to mobilise people's protest against the new imposts. The widespread bandh in many states show that the people are ready to move into action if a call comes from several organisations.

The New Policy however goes much beyond giving concession to big capital and addition of burden on the common man.

It is a retreat from the earlier position which considered the public sector as important and accepted the need of control over private sector. The national planning inspite of its defects and class bias was intended to serve the need of protecting Indian economy against subjugation to foreign capital and western interests.

The postulates of the new policy are removal of controls, freedom for the private sector, denigration and growing disbandment of the public sector, denigration of national planning, and opening the Indian market to the multinationals. In short the entire country is being exposed to the uncontrolled exploitation of the private sector and foreign multinationals with government control day by day removed.

Danger from Multi-Nationals

The free entry of multinationals into the Indian market will not only mean unbridled exploitation of the workers and the people but it will lead to the danger of undermining our economic independence. The multinationals are not satisfied with capturing economic market but conspire to bring down governments and establish their economic and political domination over countries. The restriction that hitherto operated against the entry of multinationals are being removed and the people of our country are being exposed to great political danger.

Stop Denigration of Public Sector

Large sections of workers and many trade unions

have acted in the past as if the way the public sector functioned or what the government did with it was no concern of theirs. But this was a wrong attitude of the working class of a newly liberated country. The public sector in India cannot be compared with the public sector of Britain. For instance, their both the public and private sector are instruments of imperialism and function under state monopoly capitalism.

But in newly liberated countries a well managed public sector based on strategic industry is an instrument of defending the economy against imperialist depredations and dependence on imperialism. It does serve the interests of indigenous capitalism. But it obstructs the penetration of imperialism into the economy. This is why in India when the public sector started its activities in strategic industries it was largely supported by the advanced trade union movement and all progressive forces. In spite of a great deal of mismanagement the public sector contributed to defending the independence of our economy to a great extent. It has been so because in a large number of cases it was directly helped by the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. In fact, we would not have been able to build our strategic industries if help from socialist countries were not available.

This aspect of the public sector has not been properly put before the workers by the trade unions. Today it is all the more necessary to do so because under the pressure of the imperialists, the World Bank and the IMF the official policy is denigrating the public sector and giving more encouragement to the private sector. But the matter does not end here. The denigration of the public sector is further intended to invite the foreign multinational companies to help India in her technological advance.

Comrades, the New Policy of Rajiv Gandhi not only contains proposals for the denigration of the public sector. It may also end in placing the public sector undertakings under the technological and managerial control of foreign companies. In fact it seems a process of penetration into the public sector by foreign multinationals is already starting if we are to believe reports appearing in the press. The penetration is taking place in the name of technological agreements with non-residential Indian capital which is often a sign board for foreign multinationals.

Comrades, the officers of the public sector undertakings recently entered a strong protest against the way they were treated by the authorities. They observed an all India protest day on the 13th March voicing following demands: 1. Uniform dearness allowance neutralisation, 2. Amendment of Payment of Bonus Act for abolishing bonus eligibility ceiling limit 3. Implementation of International Labour Organisation Compendium on good practices for professional workers specifically in relation to right to form association and collective bargaining and role in decision making. 4. Pension

scheme for public sector employees in addition to present retirement benefits. 5. Definition of legal status of officers in public sector. 6. White paper on government policies relating to public sector particularly with reference to (1) capacity utilisation of existing investment in technology manufacturing facilities and man power, (2) import liberalisation and (3) participative management.

The CITU supports these demands some of which are not only in the interest of the officers but in the interest of the country as a whole.

Machination of the Multinationals

Guided by the spirit of patriotism the Officer Association exposes the claims of the Government to justify its present policies of denigration of the public sector. They say, "yet another attack on the public sector is that it is not competitive and an exposure to international competition would streamline such enterprises. This policy is merely an attempt to hide the vital truth that several multinationals in the capital goods industry are badly hit by recession and would resort to anything to get the Indian market." They further say, "Is it not amazing that when the Indian shipyards are starved with orders, the government of India under the SAFAUN scheme provides subsidies for the Indian merchant navy to import ships? Similarly, while no country allows the import of electrical equipment if they indigenously manufacture electrical power equipment, the world imports are allowed while BHEL starves. The Chairman of BHEL is reported in the press as having stated, "No country kills its own indigenous industry. We are concerned that if orders went outside, BHEL's capacity utilisation would be reduced. We will fight for the orders".

"It must be clearly understood that there are no short cuts in technological development. Technology imports in a close market are in essence an alternative route for penetration into the market that too on a preferential basis. Indian scientists and technologists are quite capable of meeting a substantial requirement of industrial technology. What is lacking is the political will to ensure self reliance. We the representatives of the public sector officers warn the public that the present policies of down grading the public sector and of liberalising import both of equipment and technology will prove disastrous in the long run."

Our apprehensions about the New Economic Policy are now fully supported by the officer's association. They also realise that under the guise of opening the public sector to competition, penetration of multinationals is bound to take place endangering the interests and economic independence of the nation.

Introduce Democratic Management

Under these conditions it is absolutely essential that the public sector is opened to democratic

management by the full participation on equal terms of workers, officers, and the management. Instead of opening the public sector to foreign competition it should be opened to democratic and participative management to increase its efficiency to serve the interest of the country.

Workers' Participation on Equal Status

Comrades, the CITU is repeatedly demanding workers' participation in management on the basis of full equality and on the basis of representation through a secret ballot of the entire workers of the factory or concern. Both elements, equal status and representation on the basis of ballot, are necessary if the entire mass of workers are to be involved in running the concerns and inspired to make its effective contribution to efficiency to serve the interest of the country. But the government refuses to accept either of these conditions and proposes a farcical form of workers' participation. It does not guarantee or accept status of equality for the workers. It refuses to accept that workers' representatives should be chosen by secret ballot. It does not propose to go beyond the vote of trade union membership and that too based on check off system. This necessarily leaves out of account a major section of the workers who are thus deprived of all interest in promoting the efficiency of production.

One can easily understand the opposition of the Government to the demand for secret ballot. But it appears very strange that some trade union organisations also should side with the government on this issue and decline to support the demand for ballot under this or that specious excuse. It shows utter lack of confidence in the mass of workers and resistance to draw the entire mass of workers into the task of running the concern.

Growing Industrial Sickness

Comrades, notwithstanding the official claims of higher rate of industrial production the number of sick concerns continues to increase. Now more than 500 big industrial units and more than 90 thousand small units are sick. This has imposed untold sufferings on the lakhs of working class families with no sign of relief in the near future.

On the other hand there are indications that conditions are going to be more difficult and more concerns will go sick or be closed as a result of the import liberalisation policy of the government. Many industries are threatened with closure with the liberal import of materials, components and other products. Only certain big industries and monopolists are taking advantage of the situation and their employment capacity is much less because of the import of sophisticated machinery and computers.

Monopolists Thrive

The beneficiaries of the new policy can be clearly identified from a review of Indian economy made

by Shri R.P. Goenka, President-elect of the FICCI appearing in the Economic Times dated March 22. According to Mr. Goenka, "Industry has responded well to the new opportunities...By the end of December 1985 about 1196 registrations had taken place in the 25 broad industry groups delicensed, totalling approximately Rs. 4000 crores...Seventeen MRTP and 27 non MRTP companies have availed of the broad basing facilities. MRTP companies in industries exempted from section 21 and 22 of the MRTP Act also invested more specially in electronic etc., total investment being of the order of Rs. 2889 crores."

Such is the situation facing us and our trade union movement is called upon to resist the effect of the new policy. This calls for greater unity and greater concerted action and not weary calls for symbolic protest or anaemic dharnas.

While Workers are Ruined

The textile and jute workers continue to face a difficult situation. More textile mills are being closed. Recently the NTC ordered four more mills to be closed throwing thousands of workers out of job. We must therefore urgently pursue our demands for the nationalisation of jute and textile industries and create sanction for it. The trade union movement is fully prepared to meet its responsibility in any nationalised concern and discuss all problems including the problem of more efficient production and modernisation of industry in the interest of nation the people and the working class.

Growing Unemployment

Comrades, there is nothing more heart rending, nothing which makes us more indignant than the mounting increase in both urban and rural unemployment. The figure of registered unemployed has now reached 3 crores and this does not reflect the real number, as a large section does not bother to get registered. No one really knows the number of rural unemployed. The figure may vary between four and five crores and even more.

Year by year young men and women full of vigour, youthfull hope and a robust outlook on life enter the labour market from schools, colleges, peasants and working class families only to meet with denial of opportunities to contribute to social wealth. Unable to earn a living they undergo the humiliation of living at the expenses of relatives and others or from a chance job which may come in their way. Crores of India's young citizens see no prospect before them except this degraded existence. Forty years of Congress rule is resulting in the social killing of a whole generation.

The trade union movement of our country, the CITU and its unions must be severely indicted for neglecting this young section of the working class and confining itself to defending the emolument of

those on permanent jobs. In this way the trade union movement becomes a partner of the capitalist class to make the younger generation the scape goat of the crisis of the capitalist path.

Fight for Right to Work

It seems hardly any State Committee can boast of any significant steps to mobilise the unemployed to call their conference and agitate for immediate relief. Barring citing figures of increasing unemployment, the trade union movement has done very little. Hunger marches, raising the direct demands for immediate relief under the guidance of organised trade union movement will rouse this vital section of the working class to fight for its right and strengthen the unity of the class.

The West Bengal Government has provided unemployment relief to the unemployed but the Cong(I) government has done nothing in this direction. Some of them or at least some Cong(I) leaders try to solve the problem by inciting one section of workers against another on the slogan of jobs for the sons of the soil.

In the May Day centenary celebration a special day should be assigned for raising the demands of the unemployed and calling for right to work to be embodied in the Constitution as a fundamental right. The workers must be told that the right work is not just a dream but is concretely embodied in the Constitutions of all Socialist countries. To secure it, political power must be in the hands of working class and the people.

The General Council should direct the State Committees to take effective steps to organise the unemployed, call their conferences, ventilate their grievances and rally the organised workers in defence of their demands.

The organised movement must rouse the entire working class against the steps and plans of the government which are leading to further unemployment. Apart from the computerisation drive the public sector authorities, the Central Government and a number of State Governments have stopped further recruitment and refused to fill vacancies that arise due to natural wastage. Tens of thousands of posts remain vacant. Besides both in public sector and government departments authorities are imposing compulsory or the so called voluntary retirement on a number of employees and workers. In the banks also the same procedure is being adopted. There are open proposals for axeing nearly 20 thousand workers of the Food Corporation of India. And according to press reports the Coal authorities have considered that nearly one lakh workers are surplus in the coal industry.

Give up Feudal Outlook Towards Working Women

In this retrenchment offensive the women employees and women workers are the first victims

and they have to bear the brunt of the offensive. Very few trade unions attach importance to defending the jobs of women workers. The neglect of working women by the trade unions constitutes an intractable disease which will have to be dealt with by uprooting the cause, namely the survival of feudal outlook towards women.

These plans of the Government and the authorities must be fought continuously and a demand must be made to fill in the vacancies created during the last so many years. The CITU unions should lend their full support to the employees' unions and champion their cause. Simultaneously similar plans which are hatched in the private sector have to be fought. A large number of private concerns are replacing permanent labour by casual or contract labour to escape payment of dearness allowance and contribution to ESI and the provident funds. These malpractices must be fought vigorously and unitedly.

Fight Against Arbitrary Powers

Comrades we all must congratulate the State Government employees and their federation on their magnificent strike to protest against sections 310 and 311 (a) (b) of the Constitution. More than 4 million employees participated in this gigantic protest showing extraordinary unity. They had to launch this protest because the two sections, as now interpreted by the Supreme Court, leave arbitrary powers of dismissal in the hands of Government. And the authorities have already taken advantage of this to dismiss a number of locomen who had gone on strike in 1981 to secure implementation of earlier agreement to reduce hours of work.

Organise the Unorganised Workers

Comrades, it is a matter of some satisfaction that at least some of our State Committees like Karnataka, Tamilnadu, Andhra Pradesh and Delhi have made efforts to reach the workers of unorganised sector. Several of these committees have held conventions on the question of revision of minimum wages and other demands of unorganised workers. In Karnataka 30 thousands were arrested when government offices were picketed in August 1985 and there was a strike embracing over 5 lakhs of workers.

The unorganised sector forms a very important militant and most exploited section of the working class and our movement cannot be said to be completely representative movement unless it embraces and inspires this vast section.

Collapse of Labour Legislations

Comrades, we all realise that there is a virtual collapse of all labour legislations including the safety legislations deliberately organised by the authorities to attack and withdraw statutory concessions and rights. The courts also had several

time observed that legislation itself was farcical and its violation could be virtually done with impunity by the employing class. Now recently the crooked ways of the government were exposed by Bajju Ban Riyan, CPI (M) MP in connection with an amendment to the Contract Labour Bill.

What is the purpose of this new amendment? Previously it was provided that the government of the state where the Central unit is functioning shall be the appropriate government for intervening and settling any dispute between the contract labour and the contractor. But now the power is being vested in the Central Government. Why? Com. Bajju Ban Riyan answers why: "Sir over the last one or two years labour dispute developed in certain Central units located in West Bengal like the Burnpur Steel Project, the Durgapur Steel and Fertilizer Corporations, the Metro Railways, etc, where contract labour was working. In these cases the Labour Commissioner of the State Government of West Bengal intervened and resolved these disputes to the satisfaction of the workers. The State Government arranged for the regularisation of the workers and saw to it that their outstanding dues are also paid."

This was of course not to the liking of the Central Govt. They and the Cong(I) State Governments were accustomed to use the police against the contract labourers and suppress their struggle. Bajju Ban Riyan gives instances: "About two years back the contract labour working under the Assam Oil Division agitated for the payment of their dues. They were mercilessly beaten up by the CISF and driven away without paying them their dues." Similar fate overtook the contract workers at the Panipat Fertilizer Project.

This is the secret of the new amendment. The Central Government wants to deal with contract workers directly to beat them up into submission. This is how labour legislation is being improved under the Cong (I) rule.

Undaunted Facing Repression

Comrades, the working class continues to fight its battle in the most adverse circumstances facing it. Every year more than a million workers risk their jobs, their livelihood, their wages, when they take up the fight against the employers' offensive. Since 1982 between January and November, 82 million working days were lost in disputes involving 1.4 million workers. In 1983 the corresponding figures were 40 million days lost involving 1.23 million workers. In 1984 between January and August 45 million man days were lost involving 1.76 million workers. In 1985 during the same period 17 million man days were lost and 2.06 million workers were involved.

In these strikes the workers had not only to undergo privations and sufferings but face police repression and goonda attacks. The workers in

Himachal Pradesh, in Haryana, had to face the most illegal action of the police including kidnapping with the connivance of the police with the hired goondas of the management. But our young units are carrying on the struggle courageously and bravely and consolidating the strength of the CITU. We must all appreciate the courage and devotion of our CITU units in Punjab which have to uphold the working class flag in the midst of a campaign of murder and terror, greet our comrades in Assam who had to face a similar situation and our comrades in Tamilnadu who were conducting the struggle of the working class in the midst of rise of chauvinistic sentiments and feelings.

It is only the working class which with all its faults continues to defend its interest and fights the employers and the government. It is our duty to harness the spirit of resistance for vigorous defence of the interests of the workers.

Fight for the Cause of Peasantry, Agricultural Labour

It is our responsibility to link this resistance with the demands of the peasantry which still continues to be neglected, with the demands of agricultural workers and above all to link it with the demands of democratic struggle against authoritarianism. It is through our intervention that the scattered struggle will create a consciousness which can unitedly fight harijan baiting on the one hand and attacks on Muslim minority on the other. Only a strong working class movement continuously increasing its consciousness and spreading its influence over the rural areas will check the atrocities on harijans and inspire religious minorities to stand united with the working class.

Increase Independent Activities

Taking this responsibility into consideration it has to be admitted that our intervention has not been effective. It has not been effective even in the economic struggle considering the large number of strikes that go untouched or unled by the CITU. It is necessary to overcome this lacuna and be with the workers whenever they are in action. This means the independent activities of the CITU must increase ten times and they must reach the spontaneous struggles breaking out in several places.

Without such increase in independent activities the required trade union unity to meet the economic offensive cannot be built. The habit of waiting on others before moving further in the name of trade union unity is a pernicious habit which leads to slowing the pace of trade union unity. The CITU unions and leaders must realise that the building and strengthening of trade union unity depend on their activities and incessant effort.

Use Strength of United Movement

Comrades, while we certainly appreciate the unity built around the National Campaign Committee it

is necessary to remark that the momentum it earlier gave to united mass action is losing its force. In the midst of a grave economic situation if united activity is unable to go beyond symbolic protest there is something radically wrong with our ways of functioning and it must be located. Trade Union unity cannot be reduced to some kind of routine affair with no increase in the weight of mass action, on the quality of mass protest.

In reality the power of united trade union movement if it is effectively used, is a mighty power which was seen in the anti-price hike bandhs organised in a large number of states. The participation of working class was most enthusiastic in many states and set the pace for mass response. I congratulate our working class and our CITU unions on the massive expression of protest against the price rise.

There is no doubt that inspite of our weaknesses the net of trade union unity is widening and larger and larger section of working class is responding to its call. The participation of INTUC union in West Bengal and Kerala in joint calls on some important issues constitute an important advance for our struggle for unity. On your behalf I have already appreciated the initiative shown by the INTUC on the question of the united stand of all trade unions and in defence of peace.

Fight for World Peace

Let me therefore conclude my speech on the question of world peace vital to the world working class movement and to the people of the world. The working class of our country must realise that the non-alignment policy pursued by the Government is an important factor in strengthening the world balance in favour of peace and facilitate our task to fight against the war mongering plans of US imperialism. Karl Marx had said that the maturity of a working class is seen from the interest it takes in the foreign policy of its government. It cannot be said that our movement has taken much interest in influencing, shaping and strengthening the policy of non-alignment which helps us to fight the imperialist war mongers. Today immense pressures are being exercised to change this policy taking advantage of the serious economic situation in which the Government of India find itself. To exercise vigilance and defeat all attempts to change the foreign policy in the reactionary direction is an integral part of our task to fight war, to protect peace and protect the gains of hundred years of world working class movement.

Let our General Council in this May Day centenary year assure the working class of Soviet Union and other countries that our organisation and our working class will do everything to frustrate imperialist plans of war against the peoples of the world to protect peace and gains of socialism. Let me once again assure the AUCCTU that its appeal will be warmly responded to by our CITU unions and by the workers of India.

23.3.86

Stirring Call to Strengthen Organisation

● **Uphold the Banner of Proletarian Internationalism, Struggle Against War and For Peace.**

THE General Council meeting of CITU held at Calcutta from March 31 to April 2 gave a stirring call to step up the independent activities of the organisation while going all out for united actions to meet the challenges, both national and international. The Presidential address, followed by the General Secretary's report laid the task to the CITU State Committees and the unions so that they could mobilise broadest sections of the working people to project themselves as the biggest force of peace against the imperialist war mongers, as well as against the internal divisive forces backed by the imperialist agencies and maintain the unity and integrity of the country. They must at the same time wage a determined fight against the new economic policy of the government which apart from laying bare the vices of the capitalist path of development one after another by way of ever increasing prices, closures, lockouts and industrial sickness and growing unemployment, had yielded to the pressure of the world Bank and the IMF, denigrated the public sector and had thrown the working class exposed to the full blast of exploitation by the multinationals and the collaborating Indian monopolists. The Presidential address, the General Secretary's report, as well as the resolution on the economic policy drew the pointed attention of the members to the retrograde shift in the economic policy which posed a danger to non-aligned foreign policy of the government and to the independence and freedom of the country and so deserved to be fought with the full strength of the united trade union movement for its reversal. Alongwith all these, the CITU unions were to intensify the efforts for united trade union actions against the growing authoritarianism on the part of the government and safeguard the democratic rights of the people. The situation demanded the activities of the CITU unions to be spread out to meet these multifarious challenges. The meeting also called upon the State Committees and the CITU unions to conduct the May Day Centenary celebration based on the revolutionary traditions of the May Day, focus all these class demands so as to raise the revolutionary consciousness of the workers and to extend them to fulfil the international task of the CITU unions to denounce the war designs of the US imperialists and their NATO allies and defend the Soviet Union, the socialist system and peace under the banner of proletarian internationalism.

● **Fight Against Divisive Forces, Against the Retrograde Economic Policy, Against Closures, Lockouts, Against Authoritarianism, for Democracy.**

The meeting started with the Presidential speech by Com. BTR. Com. Samar Mukherjee then moved the resolutions on Martyrs, on Olof Palme, the assassinated Swedese Prime Minister, on Com. Ramdass and on Condolences.

The meeting then elected the Resolution Subcommittee and the Credential Sub-Committee as follows:

Resolution Sub-Committee: P.K. Ganguly (Convenor), P. Sanzgiri, Sunil Basu Roy, Biren Roy and N. Padmalochanan.

Credential Sub-Committee: P. Satyanarayana (Convenor), A.K. Padmanabhan, Kali Ghosh and Ranjit Basu.

Com.M.K. Pandhe then placed a report on the meeting of the Coordination Committee of Public Sector Unions held at Durgapur on March 28 and 29, which decided to observe May 21 as the Save Public Sector Day.

Com. Samar Mukherjee then placed the General Secretary's report. The report elaborately dealt with the problems as stated above and also reviewed the activities of the CITU for the period between May, 1985 and March, 1986. It also pointed out that many struggles were launched during the period by such organisations which were not affiliated to any central trade unions. He called upon the State Committees and the unions to constantly review their activities, overcome the weaknesses and strengthen the organisation so as to intervene in and lead the struggles. Com. Samar Mukherjee also reported about his visit to Bangladesh to attend the Conference of Jatio Shramik Jote.

27 members representing all states took part in the discussion. While relating their experience about the united struggles which had taken place, they pointed out that there was a strong tendency of some of the constituents of the NCC at the state level to avoid coming together to implement the NCC programmes on one plea or another. It was decided that while persuading them to join common action, CITU's independent activities must continue and reports be sent to the Centre.

Among those who participated in the discussion

were R. Umanath, N. Padmalochalan, C. Nanjun-dappa, P. Sanzgiri, N. Prasad Rao, Daulat Ram, Chandi Prasad, Mangat Ram, Amal Ghosh Dastidar, S. Kumar, Shivaji Patnaik, Krishna Kant, Mohanlal, Subodh Mehta, S.N. Solanki, Sitaram Manzhrekar, K.N. Ravindranath, Manoranjan Roy, Chitta Brata Majumdar, Dilip Majumdar and V. Cherian.

Com. Samar Mukherjee then replied to the debate giving a ringing call for strengthening the CITU so that it could redeem its responsibility of leading the struggles of various sections of people. The report then was adopted unanimously with the stipulation that such of the suggestions which were found acceptable should be included.

Resolutions were moved on various subjects. Com. Jyoti Basu moved the resolution on "Appeal of AUCCTU" and called upon the members to take the question of peace to broad masses so that the movement against nuclear war could be strengthened further. Com. E. Balanandan, Treasurer, CITU supported the resolution which was adopted unanimously. A resolution on US missiles in Angola and Afghanistan was moved from the chair. Another resolution supporting the strike of news paper employees were moved by the chair and was passed unanimously. Com. M.K. Pandhe moved the resolution on the Retrograde Economic Policy. Com. P.K. Ganguly seconded the resolution. Com. Nrisingha Chakraborty moved the resolution on Srilanka Ethnic Tamils which was seconded by Com. R. Umanath. Com. P.P. Sanzgiri moved the resolution on Divisive Forces which was seconded by Com. Ravi Sinha and Com. Mohd Amin. Com. Vimala Ranadive moved the resolution on Muslim Women's (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Bill which was seconded by Com. D. Janaki Raman. The resolution on Punjab was moved by Com. Mangat Ram Pasla and was seconded by Com. S.N. Solanki. Com. Amal Ghosh Dastidar moved the resolution on Assam which was seconded by Com. Mohd. Amin. A resolution extending full support of CITU to the proposed Coal Workers' strike on 9th April was proposed by Com. S.K. Bakshi and was seconded by Com. Bamapada Mukherjee. Com. Hari Sadhan Mitra moved the resolution on Closures, Lockouts and Industrial Sickness and Com. P.R. Krishnan seconded the same. Com. Mohd. Amin moved the resolution on Nationalisation of Jute, Textile and Sugar Industries which was seconded by Com. Harsahay Singh. Resolution on Unemployment was moved by Com. K.N. Ravindranath which was seconded by Com. Chandi Prasad.

The meeting also discussed the question of holding of 6th Conference of CITU. It was decided to request Kerala State Committee of CITU to hold the Conference during the end of the year. It was decided that the Secretariat would take a final decision after hearing from them.

Com. P. Satyanarayan, Convener, Credential Sub-Committee reported that 114 new unions with a membership of 34,738 had applied for affiliation of which 81 unions having a membership of 27,166 were found alright and were granted affiliation straight away. 33 unions having a membership of 7,572 members whose application were found wanting in some respects were granted affiliation subject to their compliance with the constitutional obligations. The meeting discussed the question of issuing of a Joint Manifesto of May Day with AITUC and authorised the Secretariat to proceed further on the same. If possible other trade unions also may be organised on a common appeal.

Then Com. BTR summed up the discussions. He thanked the West Bengal Committee and the volunteers who made the meeting successful. Referring to the discussion he said that Comrades have now started analysing and presenting the picture of industrial relations in their states. He stated that the Central Office would help the State Committee in this respect but they in the main would have to present proper report and share their experience with others so that all India outlook grows. He also said that the discussion was fruitful. But even then the CITU's leading cadres were not reacting sharply to matters of foreign policy or of national interest like the question of unemployment divisive forces, etc. He also pointed out that the trade unions failed to see the strong point of the non-aligned foreign policy, which was essentially anti-imperialist and urged for full support to it. Similarly they also did not deal with the subject of unemployment properly. There is already a charge against the trade unions that they were only moving for the organised sector and paying no attention to unorganised sector, unemployed and the working women. He called upon the General Council to devote one day out of the week long May Day Centenary celebrations exclusively on the question of unemployment and a big movement on "Right to Work" should be built up. Like 8 hours day, the Right to Work is also a basic right.

He then analysed the experience of united front functioning and said that some felt that such united front was merely tactics. The CITU has been following this as a basic strategy to win over the working class from the reformist line to the revolutionary trade union line. Citing the experience of more than a decade and half, he said that a stage has now been reached when CITU can no longer be ignored by others. The CITU must use this position to mobilise the workers to attack the Govt. policies. He stated that denigration of Public Sector had already evoked protest from all sections who wanted democracy and self-reliance. The situation today was such that increased influence of the multi-nationals had posed a very serious danger when the divisive forces backed by the imperialists were already active in a very big way. The CITU must prepare itself for leading this struggle.

General Council Meeting

Calcutta, March 31—April 2, 1986

Resolutions

On Martyrs

THIS General Council meeting of CITU held at Calcutta from March 31—April 2, 1986 dips its red banner in the memory of those comrades who in the course of their struggle for the emancipation of the working class and the people attained martyrdom, having died at the hands of the goonda hirelings of the managements and by police firing. The meeting pledges to carry forward their task.

On Olof Palme

This General Council meeting of CITU held at Calcutta from March 31-April 2, 1986 expresses deep sorrow at the passing away of Olof Palme, the Prime Minister of Sweden, who was dastardly assassinated on March 1. Olof Palme was in the forefront in the struggle for peace and opposed the US imperialist's war designs. He was the initiator and a signatory to the six nation's appeal for nuclear disarmament. In his death the world has lost a valiant fighter for the cause of peace. The meeting pays homage to the memory of Olof Palme.

Com. Ramdass

This General Council meeting of CITU held at Calcutta from March 31-April 2, 1986 expresses profound sorrow at the premature death of Com. Ramdass on November 8, 1985 at Delhi at the age of only 60. Com. Ramdass was the Central Committee member of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and the working editor of the People's Democracy. Com. Ramdass enrolled himself as a member of the Communist Party of India in 1942 at an early age of 17. In the height of the freedom struggle, when the ruling classes made the Communist Party of India the target of their attack, Com. Ramdass, even at that age, while lending full contribution to the struggle for independence, fought unremittingly for the cause of proletarian internationalism, popularising the political ideology of the Communist Party that the path of Indian freedom lay in its active participation in the anti-fascist struggle headed by the Soviet Union. He joined the Central Party press in 1947 and became one of the active functionaries in the Cross Road Weekly. Being a devotee and an ardent follower of Marxism-Leninism, Com. Ramdass fought uncompromisingly against both the left and right deviations. Working as a staff of the New Age he consistently fought the growing trend of revisionism in the party. His ideological and organisational work immensely helped in the ultimate formation of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) in 1964.

Almost immediately after the formation of the

CPI (M) countrywide arrests followed and almost the entire leadership of the party were thrown behind the bars. Remaining undeterred in this perilous situation, Com. Ramdass continued his devoted work for the newly born party and started the People's Democracy almost singly handedly. He was elected to the Central Committee in 1968. Shouldering many more responsibilities Com. Ramdass carried forward the revolutionary task of focusing the principles of Marxism-Leninism in the concrete national and international conditions through the People's Democracy. The meeting pays homage to the memory of Com. Ramdass and conveys its heartfelt condolences to Com. Kitty and other members of his family.

On Condolences

This General Council meeting of CITU held at Calcutta from March 31-April 2, 1986 pays homage to the memory of Com. P. Laxmidas, the General Council Member of CITU, and others who died during the period in the course of their revolutionary struggle for ushering in socialism. The meeting conveys its heartfelt condolences to the members of their bereaved families.

On the Appeal of AUCCTU

This General Council meeting of CITU held at Calcutta from March 31 to April 2, 1986 warmly welcomes the appeal of the All Union Central Council of Trade Unions, Soviet Union on the statement given by Com. M.S. Gorbachov, the General Secretary of CPSU on January 15, 1986 in which the Soviet Union put forward the proposal for complete elimination of nuclear and chemical weapons and any other threat of annihilation facing mankind, in three stages before the year 2000 AD.

The international situation today is marked by the US imperialist's drive for nuclear war against the Soviet Union and the socialist camp. It is a war to reestablish the global domination of imperialism headed by the USA. The ideological and the military strength of the socialist camp stand as a deterrent to the imperialist's plans of domination. The U.S. imperialist is therefore trying to secure military superiority over the Soviet Union to launch a war against it. While the Soviet Union has made a number of peace proposals, announced unilateral moratorium in nuclear tests and declared that it will not be the first to strike nuclear weapons, the USA has blatantly rejected all the proposals. In fact, its so-called Strategic Defence Initiative, i.e. the star war project is meant precisely for the nuclear first strike.

Under such perilous situation, when the UNO has also declared 1986 as the year of peace, as referred to by AUCCTU, this meeting applauds the proposal of Com. M.S. Gorbachov to enter the third millennium without any weapons of mass annihilation as an outstanding contribution to world peace and lends full support to it.

This meeting assures the AUCCTU and through them, the heroic people of Soviet Union, that the CITU and the Indian working class would do every thing in their power to ensure that our sisters and brethren do not have to relive the horrendous days of the 2nd World War unleashed by the fascists in which 50 million people including 20 millions from the Soviet Union lost their lives. This is our pledge in redeeming our international responsibility, to ensure that the fruits of the hundred years of struggle of the proletariat are not snatched away by the imperialists.

The meeting calls upon all State Committees and the affiliated unions to go all out to campaign and popularise the proposals among all sections of workers, trade unions, other mass organisations and the democratic and peace loving forces as a part of the May Day Centenary programmes, and carry forward the unremitting struggle for peace and frustrate the imperialist war designs. The meeting further appeals to all other trade unions to join the mass struggle for peace to save the human-kind from a nuclear holocaust.

On US Missiles in Afghanistan and Angola

This General Council meeting of CITU held at Calcutta from March 31-April 2, 1986 denounces the Reagan administration for deciding to send the sophisticated "Stringer" anti-aircraft missiles to help the counter-revolutionaries in Afghanistan and Angola and also against Nicaragua and Cambodia. This action of the USA comes in the wake of its military threat to Libya and sending war vessels to the Libyan coast. These belligerent actions of the Reagan administration amount to blatant moves to establish its stooge dictators' Governments everywhere in pursuit of its plan for world domination and escalate global tension, when the Soviet Union has given a new concrete proposal for world peace.

The meeting demands of the Reagan administration to forthwith withdraw its belligerent move and calls upon the affiliated unions and appeals to all other trade unions and peace loving forces to raise their voice of protest.

On Apartheid in South Africa

This General Council meeting of CITU held at Calcutta from March 31 — April 2, 1986 denounces the racist government of South Africa for pursuing the barbarous apartheid policy. This despicable policy of the minority white regime has been pronounced in a most savage form, unleashing ruthless repression on the struggling South African people.

Having thrown the indomitable freedom fighter Nelson Mandela behind the bars two decades back, the minority government committed the judicial murder of the young anti-apartheid poet, Benjamin Moloise and hundreds others. Murders, mass arrests and police raids and torture have become the order of the day. The meeting further denounces the US and British imperialists for shamelessly supporting the racist regime defying the world opinion and vetoing the UN resolutions asking for mandatory sanctions against South Africa. The dirty designs of the USA and Great Britain are in pursuance of their colonialist policy dictated by the transnationals to make super profits by plundering the wealth of South Africa. This is actually the policy enunciated in Reagan's so-called Constructive Engagement Pronouncement — a policy to keep over 22 million South Africans outcasts in their own country.

Demanding immediate and unconditional release of Nelson Mandela, the meeting hails the liberation struggle waged by the people of South Africa under the leadership of African National Congress. It calls upon the State Committees and the affiliated unions and appeals to all other trade unions to raise their voice against the apartheid regime and extend all possible help to the fighting people of South Africa.

On the Retrograde Economic Policy

This General Council Meeting of CITU held at Calcutta from March 31 to April 2, 1986 congratulates the working class and the toiling people for the massive demonstration of unity in observing the successful Bharat Bandh on February 26 against the administered price hikes of several essential commodities. The meeting especially congratulates the Left Fronts of West Bengal and Tripura for organising the State Bundhs on February 11 and the opposition parties and trade unions of Delhi for organising the bundh on February 10, which gave the impetus for the Bharat Bandh.

The Bharat Bundh which was the culmination of series of protest actions was an expression of people's anger against the retrograde economic policy of the Govt. of India.

The Govt. has made a major shift in its new economic policy retreating from the earlier policy. The new policy denigrates the public sector, strengthens the private sector and has opened the doors to the multinationals to enter economic life of the country. It seeks to secure an accelerated development through modernisation and computerisation, relying on multinationals and Indian monopolists, allowing them various concessions. Gates have been opened wider to massive imports while exports are dwindling, leading to serious position of trade deficit. These are the very policies for which the World Bank and the IMF have been pressurising the Govt. of India for years.

M.Ps' Memorandum to U.S. President

This General Council meeting of CITU held at Calcutta from March 31-April 2, 1986 expresses serious concern over the accentuation of the attack on the opposition parties and trade unions in Assam. The CPI(M) and the CITU have been especially the target of such attacks.

The meeting notes that these attacks have come in the wake of the Assam accord which the CITU views as a piece of most undemocratic agreement arrived at by the Government of India submitting to demands of the secessionist agitators backed by imperialist agencies. The fake assurance given by the AGP Government has failed to restore peace and amity and instil confidence among the linguistic minorities and the ethnic groups in the state.

Scores of cases of terroristic attacks, gruesome murders, kidnapping, rape, arson and social boycott of the members and supporters of the opposition parties and trade unions are being reported.

The meeting also notes that the AGP Government has made the Assamese language compulsory in the Secondary Schools including those where tribal language was the medium of instruction since long. Alongwith this the anti-reservation moves have led to protests from the Scheduled Castes and Tribes and other backward communities in the state.

The meeting further notes with concern that the AGP Government is preparing a new Immigration Bill to throw out thousands of minorities from the state by dubbing them as foreign nationals.

All these developments are pointers to the increasingly sinister role played by the divisive forces. This portends a danger to not only the unity of the State, but also the unity and integrity of the country. The claim of the Prime Minister that the Assam accord has restored peace and amity in the state is totally belied by these facts. The meeting denounces these activities and demands of the Central Government and the AGP Government of Assam to take serious steps to stem the divisive and reactionary forces in the State. The meeting congratulates the Assam State Committee of CPI(M) and CITU for carrying forward determined struggle against these forces, which has led to positive results in the re-emergence of the unity of the opposition parties and the trade unions as was evidenced on the 26th February mass actions against the price hikes. The meeting calls upon all the State Committees and affiliated unions to carry forward their task of exposing the secessionists and consolidating the left and democratic and secular forces.

[The rest of the resolutions will be published in the next issue]

FIFTYSEVEN Members of Parliament belonging to the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha sent an appeal on March 6 to the United States Congress on the U.S. Administration's policy towards the Republic of Nicaragua. The memorandum addressed to both the Houses of the U.S. Congress appeals to them not to sanction the request of the Administration for 100 million dollars to aid the mercenary gangs operating from Honduras and Costa Rica who were attacking the peaceful civilian population of Nicaragua. The memorandum requested the U.S. Congress to see to it that the United States Govt. settle all outstanding problems by negotiations and not to countenance any move which would infringe upon the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Nicaragua.

Among the M.Ps who signed the memorandum were Dipen Ghosh and Basudeb Acharya (CPI-M), M.C. Bhandare and Anand Sharma (Cong-I), Indradeep Sinha and Narayan Choubey (CPI), P. Upendra and C. Lakshmanan (Telugu Desam), M.S. Gurupadaswamy and V.S. Krishna Iyer (Janata), Chitta Basu (Forward Block), Piyus Tirkey (RSP), Dinesh Goswami (A.G.P), Balwant Singh Ramocwalia (Akali Dal), Kishore Chandra S. Deo (Con-S), M. Mehfooz Ali Khan (Lok Dal) and Datta Samant (Independent). A delegation of M.Ps visited the U.S. Embassy and handed over a copy of the memorandum for the U.S. President, Mr. Reagan.

Convention Against Communalism

Venue: Mavalankar Hall, Rafi Marg, New Delhi.

Date & Time: May 11, 1986, 11.30 AM to 5.30 PM.

Quota of CITU Delegates: 100.

Delegate Fee: Rs. 5/- per delegate.

- * All States should send delegates as per quota given in Circular No. 26/86 of April 14.
- * All delegates should reach Delhi latest by May 10, morning.
- * All delegates requiring return reservations should remit the required amount and inform about staying arrangement if required.

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American Brinkmanship

B.T. Ranadive

THE unprovoked and dastardly U.S. attack against Libya constitutes an act of criminal aggression unparalleled in recent history. It can be compared only with Musolini's attack on Euthopia or the many treacherous deeds of the late Adolf Hitler of evil memory.

This is the second time that aggression was launched against this small country by a bullying power which has enough nuclear arms at its disposal to destroy the entire world. It is the same power that launched a cowardly aggression against Grenada and is today supplying arms and help to Nicaraguan counter-revolutionaries to upset the democratic government of that country. These misdeeds coming one after another are not the product of the mind of an individual but the logical consequence of the policies of the industrial-military complex that rules the U.S. in the name of people. The class character of the representatives of the people elected under the U.S. Constitution was seen when both the Senate and House of Representatives voted for military action against Libya.

The excuse that action was taken because the Libyan Government was supporting terrorist actions against American citizens and institutions cannot be accepted by any sane or honest person. The immediate cause of this aggression is supposed to be the killing of two U.S. personnel in West Germany after a bomb attack. No one except the U.S. agencies consider that the attack was the handiwork of Libyan terrorists. But the U.S. imperialists do not need any proof when they consider aggression necessary in their interests. Neither do they consider the restrictions and norms of international law before attacking the sovereignty of any other nation. Like the British imperialists of the earlier days, they consider themselves to be the overlords of the world and place themselves above all international guarantees, UNO resolutions, or any moral code of behaviour. They consider it perfectly moral and legitimate to kill hundreds of innocent Libyans as a revenge for the loss of two American lives.

Mrs Thatcher's Government by slavishly joining the U.S. imperialists and Reagan in this shameful aggression against Libya has covered itself with utter disgrace. No previous British Prime Minister had sunk so low as to subordinate its foreign policy and its independence to the dictates of a dominating ally and a rival power. Mrs Thatcher not only supported Reagan, she readily obliged him by allowing the use of Britain based U.S. planes to carry out his nefarious design. Except France and Spain no other European country forcefully opposed the U.S. move though some of them pleaded that restraint should be observed. How can Governments which allow U.S. missiles to be deployed in their territories under the pretext of protecting their security against

the USSR, have the courage to dissociate themselves from such aggression. The NATO alliance has worked and U.S. has been allowed to go ahead with certain verbal demarcation from its stand.

However, the people of Europe, the democratic and progressive forces all over the world and the fighters for peace have all unanimously condemned this dastardly action, isolating the U.S. Government and its allies. There is wide spread indignation among the Arabic countries though the Governments of some of these countries are only expressing their opposition verbally and preventing people's anger from taking its full course. The condemnation by the Soviet Union has encouraged the anti-imperialist and democratic forces and increased their confidence to fight U.S. policy. The communique issued by the conference of Non-Aligned Ministers has further helped in exposing the U.S. and isolating it from the people of a large number of Third World countries.

The unmitigated act of aggression has united all secular political parties in India and in Lok Sabha all parties have unanimously condemned the U.S. Government for its armed attack against Libya. The ruling party, its government, the bourgeois-opposition parties and all left parties have voiced the indignation of democratic forces against American invasion and made it clear that those who pursue this policy will ever be opposed by the mass of democratic forces in the country.

This ruthless act of aggression, however, was to be expected from a power which is seriously preparing for a nuclear war and its extension to space. These acts of U.S. imperialism exposed the utter hypocrisy of those who while opposing U.S. acts of aggression, indulged in cheap talks about two super powers. The Reagan administration continues to vitiate the international atmosphere by refusing to agree to any concrete proposal for stopping nuclear tests and step by step eliminating of all weapons of mass destruction as suggested by Com. Gorbachev. The optimistic atmosphere that was created after the Gorbachev-Reagan meeting has been dissipated by Reagan's wild statements and still wilder moves and actions of his administration. As the Soviet Government's statement issued on April 12 states "The nuclear explosion conducted by the United States on April 10, 1986 once again clearly demonstrated what is really concealed behind the words of the United States administration about its devotion to the aims of liquidating nuclear arms. It is intended to further threaten mankind with a nuclear war, to keep the world in the trap of fear of universal annihilation. Once again Washington has placed the egoistic imperialist ambitions of the United States' military industrial complex above the interests of mankind. The American Government's irresponsible actions are an open challenge not only to the Soviet Union but

Go to the people of all continents; to the world as a whole”.

Last summer in order to facilitate peace negotiations the Soviet Union declared an unilateral moratorium on all nuclear tests. It was hoped that the U.S. administration would respond to this offer and take steps to accelerate the drive for peace. It was necessary that the U.S. gave up its Star War project and put an end to all nuclear tests designed in the direction of carrying war to outer space. But the U.S. Administration refused to give up its Star War Project and advertised it as a product for defence only. U.S. experts themselves revealed that the Star War Project can be used only as a weapon of first strike otherwise it has no validity. In spite of opposition to the project by the progressive forces, the American administration went ahead taking steps to complete it and by its nuclear explosion of 10th April it announced that it had no intention of engaging in peace negotiations. The time bound programme proposed by Com. Gorbachev to rid the world of nuclear weapons was rejected. The USSR was now compelled to give up its voluntary moratorium on nuclear tests. Responsibility for this situation entirely lies with the U.S. administration.

The Soviet statement of April 12, at the same time assures: “Soviet Government reiterates its proposals to the Governments of USA and Great Britain on resuming and bringing to completion the tripartite talks, stopped in 1980 with a view to work out a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear weapons tests. The Soviet Union stands for its undelayed beginning of multi-sided talks within the frame work of Geneva conference on disarmament with the same aim. We are also prepared to reach agreement on spreading the terms of 1963 Moscow Treaty banning nuclear weapons test in the atmosphere, in outer space.

Earlier by agreeing to verification on spot the USSR removed the last excuse for U.S. refusal to accept ban on nuclear test.

It is futile to expect that the U.S. administration will respond to the new Soviet offer and make way for meaningful dialogue for peace. The U.S. imperialists are bent on achieving military and arms superiority over the Soviet Union before they launch a destructive war. A power determined to carry out its war designs resorts to aggressive measures against all those who are likely to oppose its war. It does not want any neutrals in the war. It therefore tries to subjugate both neutral and the opponents of the war before it enters upon its major adventure. The Libyan crisis is a product of this policy and constitutes a warning for all democratic and peaceful forces that the U.S. is engaging in brinkmanship and is fervently preparing for a nuclear holocaust.

17.4.86

Worldwide Protest Actions

Spontaneous protest actions burst out all over the world against the USA's barbarous attack on Libya. Trade Union workers, students, youth, women and the peace loving people joined the demonstrations in large numbers. In USA, hundreds of people staged

demonstrations before the Pentagon recruitment centre in New York. Similar demonstrations were held at Chicago, Boston, San Francisco and other cities of America. Over two thousand people demonstrated before Margaret Thatcher's office at 10, Downing Street and at White Hall, London. More than 160 demonstrators were arrested. Another candle light demonstration was organised by the Britain's Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. Demonstrations were also staged before the American Embassy. Everywhere the placards read: “Murderers Out of Britain”, “Margaret Thatcher—Blood in Your Hands”. In Copenhagen, a mass demonstration held before the U.S. Embassy denounced the American policy as a threat to world peace. Another rally was held at Orhus. In Vienna, 22 people were arrested from a mass demonstration held before the U.S. Embassy. In West Germany thousands of protesters rallied before the U.S. Consulate at Hamburg and Stuttgart. In West Berlin over ten thousand protesters fought with the riot police on 16th night. Windows of buildings were smashed, ten were arrested and 17 police men were injured in the course. Hundreds of people staged demonstrations in North and South Lebanon, Egypt and Jordan. The police lined up in Sweden to control the demonstrators. Demonstrations were held in Brazil also. Widespread demonstrations took place in Italy. Marchers paraded in 90 cities of the country. Organised by the Communist Party, thousands of people and students paraded the streets of Rome, shouting: “Yankee Go Home” and “Reagan the Executioner”. Organised by the Spanish Communist Party and anti-NATO groups, thousands of protesters rallied at Madrid, Zaragoza and a dozen other cities in Spain. In the industrial cities of Basque, San Sebastian and Vitoria thousands of demonstrators clashed with the police. Widespread demonstrations were held in Pakistan with burning of American flags and effigies of Reagan. People shouted slogans: “Death to Reagan”, “Pakistanis and Libyans are Brothers”. The Women's International Democratic Federation from Berlin condemned the U.S. attack. Demonstrators from Africa and West Asian countries staged a sit-in demonstration before the American and U.K. Embassies at Beijing.

CITU Denounces U.S. Aggression: B.T. Ranadive, President of CITU in a statement issued on April 16, denounced the naked aggression as a political brigandage by the USA in pursuance of its aim for global domination and pursuit for war. It welcomed the declaration of the non-aligned foreign ministers condemning the U.S. attack. The CITU called upon the State Committees and the unions to protest against the U.S. warmongers and in support of the Libyan people.

The Parliament unanimously condemned the attack and a large number of the M.P.s demonstrated before the U.S. Embassy at Delhi. All the political parties and trade unions similarly condemned the U.S. action. Students, trade union workers, youth and other mass organisations held massive demonstrations at Delhi, Calcutta and other places of the country.

Conference of Water Transport Workers

THE third all India conference of the Water Transport Workers' Federation of India was held at Haldia from March 8 to 10. The conference was inaugurated by Com. B.T. Ranadive, President, CITU.

Com. BTR said that in every capitalist country the deteriorating economic situation made the working class and the common people its hostages. Closures, lockouts, price rise, unemployment, etc. were the inevitable results of capitalist economy, and the working class could not escape these attacks without bringing a change in the social order. As a part of the working class, the water transport workers had also become the victims of the system. As everywhere else the cry in the shipping industry was also for reduction of man power, mechanisation, computerisation, etc. He drew the attention of the workers to the report of the Committee on Transport which stated: "In our view, therefore, it will be sensible not to mix up employment objective with the issue of choosing an efficient transport system". He said that this meant growth of containerisation and mechanisation at a faster rate. He drew attention to the new economic policy of the Government and said that the retreat from the earlier policy had posed a danger to the economic and political freedom of the country. Under pressure from the World Bank and IMF the government was denigrating the Public Sector in favour of the private sector and had thrown the doors wider to the multinationals for high technology. This policy would throw the workers and common people exposed to the unbridled exploitation by the monopolists, both Indian and foreign. He urged upon the delegates to intervene in the policy and the functioning of the public sector demanding equal participation by the workers in the management.

Com. BTR further pointed to the increasing activities of the divisive and secessionist forces which were backed by the imperialists with a view to destabilising the country and enslave it. He said that the bourgeois-landlord government had not only failed to contain these forces but was compromising with them for its electoral gains. He stressed that only the united force of the working class could defeat these imperialist backed forces and maintain the unity and integrity of the country. He further called upon the delegates to build up unremitting struggle for peace against the heightened danger of a nuclear holocaust created by the American imperialists and their cohorts. Among others who greeted the conference were M.K. Pandhe, Satya Gopal Mishra, M.P., Tamilaka Ponda (AIDWA), Jagdish Das (State Govt. employee), etc. Messages of greetings were also received from the transport unions of several foreign countries, national federations and from Com. Jyoti Basu, Chief Minister of W. Bengal.

The conference also gave a call to observe All India Demands Day on April 16. The programme was taken to protest against the non-implemen-

tion of the settlement reached between the Govt of India and the national federations of the Port and Dock workers in April, 1984 following the country-wide indefinite strike. The Conference reelected M.M. Lawrence and K.K. Roy Ganguly as the President and General Secretary respectively.

Successful Observance of April 16: The Demands Day was successfully observed in the country. At Calcutta all the unions staged a day long dharna before the CPT Head Office in Strand Road. Among others the dharna was addressed by Bhola Basu, the CITU leader.

Indian Shippers Forced to Negotiate with FSUI: Despite recognition of the Forward Seamen's Union of India (CITU) by the Government of India, the Indian Shipping companies were refusing to include the representatives of FSUI on the National Maritime Board. The Indian National Shippers Association was negotiating with the representatives of the National Union of Seafarers of India (INTUC) only. The FSUI started agitation and held up the ships in the ports. The Chief Minister, West Bengal, intervened in favour of seamen. Seeing the remarkable unity shown by the seamen in different ports behind FSUI, the INSA was forced to call its representatives for negotiations on 16th April.

Dharna by BEFI

A massive dharna was organised by the Bank Employees Federation of India before the Ministry of Finance at Delhi on April 4. The programme was taken by BEFI to protest against the increasing attacks on the bank employees in the form of massive computerisation, ban on recruitment, premature retirements, victimisations and attack on trade union rights. Over 500 representatives from different states and a large contingent from Delhi participated in the dharna. A team from the All India Regional Rural (Gramin) Bank Employees Association also joined it. The units of the All India Reserve Bank Employees' Association also staged similar dharnas at their Bank offices on the same day at different parts of the country. The dharna was addressed by leaders of several central trade unions, viz, M.K. Pandhe (CITU), Chitta Basu (TUCC), Piyus Tirkey (UTUC), apart from M.P.s, viz, Basudev Acharya, Dipen Ghosh, Ajoy Bishwas of CPI(M). The leaders of the Bank employees from various States including a number of women leaders also addressed the dharna. Basudev Acharya raised the matter in the Lok Sabha later in the day. An 8-member delegation later met the Finance Minister and submitted a memorandum to him. But the Minister said that he had nothing to comment, since the matter was related to the policy of the Government as pronounced by the Prime Minister.

AROUND THE STATES

KARNATAKA

State Committee Meeting: The meeting was held at Bangalore on April 10 under the Presidentship of Suryanarayana Rao. The meeting heard the report of the General Council meeting held at Calcutta from March 31-April 2 and the other industrial meetings. It discussed the plans for celebrating the May Day Centenary and at the outset decided to print the manifesto of CITU and distribute the same to the workers and also to the public. It also decided to hold one symposium at Bangalore on May 21 in observance of the Save Public Sector Day. The meeting also decided to organise District and Taluk level conventions of unemployed workers, followed by a state level convention at Bangalore on May 22. Five thousand copies of a pamphlet "Unemployment Problem" will be brought out before the convention. The meeting further decided to hold a state convention of plantation workers at Chikmagalur on May 17 and 18. It also decided to complete the drought relief collections as early as possible. The meeting directed all unions to pay the affiliation fees and send the annual returns for 1985 before May 1.

ANDHRA PRADESH

State Committee Meeting: The meeting was held at Vijayawada on April 10 and 11 under Presidentship of P. Satyanarayana. The meeting discussed the details of the May Day Centenary programme and decided to observe it alongwith the trade unions on the basis of demands of revolutionary significance. However, the State CITU would observe it independently in the last week of April culminating on the May 1. During the week, one day will be observed highlighting the problem of unemployment, demanding Right to Work to be incorporated in the Constitution and unemployment relief to the unemployed. 12,000 copies of the article by Com. BTR will be sold during the period. The meeting also discussed about the closures and lockouts in the State and demanded reopening of the all the closed units. It demanded of the State Government not to sanction the closure of the Steel Foundry of the AP Steel Corporation and also demanded take over of the Challapalli Sugar Factory. It also demanded withdrawal of the disciplinary action taken against the railway workers for their support given to the Bharat Bundh on February 26, 1986. The meeting also directed the unions to submit the Annual Returns by May 15. The meeting decided to convene the 5th State Conference in the month of October at Kurnool. It also decided to hold conventions of rice mill workers, sugar workers and cement workers in June. The Convention of paper mill

workers will be held on April 15 at Kurnool.

Convention of Public Sector Unions: A State level convention of public sector unions was held at Hyderabad on March 23. The convention was attended by 850 delegates representing the public sector from all over the State. As the issue concerned the officers also, invitation was extended to them also, and about 50 officers from various public sectors attended the convention. Apart from this, about 100 of them attended as delegates representing the officers' associations including K. Ashok Rao, Secretary of their confederation. Besides, Prof. E.A. Ramaswamy of Administrative Staff College, Prof. Laxminarayan of Osmania University, Dr. Vijay Mohan Reddy and others also attended the convention. In a key note address sent to the convention, Com. Joyti Basu, Chief Minister of W. Bengal and Vice-President of CITU made a scathing attack on the shift in the policy of the Central Government regarding the public sector. He said that the assault on the public sector was a part of the package of policy measures in favour of privatisation which the Centre seemed to be implementing along the lines known to be advocated by the IMF and the World Bank. This will exacerbate poverty and unemployment. Speaking as the Chief Guest, N.T. Rama Rao, the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh decried the Centre's policy of importing technological know-how when they were readily available with the public sectors in the country. N. Prasad Rao, the State CITU General Secretary delivered the welcome address and M.K. Pandhe, Secretary, CITU inaugurated the convention. 27 delegates participated in the deliberation. Among others who spoke were Raghunath Reddy, the former Union Labour Minister, Prof. Ramaswamy, Prof. Laxminarayan, Vijay Mohan Reddy, Ashok Rao and Sonawalker. Shri Hari, Secretary of the State CITU moved the main resolution. The resolution called upon the working class to struggle against the policy of denigrating the public sector by the government and build up countrywide united movement with a 12 point demands which included withdrawal of all concessions given to the multinationals, step importing of products and equipments which can be produced in the country by the public sectors, stopping of the computerisation drive, improvement of the working and living conditions of the workers, nationalisation of the cotton, jute, sugar, coir, drugs and other industries, as also the Peerless Company, etc.

DELHI

State Conference: The 6th Conference of Delhi State CITU was held at Faridabad on April 13 and 14, being conducted by a Presidium consisting of Shadiram, Bhagvan Prasad and Bhardwaj. 241 delegates attended the conference which was inaugurated by M.K. Pandhe, Secretary, CITU. 34 delegates participated in the discussion on the General Secretary's report placed by Sushil Bhatta-

charya. After reply by S.B. Bhardwaj, the report was adopted unanimously with a few amendments. The conference adopted resolutions on lockouts, closures, price rise, unemployment, divisive forces, on situation in Punjab and Assam, war and peace, May Day Centenary, nationalisation of the Peerless Company, etc. Addressing the delegates session Com. BTR explained the present national and international situation and called upon the delegates to intensify the struggles for peace, against the divisive forces and the economic policy of the Government. He also explained the revolutionary significance of the May Day and called upon the workers to observe the centenary in its revolutionary tradition. The Conference elected a 31 member committee with Shadiram as President and S.B. Bhardwaj as the General Secretary. The open session was addressed by Com. BTR and S.B. Bhardwaj.

MAHARASHTRA

Massive March against Drought: Over 20 thousand people, workers, kishans, agricultural workers and women converged at Bombay on March 20 from all parts of the State to demonstrate their anger against the government's apathy towards the severe drought the state is suffering from. 16 out of 28 districts of the state are in the grip of severe drought affecting over 15 million people who do not have drinking water even. The protest action was organised jointly by the opposition parties, viz, CPI(M), CPI, Cong(S), Janata, BJP, Peasants and Workers Party, Republican Party (Gavai) and Kamgar Aghadi, and supported by the trade unions, viz, CITU, AITUC, HMKP, UTUC, Datta Samant's unions and the Kishan Sabha and the Agricultural Workers' Union, as well as DYFI and SFI. The 15 thousand people from the villages were joined by about 5 thousand urban workers from Bombay. The march started from Azad Maidan and culminated at Sachivalaya where a rally was held. The rally was addressed among others by Ahiliya Ranganekar, Lahanu Kom, P. Sanzgiri CPI(M), Jagannath Yadav, P.K. Patil (Janata), B.S. Dhume (CPI), R.S. Gavai (Republican), Ram Kapse (BJP), and Padam Singh Patel and Sarad Pawar (Cong-S).

Women's Dharna: A large number of women came to Bombay on March 21 from different parts of the state to stage a dharna which was jointly organised by thirty women's organisations. The dharna was staged near the Bombay University building. Among the demands raised were to withdraw the retrograde Muslim Women's Bill, against price rise, jobs for women, against discrimination, etc. Several trade unions, including CITU and other mass organisations came in procession to greet the women's dharna. The dharna was addressed by leaders of several organisations. Later, a delegation consisting of Ahiliya Ranganekar, Saudamini Rao, Leelatai Bhosle, Manju Gandhi, Tara Reddy and Mumtaz Inamdar met the Chief Minister and submitted a memorandum to him.

Meetings Addressed by Samar Mukherjee: Samar Mukherjee, General Secretary, CITU addressed two meetings of CITU workers in Bombay on

March 18 and 19 at Andheri Centre and Janashak Hall, Worli. He explained the national and international situation and called upon the workers to step up the independent activities of the CITU and forge united struggles so as to meet the challenges effectively. In the international scene, he drew the attention to the increasing war manoeuvres by the US imperialists against the Soviet Union for world domination and urged for developing struggle for peace and safeguard the socialist system. In the national scene, he pinpointed to the disastrous economic policy of the government and the rising divisive forces backed by the imperialists and exhorted for building up united struggle against the same. He laid stress for championing the cause of the peasantry, the unemployed, the unorganised sections and the women workers for an effective movement. He congratulated the workers for making the Bharat Bundh successful and urged for consolidating the unity and carry forward the movements.

BIHAR

Rally against Closures: At the call of CITU, a massive day long dharna was staged before the Legislative Assembly at Patna on March 12, demanding nationalisation of Ashok Paper Mill, Phulwarishariff Cotton Mill and opening of Dalmianagar and other factories. Workers from Jamshedpur, Hazaribagh, Dhanbad, Ranchi, Dalmianagar, Dharbhanga, Sahibganj, Begusarai, Bhagalpur, Patna and other places came to join the dharna. A colourful procession started from the State Committee office at Kanbarbagh and culminated near the Assembly. The dharna was addressed among others by Yogeshwar Gope, Chandi Prasad, Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, Abdul Hakim, K.K. Tripathi, S.K. Sharma, and Subodh Roy, General Secretary of the State Kishan Sabha. A delegation later met the State Labour Minister and handed over a memorandum.

MADHYA PRADESH

Strike in Gwalior Rayon: The workers of the Gwalior Rayon (Grasim) are on indefinite strike at Nagda since March 21 in pursuance of their long standing demands. The strike has been unitedly called by CITU, AITUC and other unions. Despite frantic attempts by the management and the INTUC union the strike has been complete and has seriously affected the stock of viscose staple fibre in other mills also. The Chairman of the Indian Cotton Mills Federation had to admit about the serious situation and express the opinion that the immediate solution was to end the strike. But despite this, the management of the Birla enterprise have remained adamant. 127 workers, mostly of CITU were arrested. Section 144 has been clamped. But the strike has got full support from various trade unions. There was a complete Nagda Bandh on April 12. The striking workers are being addressed by various leaders and MPs, viz, Homi Daji (AITUC), P.K. Moitra (CITU), Masudal Hussain, M.P., CPI-M, etc. Processions and rallies are being held daily.

Glorious Strike of Coal Workers

ALL the Central Trade Unions in the Coal industry united and the work in all the 450 coal mines in India came to a grinding halt when the seven lakh coal workers went on complete strike on April 9 demanding full implementation of the National Coal Wage Agreement—III. Never before such a massive strike was organised in the coal industry. The call of the strike was jointly given by the All India Coal Workers Federation (CITU); Indian National Mine Workers' Federation (INTUC), Indian Mine Workers Federation (AITUC), Hind Khandan Mazdoor Federation (HMS) and Akhil Bharatiya Khandan Mazdoor Sangh (BMS). The 11-point Charter of Demands contained several non-implemented clauses of the agreement, like provision of drinking water, housing, education, medical benefits, violation of safety rules, enhancement of ceiling on gratuity, pension scheme, uniform standing orders, job to dependants, etc.

There was simmering discontent among the coal-workers due to the continued refusal of the CIL management and the Government to fully honour the NCWA-III which was signed in September, 1983 and was to be implemented with retrospective effect from January, 1983. All the federations tried their best patiently all these years for settlement of the demands. But both the CIL management and the Government remained adamant and callous to the problems of the workers. The workers were thus forced to embark upon the path of direct action. The federations called upon their unions to launch independent actions first. The AICWF observed an All India Protest Day on February 5. Then an All India Demands Day was launched on March 3. On March 21 all the federations jointly served the strike notice by holding massive demonstrations in all the mines. The joining of the INTUC reinforced the unity of the workers. The CIL management and the Government called hurried meetings, but only with the motive to disrupt the strike. Since the authorities were in no mood to settle the demands, the federation, were also in no mood to withdraw the strike notice. The Government laid bare its anti-labour character by illegalising the strike. But the workers were undeterred and the strike was complete. Leaders of the federations addressed joint rallies of the striking workers in several collieries. On behalf of CITU, M.K. Pandhe, Ramnika Gupta, Chandni Prasad, Sunil Basu Roy, Bamapada Mukherjee, Basudev Acharya, M.P., and others addressed several rallies.

The CPI(M), CITU and other Central Trade Unions issued statements congratulating the coal workers for their unique show of unity and success of the strike. The CITU and AICWF appealed to all the unions to further strengthen the unity so that the Government and the CIL were forced to settle their demands and the interests of the coal miners effectively protected. They warned the Government of bigger struggles if it continued to refuse implementation of all the clauses of the NCWA-III.

Coal Workers to Fight Back Victimisation

Exasperated by the unprecedented strike of coal miners the CIL management resorted to large scale victimisation measures. Printed show cause notices, charge sheets have been issued against the striking workers. Threats of deduction of 8 days' wages have been given to several workers.

The extended office bearers' meeting of the All India Coal Workers' Federation which met in Calcutta on 18th April under the Presidentship of M.K. Pandhe, strongly condemned these victimisation measures of the managements and warned that if they persist in these vindictive actions, coal workers will be left with no other alternative but to resort to indefinite strike actions in areas where management had been indulging in such penal measures.

The meeting reviewed the recent countrywide strike and noted with satisfaction that never before such a complete strike was witnessed in all the coal mining regions in the country. The AICWF therefore appealed to all the Federations to strengthen the unity built in the strike and prepare for still bigger struggles in order to compel the managements to honour all the commitments given in the last agreement. It also appealed to all the Federations of coal workers to prepare a joint Charter of Demands for the next round of wage negotiations so that the managements are forced to start negotiations without any further delay. The AICWF has already prepared a draft of the Charter of Demands for the coal industry.

The meeting condemned the U.S. imperialists for their cowardly attack on Libya and called upon the coal workers to join solidarity actions against the U.S. pirates. It welcomed the unity achieved among all the Central T.U. organisations against communal and divisive forces, against war danger and the support of the struggle of the people of South Africa. It supported the All India Convention being held at Delhi against communalism and decided to observe 16th June as Anti-Apartheid Day in all the Coal mines in co-operation with other unions. The meeting also called upon all the unions in coal industry to observe 21st May as All India Save Public Sector Day against the derogatory policies of the Central Government.

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"Meet the Challenge to Job Security Unitedly"

—Calcutta Convention

THE joint convention of Railwaymen and all other sections of Central employees held in Calcutta on 10th April '86 in the spacious auditorium of Netaji Subhas Institute ended with a clarion call for all in unity in defence of job security and rights of Govt. employees, for protecting the employment potential of the country. The declaration adopted by the convention states, "all the Piecemeal and sectoral movements of different sections of Govt. employees will have to be merged into a total united movement to meet the challenge". The declaration described in details how job security and employment potential has been subjected to severe attack through application of Art 310, 311(2) (a) (b) (c) of Constitution, computerisation etc.

The Convention which was organised jointly by Eastern Railwaymen's union, All India Railway Employees' Confederation — E Rly and SE Rly units, E Rly workers union, Metro Railwaymen's Union, units of National Federation of P & T Employees, All India Defence Employee's Federation, Confederation of Central Govt. Employees and other organisations operating in the Eastern Region, were addressed among others by S.K. Vyas S.M. Banerjee, K.M. Mathew, Parvati Krishnan, Sukomal Sen MP, Dipen Ghosh MP.

The Convention decided to hold a Central rally of Central Govt. Employees on 15th May at Calcutta, which would be preceded by observance of Protest Day on 8th May, the day on which the historic Railway strike of 1974 started. Programme of both these days would be observed jointly in districts, divisions and regions as well, the convention decided.

The Eastern Railway unity committee formed earlier comprising of major unions on the Eastern Railway including the AIRF unit played an important role in bringing about this convention reflecting more broadbased unity.

Coal Ash & Transshipment Workers

The Annual Conference of Indian Railways Coal, Ash & Transshipment Handling Mazdoor Union (CITU) held at Adra, West Bengal on March 29-30, 1986 once again reiterated their emphatic demand for alternative job for contractors labour engaged in Coal Ash and Transshipment handling work on Indian Railway who are being redundant as a result of progressive closure of steam Loco sheds as a part of the plan for gradual abolition of steam traction, as also abolition of some yards. The conference expressed serious concern over the fate of several lakhs of contractors labour who are

going to be thrown out of employment in next few years and resolved to carry on extensive campaign throughout the country to mobilise support from all sections of democratic people.

In all 348 delegates attended the Conference which was inaugurated on 29th by S.K. Dhar, Secretary General, AILRSA. Samar Mukherjee General Secretary, CITU addressed the session and Basudev Acharya, welcomed the delegates and guests.

The open session held same evening was attended by over 5 thousand people from all walks of life and was addressed among others by Samar Mukherjee who urged upon workers to build up most broad based unity to meet the challenge of the anti-labour policies of the Government.

Station Masters

The 32nd Biennial General Meeting of the All India Station Masters Association was held at New Jalpaiguri on NF Railway on March 29-31, 1986. The meeting attended by over 600 delegates from all different zones hailing from all parts of the country was inaugurated by CM Singh President, AIREC. Chief Guest Achyut Deka, Convention Joint Council of Trade Unions, Assam released the souvenir. Seminars on effects of automation and on Articles 310 and 311 of Constitution were addressed among others by Subhasis Gupta and Sadhan Gupta. Other permanent trade union leaders also addressed the main session. The resolutions adopted in the meeting demanded immediate publication of 4th Pay Commission Report, opposed the antilabour policies of the Govt., computerisation, ban on recruitment, staff reduction etc and demanded constitutional job guarantee for all besides proper implementation of cadre restructuring, 40 hr week etc. The meeting elected US Singh as President and P Sivan Pillai as Secretary General for the next time.

Against Terrorist Attack

Protest by Railwaymen of Amritsar and other places against the brutal murder of 2 Railwaymen of Golvarvarpal Rly station on Amritsar Taran Taran Section N. Rly led to suspension of Rly operation for five hours. In a joint statement the Divisional Secretary of NRMU (AIRF) demanded firm action by Punjab & Union Govt. against attacks and dividing workers on Religions Communal lines. Mourning Day was observed throughout Ferozpur Division on 4th April.

Working Committee Meeting of SWFI

THE Steel Workers' Federation of India has decided to organise demonstrations in all the Steel centres, captive mines and Central Marketing Organisations on 12th May and submit the Charter of Demands to all the managements for the forthcoming wage negotiations in the country. The SWFI appealed to other unions in steel industry to submit similar charter of demands so that negotiations for the next wage agreement can commence at an early date. The Working Committee of the SWFI which met in Calcutta on 17th April under the Presidentship of M.K. Pandhe, decided to launch a country-wide movement in pursuance of the Charter of Demands.

The meeting reviewed the present crisis in the Steel Industry and decided to launch a campaign in all the plants to explain the situation. A booklet will be published by the SWFI in different languages to popularise the campaign. Demonstrations will be organised in all the steel townships on 21st May, 1986 in observance of All India Save Public Sector Day.

The meeting further decided to popularise the decisions of the Central Trade Unions against communalism, war danger and the white racist regime in South Africa. By a resolution, the meeting also condemned the U.S. aggressive acts against Libya.

Massive Rally Against Muslim Women's Bill

OVER one thousand muslim women from the various states of the country converged at Delhi on April 17 to demand withdrawal of the retrograde Muslim Women's (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Bill introduced by the Government of India. The rally was jointly organised by AIDWA; NFIW; Committee for Protection of Rights of Muslim Women, Delhi; Committee for Protection of Muslim Women, West Bengal, Muslim Satyashodhak Mandal, Pune and Muslim Women's Rights Protection Committee, Calicut. The procession started from Windsor Place and culminated at Boat Club where a day long dharna was staged. Among those who addressed the dharna were Sushila Gopalan, Ahiliya Rangnekar, Kanak Mukherjee, Samar Mukherjee, Saifuddin Chowdhury, etc. The speakers denounced the Rajiv Gandhi Government for introducing the retrograde Bill only to appease the reactionary fundamentalist sections of the muslims and for trying to subvert the Supreme Court judgement on the Shah Bano case. The Bill exonerated the husband and deprived the divorced muslim women of all their rights. It was a direct attack on the weaker section of the society

and blatantly encouraged the divisive forces. They extended full support to the movement and called upon the women to intensify their agitation to compel the Government to withdraw the Bill.

Later, a delegation representing the organisations met the President, the Prime Minister and the Speaker of Lok Sabha and submitted memoranda to them demanding withdrawal of the Bill.

The attitude of the Prime Minister was laid bare when he told the delegation that equal rights for women and maintenance were "Western" concept, and not Indian. When asked whether democracy and Parliament were also Western concept, he had no answer. Similarly he said that "secularism" meant "all religions", and not "no religion". When asked whether the State itself should dabble in religious affairs, he was silent again. The delegation told the Prime Minister that the Bill went against the very grain of secularism and was in clear violation of the tenets of the Constitution. The delegation pointed out to the Prime Minister that the muslim women from all over the country had participated in the rally because of the concern and anguish they felt against the Bill. They demanded for its forthwith withdrawal failing which the organisations were prepared for further heightened struggles.

CITU Hails Successful Bharat Bandh

B. T. RANADIVE, President, CITU issued the following Statement on February 26:

The CITU congratulates the working class of the country for active participation in the call for strike and a bandh today in protest against the huge increase in the prices of rice, wheat, coal and petroleum products which had the effect of increasing prices of all items of daily necessities. The strike and bandh in almost all the states which have not been exempted is reported total and successful.

The CITU also warmly congratulates the State Govt. Employees throughout the country for their successful strike demanding repeal of Art, 310 (1) and 311 (2) (a) (b) & (c) of the Constitution which take away their right to self-defence before being sacked from service.

The CITU warns the Government that failure to give due respect to the expression of resentment by the workers and the Government employees against price-rise and for right to self-defence, would lead to further struggle by them. The CITU appeals to the Working Class to close their ranks and prepare for sustained struggle if the Government does not pay heed to the warning strike today.

On Labour in Parliament

Article 311 : CPI(M) M.P. Ajay Biswas made a special mention for deleting Articles 310 and 311 (2) (a) (b) (c) on February 26, when five million State Govt. employees went on strike on this demand. P. Chidambaram, Minister of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pension in a letter dated March 7, informed the M.P. that the Govt. does not consider amendment necessary. Biswas in a press release on March 12 deprecated the undemocratic stand of the Government.

National Tannery : A joint deputation of Badal Kar (CITU) and P. Sen (INTUC), leaders of National Tannery workers alongwith Dipen Ghosh, Basudeb Acharya, Amal Dutta (MPs, CPIM) and D.P. Ray, Cong. (I) M.P., met N.D. Tiwari, P. Shiv Shankar and V.P. Singh, Ministers for Industry, Commerce and Finance for nationalisation of this undertaking as the Public Financial Institutions were holding 80 per cent equity shares. The Commerce Minister assured that STC will co-operate in securing orders.

Titagarh Paper Mills : Ten Members of Parliament (CPIM) led by Basudev Acharya and Somnath Chatterjee in a memorandum to Finance Minister on 20.3.86 made a strong plea for take over of Titagarh Paper Mills. A joint Trade Union delegation of CITU and INTUC led by Dipen Ghosh, Amal Dutta (CPIM) and D.P. Roy Cong (I) also met V. P. Singh the Finance Minister the same day.

Eviction of Nepalese : Basudev Acharya and 9 other MPs of (CPI-M) in a joint letter to Prime Minister on 3.4.86 expressed concern at the forcible eviction of Nepalese of Indian origin from the mine areas of Bapung Khelerihat and Latramboi in Jaintia Hills and urged upon him to intervene. CPI(M) M.Ps submitted another memorandum to the Prime Minister on 15.4.86.

Closure of Burn Standard Units : A Trade Union delegation consisting of Haradhan Roy M.L.A. and Bibek Chowdhury accompanied by Basudev Acharya, Somnath Chatterjee, Amal Dutta, Saifuddin Chowdhury, Purna Chandra Malik, Bibha Ghosh Goswami (all CPI-M) and Geeta Mukherjee (CPI) met the Industry Ministry N.D. Tiwari on 11th April and demanded withdrawal of closure notice on two refractory units of the Burn Standard Co. Ltd.

Closure of NTC Mills : Twenty M.Ps of (CPIM), in a joint letter to the Prime Minister on April 12 opposed the closing down of eight NTC mills which was announced by Khurshid Alam Khan at Lucknow.

Orient Power Cables : Twelve M.Ps (CPI-M), accompanied by A.A. Khan, President, Kota Distt. CITU submitted a memorandum to the Union Labour Minister on April 17 protesting

against illegal declaration of Orient Power Cables as a Relief Undertaking. Samar Mukherjee, Gen. Secretary, CITU is a statement issued on the same day also condemned the Govt. step.

Swiss Jewels India Ltd. : Basudeb Acharya and 10 other CPI-M MPs in joint letter to Finance Minister on 21.4.86 demanded nationalisation of Swiss Jewels India Ltd., as public financial institutions have provided 72 per cent of its Capital.

Peerless : A delegation consisting of Dipen Ghosh Amal Dutta (both of CPI-M) and D.P. Roy Cong-I met the Union Finance Minister V.P. Singh on March 20 alongwith Jaharlal Mukherjee, Secretary of Peerless Employees Union, and urged for nationalisation of the Peerless General Finance and Investment Co. Ltd., as under the Prize Chits and Money Circulation Schemes (Banning) Act the company has been prohibited to conduct business. Later on the day. Sukomal Sen of CPI-(M) in a Special Mention in Rajya Sabha also raised the same demand. On December 11 also a delegation of 25 M.P.s submitted a memorandum to the Finance Minister demanding the company's nationalisation in the interest of 4 lakh field staff, 4 thousand office staff and 2 crores certificate holders. The West Bengal and Tripura Assemblies also unanimously demanded nationalisation of the company. The Peerless Employees Union and the Favourite Small Investment Union (both CITU) held a joint rally at Delhi on April 11, which was addressed by Saifuddin Chowdhury, M.P., CPI(M) and P.K. Ganguly, Secretary, CITU. Massive agitations have been launched by the employees in West Bengal and other parts of the country demanding nationalisation of the two companies. In a statement issued on March 21, B. T. Ranadive, President CITU demanded nationalisation of the company. The CITU General Council also in its meeting held at Calcutta from March 31-April 2 raised the same demand. A massive 25-thousand strong rally was held at Boat Club on April 23 by the field staff association and the employees unions, addressed by M.P.s of all parties. A delegation met the Finance Minister demanding nationalisation.

IISCO : Six Members of Parliament, viz, Basudev Acharya, Ajit Shaha, Dipen Ghosh (all CPI-M) Indrajit Gupta (CPI) and Gopeshwar, Ananda Gopal Mukherjee (Cong-I), accompanied by M. K. Pandhe, Bamapada Mukherjee, S. N. Kar Chowdhury (CITU) and Priyalal Shah, D. K. Brajabasi (AITUC) met the Union Steel Minister, K. C. Pant on April 21 and submitted a memorandum urging to provide sufficient funds to modernise IISCO so that it can be revived in the interest of 24000 employees. They expressed concern over the penetration of a multinational company for running the IISCO and demanded utilisation of Indian technical know-how instead of relying on a Japanese consortium.

National Convention against Communalism and Divisive Forces

AS already reported in the March issue of The Working Class, all the Central Trade Unions, demonstrating an unique show of trade union unity met on February 15 and 17 and on March 22 and adopted unanimous resolutions against Communalism and the Divisive Forces, against Apartheid in South Africa and on Peace and Disarmament. The Central Trade Unions represented were INTUC, CITU, AITUC, HMS, BMS, UTUC, TUCC, UTUC(LS), NLO and NFITU.

The meeting of March 22, which was attended by Samar Mukherjee, General Secretary and M.K. Pandhe, Secretary, on behalf of CITU, decided to hold a National Convention against Communalism and Divisive Forces at Delhi on May 11 and also to observe June 16 as the Anti-Apartheid Day. Later on, a day will also be observed as Peace and Disarmament Day.

A Preparatory Committee was formed to organise the convention against communalism. The Preparatory Committee met on April 11 and 19 and decided to hold the convention at Mavalankar Hall. It also decided that 1000 delegates should participate in the convention — 100 per each Central Trade Union. The Committee chalked out other details also.

The meeting of March 22 unanimously adopted the following two resolutions, viz, on Trade Unions' National Convention against Communalism and on Trade Unions' Action against Apartheid:

Trade Union' National Convention against Communalism.

This meeting of the national centres of trade unions expresses its grave concern over the highly deteriorating communal situation in the country. There have been large scale communal riots in J&K, Punjab, Delhi, U.P. and other states recently.

Communal elements use any pretext to foment riots. Issues like Supreme Court judgement in Shah Bano's case and then Court order in Babri Masjid-Ramjanam Bhumi case were used by the Islamic Fundamentalists and arch Hindu communalists to flame up communal riots. In Punjab and J & K foreign trained infiltrators found acting in a concerted way to foment riots and they have succeeded to create bad blood at last. Similarly, tension is brewing at Mathura, Varanasi and other centres regarding places of worship. These communal elements openly use places of worship, for collecting arms and arsenals and commit crimes.

This meeting notes with regret that industrial centres have been seriously affected due to criminal activities of regional chauvinists and divisive forces. It has also been the experience that in most of the communal riots the Harijans, Adivasis and other weaker sections of the society are generally victims. The conflict between scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and caste Hindus on the question of reservation of jobs has led to several cases of casteist violence in Gujarat and other States which has seriously affected the unity of the working class.

It is therefore urgently needed that the organised working class intervene immediately and effectively in this critical hour to preserve communal amity and bring a sense of oneness in the country in co-operation with all the secular and patriotic forces. It is high time that the organised working class actively opposes all communal, secessionist, parochial, casteist, divisive and obscurantist forces and lead the country to communal harmony, national unity and peace.

With this end in view this meeting as per its declaration on National Integration of 17th February, 1986 resolves to convene a national convention of the Trade Unions in Delhi on 11th May 1986.

This meeting calls upon all working class and secular and patriotic people to extend their hands of cooperation in this noble task and ensure national integration in all its aspects.

Trade Unions' Action Against Apartheid

Acknowledging the urgency for action embedded in our Declaration on Apartheid of 17th February, 1986 and in deference to the overwhelming response to the Declaration amongst the working people and noting the escalation of racist violence in South Africa, the National Centres of trade unions having met in Delhi on Saturday, the 22nd March 1986, resolve that an Anti-Apartheid Day be observed on June 16 to reaffirm the solidarity of Indian working class with the liberation movement in South Africa and Namibia to highlight the atrocities committed by the racist regime, to expose the support and assistance that South African regime receives from certain governments and to demand the immediate unconditional release of Nelson Mandela and other freedom fighters languishing in South African Jails, appeal to the workers to contribute generously to a fund to be known as the Trade Unions' Solidarity Fund for South Africa.

NCC Calls for Countrywide Struggle against Economic Policy of Central Government

THE National Campaign Committee of Trade Unions in its meeting held in North Avenue, M.P.'s Club, Delhi on March 22 called upon the working class of India to resolutely fight Rajiv Gandhi Government's economic policies which hit the working class and the poor people of this country.

Thampan Thomas, M.P., Secretary, Hind Mazdoor Sabha presided over the meeting. 68 representatives belonging to Central Trade Unions and Industrywise Federations participated in it.

The meeting expressed grave concern at the growth of communal, casteist, regional, chauvinist, cessionist forces in the country which are disrupting the unity of the working class. It called upon the working class to oppose these forces so that the unity and integrity of the country is preserved.

The N.C.C. congratulated the working class for observing All India Protest Day on 20th February and Bharat Bundh against price rise on 26th February, 1986 as per its appeal and called upon the workers to continue the struggle against high prices with determination.

The meeting expressed its grave concern at the growing menace of closures, sickness, retrenchment, lock outs etc. all over the country and held the Central Government responsible for the deteriorating economic situation. The reckless drive for modernisation and computerisation has further accentuated the problem leading to large scale unemployment in the country. It demanded Right to Work as a fundamental right to be enshrined in the Constitution of India.

The NCC considered the new policy of the Government to denigrate the public sector as a retrograde one. It condemned the secret report of the committee headed by Dr. Arjun Sen Gupta and the stand of the Government to close down the public sector units making financial losses. The meeting criticised the steps towards privatisation of the public undertakings and increasing use of contract labour to perform the jobs of permanent nature. It opposed the proposal of the Central Government to scuttle the bipartite wage negotiations and impose Wage Boards on the public sector workers and called upon the workers to defeat the machination of the Government through united movement.

The meeting noted the growing attacks on trade union rights of the working class. The new amendments to Industrial Disputes Act will drastically curtail their Trade Union rights. It congratulated over 5 million state Govt. employees all over the country for their glorious strike on 26th February, 1986 demanding deletion of Article 311(2) (a), (b) & (c) from the Constitution of India.

The meeting fully supported the united decision of the Coal Unions to go on one day strike on 9th April 1986 in protest against non-implementation of their national wage agreement signed over 2 years ago. It also expressed its firm solidarity with the decision of the defence employees to go on one day strike on 21st May, 1986 against privatisation in defence industries, victimisation of leading workers and other demands. The NCC condemned the retrenchment of 6500 workers of Food Corporation of India whose jobs were handed over to the unscrupulous contractors.

The NCC will prepare programme of conventions and seminars all over the country to mobilise the workers on common issues. It will hold the Third All India Convention to highlight the most urgent issues of the workers and chalk out phased programme of Direct Action to press for their legitimate demands. The question of public sector employees movement will also be taken on a priority basis.

The N.C.C. will meet shortly and finalise details of the programme.

The meeting was addressed by Samar Mukherjee, Indrajit Gupta, S.M. Banerjee, Sukomal Sen, M.P., B.D. Joshi, N.S. Bhangoon, R. Chakrabarty, Yogeshwar Dutt, S.K. Dhar, Shri Krishna, J.P. Choubey, A.M. Purohit, S.K. Vyas, A.N. Dogra, R. Syal, Nageshwar Rao, B. Pandey, K.N. Pandit and R.K. Bhakt.

CITU Nominations

1. Com. M.M. Lawrence, Secretary, CITU will attend the Congress of General Trade Union Confederation of Romania to be held at Bucharest from April 24-26, 1986. He will also attend the May Day Celebration at Bucharest.

2. Com. K.N. Ravindranath, a member of the Working Committee of CITU and General Secretary of its Kerala State Committee will attend the May Day Celebration at Moscow and also take part in an International Conference on "Trade Union Solidarity, May Day Traditions and Challenges of Today" at Moscow on May 3-4, 1986.

3. The following Comrades have been nominated for a study visit to Moscow for 35 days from June 1 as a part of a joint group of trade unionists invited by the AUCCTU:

Com. K.M. Abraham, Member, Working Committee—Leader of the group

Com. Yeshwant Koli, Member, General Council

Com. Ajit Mukherjee, Member, General Council

Com. M.N. Ugrappa, Member Karnataka State Committee of CITU.

Save Public Sector Day — May 21

THE first meeting of the Co-ordination Committee of Public Sector Unions (CITU) was held at Durgapur on March 28 and 29. The meeting was attended by 43 members and invitees. The meeting discussed about the danger posed to the Public Sector undertakings as a result of the Government's policy to denigrate the public sector and decided to launch a countrywide campaign to mobilise the public sector employees against the Governments' policy. With this view the meeting decided to observe May 21 as All India Save Public Sector Day. The All India Defence Employees Federation has also given a call for a countrywide strike on the same day in protest against the Central Government's decision to privatise the defence production in the country.

The meeting appealed to all the unions in the public sector to observe the day unitedly in a befettering manner in defence of the public sector and against the policy of privatisation and Arjun Sen Gupta committee's report. The General Council meeting of CITU held at Calcutta from March 31 to April 2 endorsed the decision of the meeting.

Apart from the main resolution the Appeal to Save the Public Sector in India, the meeting also adopted resolutions supporting the coal workers' decision to launch an united strike on April 9, and also on the crisis in steel industry, calling upon the steel workers to launch countrywide movement demanding of the Government to stop import of steel and make the country self-reliant in steel production.

The appeal to save the public sector in India is being published hereunder:

Appeal to Save the Public Sector in India

The meeting of the Co-ordination Committee of Public Sector Unions views with grave concern series of steps taken by the Rajiv Gandhi Government during the last one year to scuttle the public Sector which will lead to strengthening the hands of multinational companies and the Indian monopoly capital.

In the name of liberalising import policy the Central Government has permitted import of several items which are being indigenously manufactured by the Public Sector undertakings. While multinational companies are given free reign to penetrate in Indian market at the behest of the World Bank and the IMF, Public Sector units are unable to sell their products. The MAMC, CEL, HMT, ECIL, FCI, IDPL as well as engineering and other units are facing acute marketing difficulties due to this policy. Even in the construction industry multinationals are permitted to compete with public sector companies such as HSCL, NBCC, NPCC, EPI and EIL and several crucial contracts have

been bagged by the multinational companies. The device of hushmoney has been recklessly used by the multinational companies to purchase the bureaucrats and the higher-ups in authority.

Whatever technology has been built by Indian scientists and technicians over a period of years is being allowed to go in drain and ready made technology which has become obsolete in their own country is being dumped in our country. The public sector which was considered as an instrument to develop self-reliance in the national economy is being relegated in the background causing heavy drain of precious foreign exchange resources.

The Rajiv Gandhi Government has gone ahead in jet speed to implement the recommendations of Dr. Arjun Sen Gupta Committee on the public sector undertakings, as a result of which the public sector is being sought to run on the lines of the private sector. The concept of holding company, expediting the process of closure of the units which are making losses consecutively for a period of 5 years without going into the real causes of their incurring losses, giving full freedom to bureaucrats to deal with all aspects of working of the undertaking in the name of introducing autonomy, refusal to take over sick and closed units with a view to nationalising them, privatisation of the work in public sector in a phased manner are in full swing.

Even in the core sector the private capital is permitted to freely compete with the public sector such as steel, heavy engineering, oil exploration, fertiliser etc, putting public sector in competitive disadvantages.

The Government is conniving at massive recruitment of contract labour and off loading of jobs in all the public sector undertakings. This phenomenon has assumed serious proportions after the Central Government's directive to ban recruitment in public sector undertakings.

In the name of high technology software and hardware of computers are freely being imported and computerisation is being introduced on a massive scale. The modernisation drive alongwith this has created huge surplusage in public sector, creating a sense of insecurity among its employees.

The sick units in textile, engineering etc. are facing a serious threat of closure and several units are surviving on borrowed time only. Threat to closure is systematically being used to impose humiliating working conditions on workers.

This meeting considers this situation as a big challenge to the very existence of the public sector. It is therefore the duty of the working class and officials in the public sector to come together and rise to the occasion to protect the very existence of

the public sector. It is only 4 lakh workers and the officials, who are the backbone of the public sector industries, can take effective steps to protect the public sector, despite sabotage by the Govt., and the top heavy administration.

The meeting therefore calls upon all the unions and associations in public sector to educate the working class and the people of this country about the challenging situation faced by the public undertakings so that a country-wide movement is launched to defeat the Central Government's retrograde policies towards public sector.

It therefore decides that an All India Save Public Sector Day should be observed on 21st May, 1986 by holding meetings, rallies, issuing leaflets etc, so that the dangers posed the Government's policies are explained to all those who cherish genuine economic development of the country. On this day the defence employees all over India will also observe one day's strike against privatisation of defence production at the call of All India Defence Employees Federation.

It further calls for holding local, regional, state level and industrywise conventions by involving various trade unions, Officers' Associations, academicians, mass organisations, Members of Parliament and other public personalities so that a powerful voice in defence of public sector is raised all over the country.

While preparing for the forthcoming wage negotiations the trade unions should also raise necessary demands to defend the integrity of the public sector and raise issues about the suicidal policies adopted by the Central Government.

The Co-ordination Committee should meet again after completing this programme so that further agitational measures can be chalked out.

This meeting appeals to the working class and the people of India to give full support to this programme so that the Central Government is prevented from further launching assaults on the public sector in India.

Consumer Price Index Numbers

(Base 1960)

State/Centre	Nov. 1985	Dec. 1985	Jan. 1986								
				Bangalore	684	694	699	Coonoor	672	678	670
				Chikamagalur	631	620	621	Madurai	649	656	654
				Kolar G.F.	624	641	642	U.P.			
Andhra Pradesh				Kerala				Kanpur	627	625	623
Gudur	553	556	556	Alleppey	677	681	698	Saharanpur	628	621	622
Guntur	656	663	669	Alwaye	662	666	670	Varanasi	706	714	709
Hyderabad	634	641	648	Mundakayam	601	603	612	West Bengal			
Assam				Madhya Pradesh				Asansol	632	639	636
Digboi	620	604	608	Balaghat	649	630	630	Calcutta	628	623	612
Doom Dooma	493	493	493	Bhopal	714	711	711	Darjeeling	537	529	528
Labac	483	467	459	Gwalior	646	632	629	Howrah	582	584	579
Mariani	524	521	479	Indore	671	669	674	Jalpaiguri	528	523	503
Rangapara	594	483	472	Maharashtra				Raniganj	584	584	581
Bihar				Bombay	654	658	668	Delhi Territory	658	652	658
Jamshedpur	600	595	587	Nagpur	647	640	632	Other Centres			
Jharia	546	548	539	Sholapur	656	663	672	Berhampur ('49)	916	895	858
Kodarma	628	616	618	Orissa				Cuttack ('49)	858	854	862
Monghyr	640	637	630	Barbil	590	592	592	Jabalpur ('49)	798	804	801
Noamundi	552	557	559	Sambalpur	656	634	639	Beawar ('51-52)	749	743	732
Gujarat				Punjab				Tripura ('61)	564	560	561
Ahmedabad	609	605	607	Amritsar	629	627	620	H.P. ('65)	455	457	457
Bhavanagar	661	676	670	Rajasthan				Goa ('66)	470	467	479
Haryana				Ajmer	639	641	638	Bhilai ('66)	425	423	418
Yamunanagar	639	622	628	Jaipur	665	662	665	Bhilwara ('66)	403	404	407
J. & K.				Tamil Nadu				Chhindwara ('66)	334	338	335
Srinagar	670	648	655	Madras	648	651	653	Kothagudem ('66)	420	424	419
Karnataka				Coimbatore	681	688	689	Rourkela ('66)	439	439	431
Ammathi	641	626	628					All India ('60)	630	630	629

(Figures in bracket indicate base year)

Joint May Day Appeal by CITU and AITUC to the Working Class of India

Subsequent to the joint communique issued by CITU and AITUC on February 15 (published in the March issue) for holding joint celebrations of the May Day throughout the country, the leadership of the two organisations met again and issued the following joint appeal on April 11. The meeting was attended by Comrades Homi Daji, Vice President and T.N. Siddhanta, Secretary of AITUC and M.K. Pandhe, Nrisingha Chakrabarty and P.K. Ganguly, Secretaries of CITU.

ON the historic occasion of the Centenary of May Day, the Centenary of the martyrdom of seven heroic trade unionists we send warm fraternal greetings to workers and trade unions of India and of all the countries throughout the world.

It is one hundred years since the workers of Chicago, voicing the demand of thousands of workers of many countries, held a massive demonstration demanding an end to merciless capitalist exploitation for an eight-hour working day. Brutal police firing resulted in death of seven and injuries to hundreds of others. Four of the leaders were hanged on trumped up charges. The struggle continued, not only in America but in a number of countries. Since 1890 the First of May has been observed, first in America and Europe and gradually throughout the world, as a day of international working class solidarity, as a day of rededication to the relentless struggle against all forms of oppression and exploitation, rededication to the struggle to end forever poverty and unemployment, rededication to the struggle for an end to the exploitative capitalist system and a lasting peace and socialism.

Since May 1886, the working class of all countries have achieved many a victory. In 1917, the working class established the first socialist state in the world. In the short span of less than twenty five years this state, the Soviet Union, became one of the leading powers in the world. In 1945 the Red Army, the army of the working class and of all working people, headed the victory over fascism! This victory ushered in a new era in world-history. Revolutions succeeded in Eastern Europe, China, Vietnam, Cuba and other countries and today in more than one-third of the world, the working class is in power. The victory also ushered in an era of victories of one national liberation movement after another. We, in India, achieved our independence in 1947.

On this May Day, humanity is faced with the grave threat of a nuclear holocaust, US imperialism and its allies are pursuing the disastrous policy of escalating nuclear arms manufacture, rejecting all proposals of the Soviet Union and socialist countries for a programme of disarmament. The Reagan administration has announced its determination to pursue the "star-wars" programme.

The working class of India can see for themselves that the present war danger does not emanate from the mad arms race of two super powers as some contend in our country. It emanates from the policy of US imperialists who with the sole aim of global domination have made the socialist system and particularly the USSR as their target. We call upon the working class to march hand in hand with all peace loving forces to foil the designs of US imperialism and fight for peace.

The constructive peace proposals put forward by M.S. Gorbachov on behalf of the Soviet Union to rid the world of nuclear weapons, to enter the 21st century without nuclear and other mass destruction weapons, to ensure that the resources now spent on manufacture of weapons of death and destruction are diverted instead for developmental purposes, to accelerate all round economic and social development and ensure a higher level of cultural and spiritual life for humanity have found growing support of the working class and trade unions, of all sections of the people, of all countries. The constructive proposals provide a valuable basis for taking this struggle forward to greater and ultimate success. On this May Day we appeal to all workers and trade unions to intensify the campaign for peace and in support of these proposals.

The arming of Pakistan by the US imperialists with increasingly sophisticated weapons, increasing US naval exercises in the Indian Ocean strengthening of Diego Garcia as a nuclear weapons base and machinations in Sri Lanka and Bangladesh — all these constitute attempt to encircle India militarily and the danger of war looms large on the borders of India. It has become more urgent than ever for the working class and trade unions of India to work unitedly and in concert with the working class and trade unions of all countries against these aggressive designs of US imperialism and its allies and participate in ever growing number in the world wide struggle for peace and disarmament.

On this May Day, we call on the workers and trade unions to uphold the banner of proletarian internationalism by expressing their solidarity with all national liberation movements against imperialism, neo-colonialism, racism, and apartheid, to declare their solidarity with the people of South Africa in their struggle against the apartheid regime, to declare their solidarity with the people of Namibia fighting for their independence, to declare their solidarity with the people of Nicaragua defending their country's integrity against the US sponsored armed attacks and economic blockade, to declare their solidarity with the people of Palestine fighting for their homeland, the people of Salvador fighting for their liberation, to declare their solidarity with the people of the subcontinent — Pakistan,

Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka struggling for democratic rights.

On this May Day we call upon the working class of India to address themselves to the problems facing the country. Policy of non-alignment is under severe attack by the US imperialists and internal reactionary forces. The new economic policies of the Government of India portends danger to this policy of non-alignment. The working class must be vigilant against any vacillations and waverings.

India is to day in the grip of a grave economic crisis. The economic policies of the Rajiv Gandhi Government, have undergone a drastic change under pressure of the World Bank and IMF. These policies accentuate budgetary deficits, inflation, skyrocketing prices leading to greater impoverishment of the toiling masses. Instead of curbing monopolies and landed vested interests and mopping up of resources from them, sweeping concessions are given to them. The public sector is being denigrated and a policy of privatisation introduced. Simultaneously an open-door policy to multinationals and indiscriminate import has been started in the name of high technology. Indiscriminate computerisation, automation, etc. will further aggravate the unemployment situation. In the name of modernisation and introduction of high technology, Indian scientists and technicians are ignored and transnational corporations given encouragement to enter the country, opening the way for their infiltration in all spheres of our economy. These concessions constitute a grave threat to our economic independence, to our policy of self-reliance.

These policies have led to increased closure, lock-outs and sick industries resulting in ever increasing unemployment. The number of registered unemployed in the country to day is well nigh three crores while actual unemployment is much more. The number of toiling masses living under the poverty line is steadily increasing.

Today the democratic rights of the people are under attack as the Government had armed itself with draconian powers and the trend of authoritarianism is growing.

The hard won rights of the working class are also under attack. The ESMA and NSA and similar legislations constitute a continuing threat to the working class movement. They have been used to suppress the legitimate struggles of the workers. The recent judgement of the Supreme Court on Article 311 (2) (b) of the Constitution has further strengthened the arbitrary powers to dismiss the government employees without even an inquiry. This cannot be ignored by other sections of the working class, in particular, those in the public sector.

On this May Day we call on all workers and trade unions to forge a greater unity to fight for their rights, to fight for a reversal of the anti-labour,

anti-people policies of the Rajiv Gandhi Government, to fight for nationalisation of Jute, Textile and Sugar industries, to fight in defence of the public sector and against the entry of transnational corporations with their policies of neocolonialism, to fight for the repeal of ESMA, NSA and all such legislations and for amending the Constitution to extend unfettered trade union rights to all government employees, to further strengthen the struggle for the right to work being enshrined in the constitution, to fight for the right to unemployment relief which is denied all these years.

Throughout the last hundred years the world has witnessed the workers in one country after another achieving the right to an eight-hour working day but in many they have achieved the rightful demand of shorter working hours. In India, there are some industrial workers who are yet to secure 8-hour working day. On this May Day the working class demands a reduction in working hours to 40 hours a week. We appeal to all workers to fight unitedly for this just demand.

We call upon the working class to champion the cause of the peasantry and agricultural labour for radical land reforms and distribution of surplus lands, for remunerative prices and adequate wages for agricultural labour, an end to the system of bonded labour, and thus build up worker-peasant alliance.

Our country today is also facing the serious situation of increased activities of divisive communal, religious fundamentalist forces, and casteist forces inspired, instigated and supported by external and internal reactionary forces. The hands of imperialists are clearly seen behind the secessionist and extremist forces who openly raise slogans of dividing the country. By rousing passions between different sections of our people, they seek to subvert our national independence and national integrity. We appeal to all workers to fight unitedly against all these reactionary forces, to close the ranks of the working class and defend our national integrity.

The revolutionary traditions of May Day will lead the working class to realise that the present power structure in our country has failed to register economic progress in the interest of the people or to protect their democratic rights. On this May Day the working class therefore pledges to fight for change in the present social system and for establishment of state power controlled by the democratic forces which would be in a position to facilitate easy transition to socialism.

We call upon the working class to defend the two left front Governments of West Bengal and Tripura as advanced outposts of democracy and foil all conspiracies against them.

To fulfill the tasks before the working class, the
(Contd. on page 31)

WFTU Message of the First of May, 1986

The following message to commemorate the May Day centenary was adopted by the 35th Session of the WFTU Bureau which was held in Prague from 8 to 10 April 1986:

ONE hundred years ago, a strike by 40,000 workers in Chicago on the first of May 1886 challenged Capital and its system of merciless exploitation. On the following days, the volleys capitalist gunfire set workers' blood flowing on the streets of Haymarket. Workers' leaders were executed for demanding an 8-hour day. We pay homage to the heroic fighters and martyrs who led that May Day demonstration in Chicago.

The history of mankind is the history of class struggle. This truth is borne out by the centuries-old struggle by the labour movement. In this long struggle between labour and capital, it is our dynamic era which has awakened the international labour movement and turned it into a force to change the shape of the world. The working class, winning State power in countries covering one-third of the world population, established a new social system based on the principles of social justice, and abolishing capitalist exploitation.

Those workers who stood up to police terror continued to carry their red banner demanding work, bread, freedom, democracy and a life worthy of man. They called for help and their cry resounded over hills and oceans as they said: Help us, fellow workers, our strength is our unity and our solidarity.

For a century now, this cry has been ringing out, to be answered by fraternal unity, the basis of workers' success all over the world.

The century of struggles since May Day 1886 has taught workers and trade unions that their strength lies in unity and solidarity.

Men and women, young and old, intellectual and manual workers, trade unionists of the world, we appeal to you on this centenary of the Chicago bloodbath.

Let us maintain the ideals of May Day, let us promote unity and solidarity between workers, and let us give new strength to all those who struggle under this red banner!

International capital is on the march again, unleashing its massive force upon us. In numerous countries, this danger is threatening our right to work, our human dignity and our freedom, our living conditions and deteriorating and our trade unions are being victimized and restricted.

We cannot give up our rights and we cannot reconcile ourselves to the fact that tens of millions

are without jobs and bread! Our solidarity and our human honesty cry out against the poverty and misery and against exploitation and indebtedness of developing countries that spreads as international capital turns human labour, sweat and tears into gold.

The workers of the world cannot accept the fact that international bourgeoisie is using the arms race as a way out of the crisis. This is a road to destruction! There will be no winners in a third world war. The arms race lies on the road to death.

Fellow Workers!

We must stay true to the idea of May Day and to human values, because civilisation is the fruit of our labour, it is we who created it! It is our right and our duty to protect it and enrich it.

Let us unite! Let us put aside our differences! Let us protect our life and our future together!

(Contd. from page 30)

unity of the trade union movement is one of utmost urgency. In recent years, after the formation of the National Campaign Committee, united actions in many sectors have registered successes. This unity has to be further strengthened and extended to reach the ultimate goal of united trade union movement. On this May Day we appeal to all workers and trade unions to come forward and strive to build a powerful united trade union movement based on the revolutionary traditions of May Day. This can be the only guarantee for ultimate victory in defence of our rights, to achieve our demands, in the struggle to eradicate poverty and unemployment, in defence of our national sovereignty and national integrity, in the march towards ending the capitalist system and for a lasting peace and socialism.

Red Salute to the Martyrs of Chicago!

Workers of the World Unite!

Down with Imperialist Warmongers!

Long live world peace!

All-India Trade Union
Congress

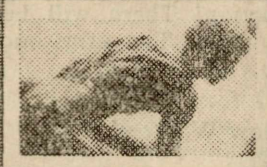
Centre of Indian Trade
Unions

Dated : 11 April, 1986.

Chicago May 1, 1886. A workers' strike for an eight hour working day

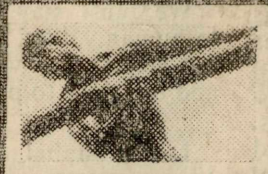


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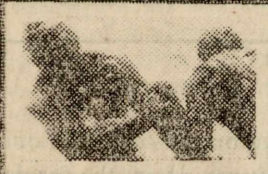


a revolution that created A history written in the sweat

of toiling men A history of an



the world over international workers'



solidarity. the Left Front



Today Government

salutes all persevering mortals.

Let us raise echo the



our voice and words of Karl Marx :

Working men of all countries unite !



Government of West Bengal

Progressive (CA-2/86)

The Left Front Govt's tribute to a hundred years of struggle.