



# THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITU

Homage to Com. B.T.R

## Condolence Meetings in the Country

### Maharashtra :

Large condolence meetings were held during the last few weeks on behalf of the CPI(M) and CITU in almost all the districts of Maharashtra to pay homage to Com. B. T. Ranadive. Leaders of other left, democratic and secular parties and trade unions participated in these meetings throughout the State. Large processions were also taken out in several centres in which thousands of people took part.

At the main condolence meeting held at the K.C. College Hall in Bombay on April 20, the speakers included CPI (M) General Secretary E.M.S. Namboodiripad, CITU Secretary M.K. Pandhe, Comrade-in-arms of Martyr Bhagat Singh—Shiv Varma, CPI leader L. S. Karkhanis, PWP leader Vithalrao Hande, while CPI (M) State Committee Secretary Prabhakar Sanzgiri presided. Vimal Ranadive and Ahiya Rangnekar, and members of Com. BTR's family were also present. Acting Secretary of the CPI (M) Bombay Committee Mahendra Singh made the introductory remarks.

Speaking to the packed hall, Com. EMS said, "Today, exactly a fortnight after Com. BTR's passing away, it is time to properly understand the rich legacy of his six-decade long political life in order to resolutely carry it forward. What is the rich political legacy that he has left us? Firstly, it was Com. BTR who showed that India's freedom movement was intimately connected with the anti-imperialist world working class movement. In the Second World War, when Hitler Germany attacked the Soviet Union, it was the letter from Com. BTR who was in jail, that heralded a basic change in the CPI policy towards the war. Although some mistakes did occur in its implementation, and it was BTR himself who placed this self-criticism in the 2nd party Congress, this line showed that the Indian Communist movement had the maturity to link the freedom struggle, opposing the flowing current if need be. Com. BTR, thus, was a staunch defender of proletarian internationalism.

"Secondly, after the gaining of independence, it was again Com. BTR who first showed that if politi-

cal independence was to be transformed into social and economic independence, the people of India under the leadership of the working class would have to lead a determined struggle against the new ruling classes of the country, which were then represented by the Congress party. Today, several forces have lifted the banner of anti-Congressism, but it is an indisputable fact that it was the CPI under the leadership of Com. BTR that first raised the banner of revolt against the Congress rule in 1948. No doubt, certain mistakes were committed during this period, for which Com. BTR and others were criticised and party action was also taken against them, but Com. BTR faced all this in an exemplary manner as a true communist. But the fact remains that the basic policy of opposing the Congress and the new ruling classes that it still represents, showed Comrade BTR's far-sightedness and this will be taken note of by history.

"Thirdly, when the CPI (M) was formed in 1964 after a bitter struggle against right revisionism and when it later had to wage an equally bitter struggle against "left" sectarianism, Com. BTR was a part and parcel of the CPI(M) collective leadership. In evolving the political-ideological line of the party, only we who worked closely with him for all these years know that Com. BTR was the leader of this collective leadership, his was the biggest contribution in the development of the party line. And this contribution remained, from 1964 onwards for 26 years right up to his death in 1990. The result of it is the increased strength and prestige of the left movement in general, and the CPI(M) in particular, all over the country today."

Comrade EMS concluded by saying, "In carrying forward the party line today we know that we are faced with innumerable problems, but there is one lesson that we have learnt from Com. BTR, and that is that the party can go forward only if it is united on the basis of ideological and political unity of the party line and it is only through such party line that the unity of the democratic sections can be built. As one of those who had the privilege of working with Com. BTR for the last 48 years, and especially for the last 26 years when the CPI(M) has been a growing force, I pledge to carry forward the struggle for his

ideals. Those young comrades who have come into the movement during the last few years should draw inspiration from the life, work and writings of Com. BTR, and they should carry forward the revolutionary struggle."

Earlier, on April 13, the CITU organised a condolence meeting at the Vanmali Hall in Bombay. After the introductory remarks by CITU State General Secretary K. L. Bajaj, the meeting was addressed by Gangadhar Chitnis (AITUC), R.G. Karnik (State Govt. Employees), Datta Samant (Kamgar Aghadi), Suryakant Vadhavkar (HMS), Shankar Salvi (HM-KP), Jagu Belani (UTUC), Balkrishna Bapat (Sarva Sharmik Sangh), P.R. Menon (NRMU), J.N. Nanal (AIIEA), G.M.V. Nayak (BEFI), Prof K.K. Thekedath (AIFUCTO), A.C. Raghavan (Mercantile Employees Federation), C.S. Sharma (Pharmaceutical Employees), and others. All the speakers paid rich tributes to Com. BTR's contribution to the working class movement and to the revolutionary struggle. In his presidential remarks, CITU State president Prabhakar Sanzgiri hailed Com. BTR's steadfastness of principles and his uncompromising struggle for the working class and its revolutionary traditions, and made special reference to the growing danger of caste, communal and divisive forces all over India and particularly in Maharashtra. He called on the working class to rise to the occasion and defeat this communal conspiracy, stressing that this would be the true homage that we would be paying to Com. BTR.

Apart from these two meetings in Bombay, innumerable condolence meetings were held in districts like Thane, Nasik, Pune, Raigad, Dhule, Kolhapur, Sangli, Beed, Aurangabad, Parbhani, Nagpur, Wardha, Amravati, Yavatmal, Bhandara, Latur, and others. These were addressed by various state leaders of the CPI(M), CITU, Kisan Sabha, as well as other left and secular political parties and trade unions. All these meetings took a solemn pledge to carry forward the unfinished tasks of Com. BTR to their completion.

### **W. Bengal**

A massive condolence meeting was organised at the Park Circus Maidan on April 7, which was joined by workers, students, youth, women and people from all walks of life. Manoranjan Roy, General Secretary of the State CITU moved the condolence resolution on Com. BTR. Lakshmi Sen, Secretary of the Calcutta District CPI(M) presided over the meeting. A huge procession was thereafter taken out with huge portraits of Com. BTR and shouting of slogans—"Long Live Com. BTR." 86 volunteers marched at the head of the procession carrying lowered red flags. The IPTA group followed next singing the Internationale. Silent processions and rallies were held all over the State and in all industrial centres. The Bokaro Steel Plant Employees Union, Calcutta organised a special general meeting and adopted a resolution paying homage to Com. BTR. The Metal Scrap Trade Corp'n. Employees Union in a meeting adopted a similar resolution.

### **Kerala**

Silent processions, rallies and condolence meetings were held all over the State. Innumerable meetings were held at Trivandrum, Ernakulam, Cochin, Palghat, Alwaye, Calicut, Kasargode, etc. In several places the workers struck work and joined the rallies.

### **Tamilnadu**

A weeklong mourning was observed in Tamilnadu with flags kept at half mast. Massive condolence meetings were held by all district committees and by the unions in the industrial centres. In many places the workers stopped work spontaneously on hearing the news of death of Com. BTR. Agricultural operations also were stopped in several places and condolence meetings and processions were organised.

### **Andhra Pradesh**

The entire State plunged into mourning on hearing the news of death of Com. BTR. Large condolence meetings, processions and rallies were held at Hyderabad, Vijayawada, Guntur, Vishakapatnam, Rajahmudi, Ongole, Khammam, Mahaboonagar and other places. Apart from workers, people, from different walks of life participated in the meetings.

### **Karnataka**

Normal activities came to a standstill in various industrial centres in Bangalore and other places. Silent processions were taken out in Bangalore, Dharwar, Managalore, Belgaum, Kundapuram, Beedar and other places.

### **Madhya Pradesh**

Processions and condolence meetings were held at Bhopal and several other cities. At Gwalior in a largely attended meeting on April 21, the newly built office of the CITU was named as Com. BTR Bhawan. The function was inaugurated by Govind Singh Bhadoria, the veteran leader of the textile workers. Various speakers paid tributes to the revolutionary contribution of Com. BTR. The meeting decided to develop the BTR Bhawan as a centre for educating the workers on the revolutionary ideology of Com. BTR based on Marxism-Leninism. The Koyla Shramik Sangh organised a condolence meeting at Bishrampur and adopted a resolution paying homage to Com. BTR.

### **Bihar**

Condolence meetings and processions were organised in various places in the industrial centres and in the colliery belt. The State CITU held a meeting and adopted a resolution paying homage to Com. BTR and pledging to carry forward his unfulfilled revolutionary objective.

### **Rajasthan**

The Rajasthan State CITU and other organisations held meetings at Jaipur, Kota, Udaipur and several other places. Resolutions were adopted paying homage to Com. BTR. The workers took pledge to carry forward struggles according to the revolutionary guidelines given by Com. BTR.

Meetings and processions were held by various unions in all other states.

# Tribute to Comrade B.T.R.

P. B. Rangnekar

It is over a month since Com. BTR has left us, never to return to guide us at every turn and twist. And yet it is so difficult to believe it, so accustomed as some of us have been, for well over sixty years, to go to him with our problems and return more than satisfied at his handling of it. Sixty years of countless memories no doubt, of the political issues he solved, of the theoretical problems he cleared, of the Shibir he conducted, of the class enemy's machinations he revealed. And still I feel that writing his memories in a way that will do justice to his many sided revolutionary work remains beyond the ken of my capacity. Let me therefore attempt to do a modest effort to paint some facets of his achievements.

I met him first some time in 1929, after he and S. V. Deshpande had taken over the work of the then famous Girni Kamgar Union, soon after the Meerut Conspiracy case. He had come to our house (a very close friend of my brother). A strike was on against mass retrenchment, a general strike. The strike was lost, he was sentenced and returned after a year, by which time reformist Kandalkar had taken over the Union.

1933 saw a hard battle for winning over the Union, for struggle. Partial strikes were on. I remember BTR then telling us that out of the 35 partial strikes, the small communist group led by him and others, led 26. It broke Kandalkar's back and the reformists were out. But the struggle was so hard and continuous that he could not snatch even one day to go to see his dying father in Poona. In the end, when he could get that respite and rush to Poona, he reached the house just when the brothers were returning from the burning ghat. It was not given to him to have a last look at even the body of his father. (I knew of it only in Yerwada jail in 1940, when I had lost my cousin and was over whelmed. Only this event of his life showed me what stuff a revolutionary should be made of.)

History "repeated" itself in 1963 too, when with him in jail (period 3½ years) his mother breathed her last. When the Congress rulers at last decided to send him to see her on her death bed, barely had he reached the place when she breathed her last.

One more such case of sense of duty came in 1943, when the united CPI decided to send him to Moscow. An old patient of Pneumonia, with a patch in lung to be guarded against, his Doctor demanded that he reduce his smoking to 2 or 3 a day, from his average 20 or even 30. Fifteen minutes later when I offered him his then usual cigarette packet, he stopped me. Cigarettes no more, he said. In vain I argued, quoting the doctor's permission to smoke 2 or 3. It had ended, and ended for life. Not even one, for the rest of his 47 years, for a man who, if only he got them, would smoke even 50 a day. A communist self-discipline at its finest indeed.

An inveterate enemy of imperialism, to begin with as a fighter for national freedom, his study of Marxism steeled him further. I know of one case he himself had told us. In the thirties he was once addressing a gate meeting at Morarjee Mills. There were no loud speakers then and the speaker had to shout himself hoarse to be audible. A car came to a stop near and an Englishman got down. 'Why are you inciting them? It may as well lead the Hindu-Muslim riots' he warned. He was, oddly enough, the Home Secretary of Bombay Government. BTR was amazed at this audacity. He replied that thanks to the Red Flag, the working class area would not see riots. The officer left and in less than a week or so Bombay saw a communal carnage. Of course it was stopped at the textile area frontiers where the writ of the red flag ran as in the past. But the lesson was taken.

Later in 1936, a little before the new elections, British rulers again organised the riots. Nariman, BPCC President, a good nationalist, but very poor about any class sense, immediately demanded that the British army must put down the riots. The nationalist press also supported him, totally failing to see the real hand behind the carnage. Only a timely discussion with BTR led me (with his draft) to expose the falsity of this demand. Nariman went on the offensive. Again BTR helped with a brilliant reply. Result, with only two of us as communists, we could get the majority of 19 in the Students' Union to accept our view point. Honest nationalists as they were, driven with the urge to fight the British, BTR's irresistible logic (of course in my name) won them over. Later in the General elections, it was this firm anti-imperialist stand that enabled us to tender our bona fides, even against the Congress.

One of the greatest facets of BTR's was his teaching of Marxism, 'living' Marxism, if I may put it that way. When in 1940, he started teaching us 'Capital' without any book, we found later to our utter amazement that Marxism was just second breath for him. Passage after passage from Capital was being quoted (in our long hand notes), well after 6 years of his studying it at the Karachi Hyderabad jail in 1934.

He insisted on our studying it later from the copy of Capital. (He took equal or more pains to teach it to the two worker comrades in jail.) Once a week there would be tests and without exception, we would fail. It was Marxian understanding applied to life. We were allowed to refer to capital, but no. In the end when we threw in the towel, he would smilingly show how serious application of Marxism could solve it. (To quote one instance: The Question: If socially necessary labour time determined the value of a thing, why should there be such huge value for a Rembrandt picture, as against a local painting? Similarly, about the world cricketer Bradman, and an ordinary batsman, etc.)



# National Convention Against Communalism

A National Convention against Communalism and Separatism was held at Mavalankar Hall, New Delhi on May 24. The sponsoring Committee which organised the convention consisted of E M S Namboodiripad, H K S Surjeet, Samar Mukherjee, Indrajeet Gupta, C. Rajeshwar Rao, M Farooqi, Tridib Chowdhury, Chitta Basu, Chandrasekhar, Ram Vilas Paswan, Surendra Mohan, Ram Dhan, Syed Mir Qasim, Mohsina Kidwai, Margaret Alva and Dinesh Singh.

A presidium consisting of H K S Surjeet, Indrajeet Gupta, Ram Dhan, Mohsina Kidwai, Tridib Chowdhury and Surendra Mohan conducted the proceedings of the convention.

Chandrasekhar placed the resolution of the Convention. Among these who spoke included E M S Namboodiripad, Dinesh Singh, Indrajeet Gupta, Justice V R Krishna Iyer, Mulayam Singh Yadav, Swaran Singh, Mrinal Pande, Mohsina Kidwai, Syed Siddiqui, Ram Dhan, Yashwant Sinha, Margaret Alva, Satish Chandra, Munis Raza and H K S Surjeet.

Over one thousand delegates from various walks of life including workers from several Central Trade Unions, students, youth, women, employees, teachers, lawyers etc attended the convention.

The convention expressed serious concern over the growing activities of the imperialist backed secessionist and separatist forces in Kashmir, Punjab and Assam and the communal forces in various parts of the country and called upon all sections of the people, the secular and patriotic forces to intervene in the situation and fight the divisive forces of all sorts to safeguard the unity and integrity of the country. The speakers especially pointed to the communal forces like the Vishwa Hindu Parishad Bajarang Dal, RSS, BJP and others who were trying to fan up religious passions on the issue of Ramjanam Bhoomi/Babri Masjid and create a communal holocaust in the country. They referred to the communal riots that occurred at several parts of the country which was unprecedented in the country and surpassed all previous black records.

The convention decided to form a National Campaign Committee and carry forward a nationwide campaign to isolate the divisive forces by holding state level, district level and local level conventions, seminars, rallies, public meetings, etc. The following resolution was adopted unanimously in the convention.

## Resolution of the Convention

This National Convention Against Communalism And Separatism feels deeply concerned at the growing threats to national Unity and integrity posed by separatist, divisive and communal forces in different parts of the country.

The situation in Kashmir has become very critical. The secessionist forces, brazenly backed by Pakistani rulers are making all efforts to detach Kashmir from India. They are forcing people belonging to the minority community to leave Kashmir. They are trying to paralyse completely the administrative apparatus and are attempting to impose their own will on the people of Kashmir. To demand the abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution in such a situation amounts to helping the pro-Pakistani secessionist forces.

In Punjab, the pro-Khalistani terrorists have intensified their activities. They are trying to disrupt communal amity by killing innocent people at ransom using sophisticated weapons. In both states, the Pakistani rulers are directly interfering by organising training camps for the extremists and supplying weapons.

Since last year the disruptive activities of ULFA in Assam have posed a serious threat to our country's unity with the potential danger of destabilising the North-Eastern region. The divisive forces are also active in various other parts of the country under different garbs.

This Convention pays homage to the memory of those martyrs who have laid down their lives in the struggle against separatism, fundamentalism and communal forces to defend national unity.

At a time when the country is faced with such serious challenges, communal forces have become very active. By launching poisonous propaganda these forces consciously plan to disturb communal harmony and to inflame communal riots. They are making full use of the Ramjanmabhoomi/Babri Masjid controversy for their nefarious designs. The Vishwa Hindu Parishad's insistence to build a temple at the disputed site by demolishing the mosque is creating a dangerous communal polarisation which can lead to incalculable consequences. It is unfortunate that even the BJP has endorsed the plan of the VHP and neither of them are prepared to either resolve the issue through dialogue or to adhere to the court verdict. The Vishwa Hindu Parishad has already begun another campaign and has announced that it will start the construction of the temple of the disputed site after June 8. The Shankaracharya of Dwarka has entered the field with the same slogan of constructing a temple, thus further complicating matters.

The majority community which is the mainstay of Indian secularism is sought to be poisoned against the minority community by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad. As against the secular foundations of the Indian state which alone provides the basis for Indian unity, the concept of a theocratic state like Hindu Rashtra and Khalistan is being advocated. Wall writings and other propaganda is being used for these provocative slogans. Efforts are made to

activise different forces which can help in creating communal polarisation. The communal organisations belonging to the minority communities whether Muslim or Sikh are adding fuel to the fire.

These activities of communal forces have started vitiating the atmosphere in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and other states leading to riots which broke out in Ranchi, Nawadah and Bhagalpur in Bihar, communal incidents in Kanpur and Mathura in Uttar Pradesh and riots in Ahmedabad and Baroda in Gujarat. These riots highlight the impending danger. Never before since independence has the threat to the secular democratic fabric of the country been so grave. The forces which are working to disturb communal amity, if allowed to be successful, will endanger the hard won independence and unity of the country.

The meeting of the newly reconstituted National Integration Council which comprises of all shades of opinion in the country made a fervent appeal for communal peace and harmony, But the communal and divisive forces refused to heed to it. In fact they have intensified their activities through the VHP. The Jamaat-i-Islami is fanning secessionism in Kashmir. Extremist organisations under the name of Bajrang Dal, Adam Sena and Khalistan Commando Force, Babbar Khalsa etc are being set up. If these forces are not given a strong rebuff they will be able to permanently damage the secular edifice of the Indian polity and society.

It was a right step that the Shankacharya of Dwarkapeeth was prevented from proceeding with his plan of shilanyas. It is also right to declare that the communal peace shall not be allowed to be disturbed in the name of the construction of the temple. These efforts require a strong backing of all the democratic and secular forces in the country.

It is the view of this Convention, that the time has come for all the secular and patriotic forces of the country to unite and resist the onslaught. Those who disrupt unity have to be exposed. National unity and integrity has to be preserved at all costs. There is no dearth of patriotic minded people in the country who are capable of rebuffing such diabolical forces and maintain the peoples natural urge for communal amity. The fine traditions of the anti-imperialist freedom struggle should inspire such a united endeavour.

In this respect, the convention asks the government to make full use of the media to propagate the ideas of secularism. The traditions of the national movement in forging unity against the foreign rule must be highlighted. The media should help educate the people about the disastrous consequences that can follow from poisonous communal propaganda. This Convention feels that alongwith administrative measures, the government must take steps to find a political solution to the problems of Kashmir and Punjab in order to restore peace there.

This Convention considers that the Ramjanmabhoomi/Babri Masjid dispute is a sensitive issue which affects the religious sentiments of millions of people. Both the majority and minority community will have to act responsibly to see that either an amicable solution is arrived at through negotiations or both sides should abide by the verdict of the court.

This Convention calls upon all sections of the people to denounce the communal forces and to rally behind the reasonable and just approach on the Babri Masjid/Ramjanmabhoomi issue and avoid communal violence which will cause untold sufferings to countless innocent families.

This National Convention decides to set up a National Campaign Committee to organise broad based campaigns for holding conventions, rallies, seminars and public meetings to mobilise all men and women of goodwill to this urgent task of preserving communal amity and national unity.

## Donation to Tripura Struggle Fund

The unions of the Water Transport Workers' Federation of India have made the following donations to the Tripura Struggle Fund :

1. Calcutta Port & Shore Mazdoor Union	1050.00
2. Forward Seamen's Union of India	1000.00
3. Dock Shramik Association, Calcutta	500.00
4. CDLB Employees Association, Cal.	200.00
5. CIWTC Ltd Floating Workers Union, Cal.	200.00
6. Paradip Bandave Shramik Union	200.00
7. Vishakapatnam Port & Dock Workers	100.00
8. Kandla Stevadores & Dock Workers Union	250.00
9. Marmagoa Waterfront Workers Union	500.00
10. Madras Port & Dock Employees Union	250.00
11. Tuticorin Democratic Staff Union	250.00
12. Tuticorin Harbour Workers Union	100.00
13. Cochin Port Labour Union	500.00
14. Cochin Port Employees Organisation	500.00
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Rs. 5600-00	

Apart from above, the CITU centre has donated an amount of Rs. 8,500/- to the Tripura State Committee, which was received from various organisations on various accounts.

# CITU Extends Support to National Convention Against Communalism

The Secretariat of the CITU met at Delhi on May 19 under the presidentship of Com. Samar Mukherjee. The meeting was attended by Com. E. Balanandan, Treasurer and Coms. Vimal Ranadive, Kanai Banerjee, Ranjit Basu and P.K. Ganguly, Secretaries.

**National Convention against Communalism :** The Secretariat extended all support to the National Convention against Communalism sponsored by the sixteen member committee at Delhi on May 24 and called upon its unions and workers to participate in it.

The meeting condemned the agitation carried forward by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad on the issue of construction of Ram temple at the Babri Masjid site after the expiry of the ultimatum period on 7th June and its hunger strike against the screening of the TV serial on Tipu Sultan.

The meeting called upon the State Committees and the unions to launch campaign programmes all over the country and expose the nefarious role of the RSS, Vishwa Hindu Parishad, BJP, etc to fan up communal passion on the issue of the Ramjanam Bhoomi temple and on the arrest of the Shankaracharya of Dwarkapeeth. It congratulated the UP State Committee for launching campaign to expose and isolate these divisive forces.

The Secretariat reiterated its earlier call and appealed to the left and other trade unions to join and chalk out countrywide programmes to mobilise the working class to intervene in the situation to isolate all these communal forces to safeguard the unity of the people and integrity of the country.

**Local Bodies Election in Andaman & Nicobar Islands :** The Secretariat congratulated the CPI (M) front in Andaman & Nicobar Islands for routing the Congress (I) in the recent Panchayat and municipal elections in the island. The meeting greeted the people of the islands for ending the long anti-people regime of the Congress (I) and reposing their faith in the left and democratic forces and expressed confidence that their aspirations will be fulfilled.

**Prime Minister's Meeting with Industrialists :** The Secretariat expressed serious concern over the press report of the recent meeting of the Prime Minister with the private monopolists represented by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry and the Confederation of Engineering Industries. Apart from the Prime Minister, the meeting was reportedly attended by the Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission and the Secretaries of the concerned Ministries. According to the press report, the Prime Minister has assured to continue the policy

of liberalisation and against controls. The monopoly representatives had pleaded for more foreign investments and liberalisation of the MRTP Act against assets.

The CITU had all along assailed the erstwhile Congress (I) Government for growingly surrendering to the demands of the World Bank and the IMF to mortgage the national economy to the private monopolists, both foreign and Indian and thereby pauperising the common people. The Secretariat reiterated its call to the National Front Government to break away from the legacy of the Congress (I) Government and formulate an alternative policy to build up a self reliant national economy free from the diktats of the World Bank and the IMF.

**Supreme Court Verdict :** The Secretariat noted with concern the recent verdict of the Supreme Court on two appeals by the Bank of India and S.U. Motors (Pvt) Ltd on the question of the right of the employers to deduct wages unilaterally during the period of strike of go-slow. The verdict giving this blanket right to the employers and further giving them the right to order dismissal for an illegal strike or even for go-slow is bound to give filip to the employers to further harden their attitude towards the genuine demands of the workers and intensify their anti-labour attitude getting support from the Government machineries. As experience goes, the employers, both private and the Government generally refuse to make negotiated settlement of the genuine demands of the workers, compelling them to go in for strike or other actions including go-slow. Furthermore, despite the legal notice as per statute, most of the strikes are illegalised by the Government. The imposition of ESMA against the oil officers strike is the most recent example. The verdict thus will further strengthen the hands of the employers in the struggle between two unequals. The Secretariat was of the opinion that these realities should have been considered by the Supreme Court for meting out real justice instead of giving an one sided verdict.

**Ho-Chi Minh Birth Centenary :** The Secretariat called upon the State Committees and the Unions to celebrate in the most befitting manner the birth centenary of Ho Chi Minh, the international communist leader and the legendary leader of the Vietnamese revolution. The birth centenary falls on May 19 and is to be celebrated for the whole one year. The Secretariat sent a greetings telegramme to the Vietnamese General Confederation of Labour on the occasion.

**Visit of Cuban T U. Delegation :** The Secretariat welcomed the proposed visit of a delegation of the Cuban Trade Union Council to CITU. The meeting agreed to bear the hospitality and expressed the desire to strengthen the fraternal bond between the two organisations.

**IDPL :** The meeting discussed about the joint dharna by CITU and FMRAI before the Petro-Chemical Ministry demanding withdrawal of all victimisations, suspensions and transfer orders by the IDPL management, and proposed to hold it by the end of July during the Monsoon Session of the Parliament. A delegation of the CITU would meet the Petro-Chemical Minister in the mean time.

**Verification of Agricultural Workers :** The Secretariat heard the report of the meeting called by the Labour Ministry on 15th May to discuss the question of verification of agricultural workers and their inclusion in the membership count of the Central Trade Unions. The Secretariat reiterated its stand taken in 1986 that the agricultural workers should not be taken into the count to ascertain the membership strength of the Central Trade Unions. The situation since 1986 had further changed to reiterate this stand, as now the new National Front Government had decided to introduce a central legislation for the agricultural workers which is to look into this question by getting the agricultural workers' unions registered under the proposed Agricultural Workers' Act, a demand which the CITU had been pursuing since long.

The meeting also noted that as per the 1986 agreement of the Central Trade Unions with the Government, the present Labour Ministry having already agreed to start the verification of industrial workers' membership of the Central Trade Unions as on 31.12.1988, a Monitoring Committee would be formed at the apex level to look into the objections raised by the trade unions relating to verification process, membership, etc. The Secretariat nominated Com. Ranjit Basu, Secretary to represent the CITU in the Committee.

**Bipartite Committee on New Industrial Relations Law :** The Secretariat heard the report of the first meeting of the Bipartite Committee on the New Industrial Relations Law held on 15th May, of which Com. M.K. Pandhe is the member from the CITU. The first meeting of the Committee decided to have an Alternate Member from each organisation. The Secretariat nominated Com. P K Ganguly, Secretary as the Alternate Member from the CITU.

The Secretariat decided to call for suggestions from the State Committees and national federations regarding the new Industrial Relations Law. The matter will be discussed in the full Secretariat meeting to be held on 1st June.

**CITU Foundation Day :** The Secretariat called upon all the State Committees and unions to observe 20th Foundation Day of the CITU on 30th May, 1990 in a befitting manner.

**National Safety Council :** The Secretariat nominated Com. M. K. Pandhe, Secretary as a member of Board of Governors of the National Safety Council from the CITU.

## Meeting of May 4 :

### Demonstration against Price Rise :

The Secretariat expressed serious concern over the recent spurt in price rise of the essential items. The CITU had warned the Government of this inevitable price rise which was bound to follow due to the increase in the prices of petrol and diesel imposed by the Union Budget and the earlier hike in the Railway freight. The meeting further expressed serious concern over the Government decision to increase quota of free sale of sugar to 75 per cent. The CITU and the trade union movement had constantly criticised the Congress(I) Government for progressively increasing the free sale quota of sugar from 35 per cent to 55 per cent and decreasing the levy sugar quota from 65 per cent to 45 per cent, thus benefitting the sugar mill barons. Thus further increase in the free sale quota has only further contributed to the profits of the mill barons and put the common people into further hardship due to the steep rise in the price of sugar. The decontrol of cement has also pushed up the price of cement.

The Secretariat extended full support to the call of the left parties for observing May 16 to protest against the price rise and called upon all the State Committees and the affiliated unions and appealed to all other trade unions to hold demonstrations all over the country demanding withdrawal of the measures and putting a check on the price rise.

**Economic Policy :** The meeting further analysed the economic and industrial policy being followed by the National Front Government and was of the opinion that it had not broken the legacy of the Congress(I) Government in pursuing the path of privatisation. The announcement by the Industry Minister that the Government will not take over the sick industrial units has caused widespread concern among the workers who are worst hit by closures and growing industrial sickness. The Secretariat demanded reorientation of the economic policy, check on industrial sickness, review of the policy of no-nationalisation and giving the leading role to the public sector.

**Super 301 of USA :** The meeting condemned the U.S. administration for its attempt to blackmail India and impose its trade law Super 301 against it demanding opening up the Indian Service Sector to the U. S. Multinationals. The meeting warned the Government of India against any surrender to such shameless and naked economic aggression by the U.S. imperialists.

**Indian Labour Conference :** The Secretariat heard the report of the 29th Session of the Indian Labour Conference, especially on the subjects of Workers' Participation in Management through Secret Ballot and on the question of Central Legislation on construction workers and agricultural workers. It noted that a section of employers from the private sector had opposed the conclusions of the national Seminars. The Secretariat warned the Government against any vacillation and demanded immediate introduction of the Bills on the subjects.

# Indian Labour Conference-29th Session

M.K. Pandhe

The 29th Session of the Indian Labour Conference held in New Delhi on April 21 and 22 took two important decisions. It reiterated the conclusions of the national seminar on workers' participation in management held in January last, indicating that all the participative fora will be elected through secret ballot. Secondly, the session unanimously recommended that the Industrial Relations Bill introduced in Parliament in May 1988 should be scrapped and a Bipartite Committee would be appointed to propose the outlines of a new Industrial Relations Bill.

The ILC was being convened after a lapse of five years. The last meeting was convened in 1985 after 14 years. The Congress Government had virtually given a go-bye to the tripartite consultation, and ILC was its first casualty. The Standing Labour Committee was also made defunct by the Rajiv Government. Several tripartite committees under the Ministry of Labour were existing only on paper. The tripartite committee on mobilisation of resources for public sector was allowed to be dissolved during the Seventh Five Year Plan because the employing Ministries were not prepared to supply required information before the committee. The decision of the last Indian Labour Conference to constitute a committee to monitor industrial sickness was not even constituted.

## Tripartite Machinery Revived

Ram Vilas Paswan Union Minister for Labour who presided over the session had to assure the members that the new Government would respect tripartite decisions. V P Singh, Prime Minister of India, in his inaugural address had to say "I want to give you an assurance at the outset that this forum would be fully activated and its deliberations would be made effective, so as to create necessary conditions for building cordial industrial relations required for increasing productivity and workers' welfare.

The official agenda of the conference included subjects like the measures to introduce effective workers' participation in management, review of industrial relations legislation, modified procedure for verification of membership of central trade union organisations, considering the proposed legislations on the building and construction workers and the agricultural workers, and review of laws and policies relating to child labour, women labour and migrant labour.

The meeting commenced by adopting condolence resolutions on passing away of Com. B T Ranadive, CITU President on April 6 and of Manohar Bhai Metha, President BMS.

The CITU was represented at the conference by MK Pandhe, R. Umanath, K N Ravindranath as

delegates and Mohd. Amin, P K Ganguly and Jibon Roy as advisers. West Bengal Labour Minister Shanti Ghatak actively participated in the deliberations and fully supported the stand of the trade unions on all the points. The Kerala Labour Minister also generally stood by the side of the central trade union organisations.

## Resentment on Public Sector DA

At the outset all the central trade union organisations protested against the issuing of the Government order to enhance the rate of DA for the public sector workers to Rs. 1.90 per point when the Tripartite DA Committee was discussing the matter at length and the trade union side had given proposal for a multi rate system of DA with four slabs. The Labour Minister discussed the matter informally with the central trade unions during lunch break and assured to arrange a meeting with the Finance Minister to resolve the impasse. Meanwhile 12,000 officers in the oil industry had given a strike notice from April 24 to protest against the Government's decision. The trade unions pressed the Government to negotiate with the officer's organisations to find out a solution to their problems.

During the general debate the workers' representatives pointed out that the Planning Commission was finalising the Eighth Plan document without consulting the trade unions. They demanded removal of ceilings in the Payment of Bonus Act, enhancement of exemption limit in the income tax proposals and preparing a comprehensive programme of house building construction in view of the exorbitant rates of house rents prevalent in urban and industrial areas. For the first time all the central trade unions including the INTUC together demanded withdrawal of the Industrial Relations Bill. The workers' representatives also strongly criticised the working of the ESI scheme, the new decision to extend the coverage of the ESI scheme and absence of a national wage policy. All of them were also unanimous in demanding radical measures for the unorganised workers.

## Growing Industrial Sickness

While speaking during the debate, CITU representative M K Pandhe drew attention of the Government to the growing sickness in industry. After acceptance of right to work as a fundamental right, the National Front Government should immediately put an end to further closures and take expeditious steps to reopen the closed units. The CITU representatives criticised the recent statement of the Minister of Industry that no sick unit would be taken over by the Central Government. The CITU demanded immediate withdrawal of the ban on recruitment in Government services and public sector undertakings.

The CITU strongly condemned the introduction of the new series of Consumer Price Index (1982 base) by the Congress Government and demanded scrapping of the series. The new Government has not announced its policy on the public sector and the CITU called for a categorical assurance from the National Front Government that the public sector units would not be privatised as was planned by the Rajiv Government.

The CITU demanded amendment to the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act so as to ensure absorption of contract labour in jobs of permanent and perennial nature. No law relating to women labour and child labour was effectively implemented with the result that their exploitation continued unabated. The CITU appealed for compulsory imprisonment of the employers violating the labour laws. The CITU urged upon the new Government that the minimum wages fixed under the Minimum Wages Act should be above the poverty line and be linked with price index so that the concerned workers get proper protection.

Criticising the proposal of Keshab Mahindra, representative of the employers, that the bill on workers participation in management be referred to Select Committee of Parliament, Pandhe noted that it was an attempt to scuttle the bill. He demanded that the bill be passed in the current session of Parliament based on the conclusions drawn in the national seminar in January last.

Shanti Ghatak, Minister of Labour, Government of West Bengal said that he disagreed with the proposal in the State Labour Ministers meeting that only 25 percent of the workers' nominees should be on the Board of Directors of a given concern. He said he had advocated 50 percent of the workers' nominees on the Board as demanded by trade unions.

### I.R. Bill Opposed

The employers' representatives were in favour of keeping the I.R. Bill alive and called upon the Government for minor modification while keeping the bill intact. Noting the deteriorating economic situation, they advocated that workers' participation in management may lead to further stagnation in the economy. They appealed for more productivity and introduction of modern technology. The arguments of the employers' representatives were rebutted by the spokesmen of the trade unions.

After the general debate, the Conference considered the issue of workers' participation in management. The INTUC representative Gopeshwar advocated that the bill should not be mandatory. He also criticised the concept of secret ballot and expressed his fear that it may lead to politicising the industrial atmosphere. Some of the employers' representatives supported the INTUC arguments. However, other trade union representatives criticised the stand of the INTUC and stated that the con-

clusion drawn in the January seminar should not be re-opened.

Replying to the argument of the employers' representatives that workers' participation would erode the authority of the management, the CITU representative, M.K. Pandhe, pointed out that the participation cannot be successful if the present powers of the management are kept intact. Industries can run better if the autocratic behaviour of the management in units are properly checked. The CITU further opposed the proposal that participation should commence at the shop level and at a later stage it should be taken to the board level, advocating that participation should be at all levels. It called for an end to the present master and servant relations which alone would ensure genuine participation in the management.

The CITU also advocated that workers' participation should not replace the present collective bargaining practices, both should be treated as complementary but in different fora. Victimised and suspended employees should be permitted to participate in the participatory fora.

The State Ministers of Labour, meeting earlier observed that in areas where the trade union movement is weak the workers should be allowed to contest instead of unions contesting the elections. The Conference expressed the opinion that unless the overwhelming majority of the worker are non-unionised, direct elections should not be preferred. The employers representatives were divided on the question of Board level participation. Some opposed top level participation while others felt that only one representative of workers can be on the Board of Directors. The employers were willing to include the dismissed employees whose cases were pending in courts but were not prepared to consider the cases of suspended employees to participate in the participatory fora. The trade unions, however pleaded for suspended employees on the ground that the employers may suspend an employee in order to prevent his participation in the management committees.

### No Black Bill Through Back Door

Intervening in the discussion on the Industrial Relations Bill, R. Umanath criticised the agenda prepared by the Labour Ministry in which most of the issues raised by the bill were once again brought through the backdoor. He pointed out that in view of the trade unions' basic objection to the bill point by point discussion would not lead to any conclusion. He therefore, suggested that the bill should not be considered by the conference and that it should be scrapped. Then alone a detailed discussion could take place on all the aspects concerning industrial relations machinery in the country. He supported the demand for appointment of a committee to suggest a new proposal for the industrial relations frame work. The CITU representative observed that by acceptance of secret ballot to determine the bargaining agent many problems of industrial relations could get automatically resolved.

In view of the unanimous demand raised by all the trade unions that the bill should be withdrawn, the Government had to come down from its position and accept the proposal. A 19 member bipartite committee was to submit proposals to the Government by the end of July 1990, which would be considered by a meeting of the Standing Labour Committee of the ILC. G. Ramanujam of INTUC was nominated as Chairman of the committee, the CITU was represented on this committee by M.K. Pandhe.

The modified procedure on determining the membership strength of different trade unions was generally approved by the conference. A proposal was given that the verification of membership should be for the year 1988 instead of 1989. However Jibon Roy, CITU representative, proposed that the consensus reached in the trade unions meeting should be followed. Regarding the verification of membership of agricultural workers there was no unanimity of opinion and it was decided that a meeting of the central trade unions with the Government would be held on May 15 to consider the issue in depth and take decision in the matter.

### Construction Workers' Bill

The main debate on the bill for the building and construction workers veered round the formation of a Construction Labour Board. The employers' representatives wanted the CLB to cover the welfare aspect only while the trade unions wanted that employment also must be regulated by the CLB. The employers' representatives felt that the CLB would find it difficult to regulate the employment and in case of individual house builders, it would be impossible to get the workers through the CLB.

P.K. Ganguly who participated in the discussion on the bill, criticised the attitude of the employers who wanted to continue the present situation. Pointing out to the conclusions of the seminar on construction workers he noted that the employers were harping on their own views not accepted in the seminar. He took strong objection to the private sector employers speaking on behalf of the public sector employers regarding the Construction Labour Board. Ultimately the Union Labour Minister had to intervene to say that the Central Government is committed to constitute the CLB even for regulating the employment in building and construction industry. Regarding the bill on agricultural and rural workers, the CITU wanted a bill on the basis of agreed conclusion arrived at in the national seminar.

Regarding the Hospitals and Other Institutions Bill, the Conference noted that the bill had already lapsed. The trade unions advocated that the workers covered by the bill should be given trade union rights. The amendment to the Industrial Disputes Act in 1982 which provided for exclusion of these institutions from the definition of industry, should be repealed.

### Non-Implementation of Labour Laws

There was a general criticism during the conference regarding non-implementation of various labour laws in the country. The laws relating to unorganised labour, women and children were generally not implemented. No employer has been drastically punished for violation of the laws. Several loopholes have been provided in the laws which enables the employers to evade these laws with impunity.

The CITU representatives strongly objected to public sector undertakings showing disregard towards laws. The Air India management had been blatantly violating the Equal Remunerations Act while the Government of India was behaving like a silent spectator. Private sector managements showed utter disregard for the labour laws in the country and resorted to several malpractices to avoid penalty for violations.

The 29th session of the Indian Labour Conference could achieve positive results due to the united approach evolved by all the central trade union organisations. The unity has now to be strengthened to ensure effective implementation of the decisions so that the working class interests are properly protected. This unity will also enable the trade union movement to effectively participate in the democratic movement in the country and carry forward the struggle for trade union and democratic rights.

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*(From page 14)*

conforms to both reason and sentiment.

I am firmly confident that the fraternal parties and countries will have to unite again.

About personal matters: All my life, I have served the Homeland, the revolution and the people with all my heart and strength. If I should now depart from this world, I would have nothing to regret, except not being able to serve longer and more.

When I am gone, a grand funeral should be avoided in order not to waste the people's time and money.

Finally, to the whole people, the whole Party, the whole army, to my nephews and nieces, the youth and children I leave my boundless love.

I also convey my cordial greetings to our comrades and friends, and to the youth and children throughout the world.

My ultimate wish is that our entire party and people, closely joining their efforts, will build a peaceful, reunified, independent, democratic and prosperous Vietnam, and make a worthy contribution to the world revolution.

Hanoi, May 10, 1969

# Comrade Ho Chi Minh

This year, 1990, the working class and the progressive forces all over the world will be celebrating the birth centenary of Com. Ho Chi Minh, the legendary leader of the Vietnamese revolution, founder of the French and Indo-Chinese Communist parties, and the unflinching fighter against imperialism for national liberation movements upholding the banner of proletarian internationalism. The year 1990 is also the 60th Anniversary of the founding of the Vietnamese Communist Party (then Indo-Chinese Communist Party), 45th Founding Anniversary of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, of which Com. Ho Chi Minh became the President and 15th founding Anniversary of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, having giving the final blow to the US imperialist aggressions in 1975.

The significance of the events—the founding of the Indochinese Communist Party in 1930, the founding of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in 1945 and the founding of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in 1975 can be grasped in the background of over century old history of the Vietnamese people's national movement since the French colonialists launched their first armed attack on Vietnam in 1847.

The heroic Vietnamese people started fighting the invader. But they were able to regain their independence only after the leadership of the national movement was taken over by the party of the working class—the Marxist-Leninist Party, ie the Indochinese Communist Party founded and led by Com. Ho Chi Minh. During the Second World War the Japanese aggressors too launched attack on Vietnam and the Vietnamese people fought the yoke of French-Japanese military aggression. The movement was guided by Com. Ho Chi Minh under the leading role of the party to ultimately form the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in September 2, 1945 in the liberated Northern part and giving the final crushing defeat to the French colonial forces in 1954 at Dien Bien Phu.

But the struggle did not end there. The American aggressors took over the plundering activities and launched one of the most brutal aggressions ever in the world on the people of Vietnam with the most sophisticated weapons including chemical and bacteriological warfare. Scores of people lost their lives, villages were reduced to dust. The devastations surpassed the horrors of the Second World War itself. The US imperialists laid bare their barbarous character. But the valiant people of Vietnam withstood the attack with rock like unity under the leadership of the Communist Party and Com. Ho Chi Minh. Com. Ho Chi Minh did not live to see the final victory. He died in 1969. But the party he built and the path he showed, laid the foundation of the crushing victory against the most barbarian imperialist force—the US imperialists. Led by the working class party—the Communist Party, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam was formed in 1975, liber-

ating the entire country from the imperialist aggression.

Before death, Com. Ho Chi Minh wrote his famous Testament outlining not only the immediate task to defeat the US imperialists, but also showed the path to be followed to build up the national economy and for socialist construction under the guidelines of Marxism-Leninism. In this period, when the imperialists have launched a renewed attack on socialism, boosting the internal counter-revolutionary forces to disintegrate the socialist states and revert to the path of capitalism, Com. Ho Chi Minh's guidelines and Vietnam's determination to uphold the leading role of the Communist Party, its anti-imperialist tradition to safeguard the Vietnamese revolution and hold high the banner of proletarian internationalism will serve as the beacon light for the international working class and anti-imperialist movements.

*(We are publishing hereunder the Declaration of Independence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the Testament by Com. Ho Chi Minh—Ed.)*

## Declaration of Independence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam

*On August 30, 1945, President Ho Chi Minh arrived in Hanoi, coming from the Free Zone. On September 2, 1945, before 500,000 people gathered in Ba Dinh Square, he read the following Declaration of Independence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam :*

“All men are created equal. They are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

“This immortal statement was made in the Declaration of Independence of the United States of America in 1776. In a broader sense, this means: All the people on the earth are equal from birth, all the peoples have a right to live and to be happy and free.

“The Declaration made in 1791 at the time of the French Revolution, on the Rights of Man and the Citizen, also states: “All men are born free and with equal rights, and must always remain free and have equal rights.”

“Those are undeniable truths.

“Nevertheless, for more than eighty years, the French imperialists, abusing the standard of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, have violated our Fatherland and oppressed our fellow-citizens. They have acted contrary to the ideals of humanity and justice.

“In the field of politics, they have deprived our

people of every democratic liberty.

'They have enforced inhuman laws, they have set up three distinct political regimes in the North, the Centre and the South of Viet Nam in order to wreck our national unity and prevent our people from being united.

'They have built more prisons than schools. They have mercilessly slain our patriots: they have drowned our uprisings in rivers of blood. They have fettered public opinion, they have practised obscurantism against our people. To weaken our race they have forced us to use opium and alcohol.

'In the field of economics, they have fleeced us to the bone, impoverished our people and devastated our land.

'They have robbed us of our rice fields, our mines, our forests, raw materials. They have monopolized the issue of bank-notes and the export trade.

'They have invented numerous unjustifiable taxes, and reduced our people, especially our peasantry, to a state of extreme poverty.'

'They have hampered our national bourgeoisie from prospering; they have mercilessly exploited our workers.

'In the autumn of 1940, when the Japanese fascists violated Indochina's territory to establish new bases against the Allies, the French imperialists went down on their bended knees and handed over our country to them.

'Thus, from that date, our people were subjected to the double yoke of the French and the Japanese. Their sufferings and miseries increased. The result was that from the end of last year to the beginning of this year, from Quang Tri province to the North of Viet Nam, more than two million of our fellow-citizens died from starvation. On the 9th of March French troops were disarmed by the Japanese. The French colonialists either fled or surrendered, showing that not only were they incapable of "protecting" us, but that, in the span of five years, they had twice sold our country to the Japanese.

'On several occasions before the 9th of March, the Viet Minh league had urged the French to join forces with it against the Japanese. Instead of agreeing to this proposal, the French colonialists so intensified their terrorist activities against the Viet Minh members that before fleeing they massacred a great number of political prisoners detained at Yen Bay and Cao Bang.

'Notwithstanding all this, our fellow-citizens have always manifested a tolerant and humane attitude towards the French. Even after the Japanese coup de force of March 1945, the Viet Minh League helped many Frenchmen to cross the frontier,

rescued some of them from Japanese jails and protected French lives and property.

'From the autumn of 1940, our country had in fact ceased to be a French colony and had become a Japanese possession.

'After the Japanese had surrendered to the Allies, our whole people rose up to regain our national sovereignty and to found the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

'The truth is that we have wrested our independence from the Japanese and not from the French.

'The French have fled, the Japanese have capitulated. Emperor Bao Dai has abdicated. Our people have broken the chains which for nearly a century have fettered us, and have won independence for the Fatherland. Our people at the same time have overthrown the monarchic regime that has reigned supreme for tens of centuries. In its place has been established the present Democratic Republic.

'For these reasons, we, members of the Provisional Government, representing the whole Vietnamese people, declare that from now on we break off all relations of a colonial character with France; we repeal all the international obligations that France has so far subscribed to on behalf of Viet Nam and we abolish all the special rights the French have unlawfully acquired in our Fatherland.

'The whole Vietnamese people, animated by a common purpose, are determined to fight to the bitter end against any attempt by the French colonialists to reconquer our country.

'We are convinced that the Allied nations, which at Teheran and San Francisco have acknowledged the principles of self-determination and equality of nations, will not refuse to recognise the independence of Viet Nam.

'A people that has courageously opposed French domination for more than eighty years, a people that has fought side by side with the Allies against the fascists during these last years, such a people must be free and independent.

'For those reasons, we, members of the provisional Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, solemnly declare to the world that Viet Nam has the right to be free and independent, and in fact it is so already. The entire Vietnamese people are determined to mobilize all their physical and mental strength, to sacrifice their lives and property in order to safeguard their freedom and independence.'

## TESTAMENT

Eventhough our people's struggle against U. S. aggression for national salvation may have to go Kamalapati Roy (AITUC), Chitta Basu (TUCC) Sunil Sengupta (UTUC) and Bhaptosh Roy (12th

through more hardships and sacrifices, we are bound to win total victory. This is a certainty.

I intend, when that day comes, to tour both South and North to congratulate our heroic fellow-countrymen, cadres and combatants, and visit old people and our beloved youth and children.

Then, on behalf of our people, I will go to the fraternal countries of the Socialist camp and friendly countries in the whole world and thank them for their whole hearted support and assistance to our people's patriotic struggle against U.S. aggression.

Tu Fu, the famous poet of the Tang period in China, wrote "In all time, few are those who reach the age of seventy".

This year, being seventy-nine, I can already count myself among those "few"; still, my mind has remained perfectly lucid, though my health has somewhat declined in comparison with the last few years. When one has seen more than seventy springs, health deteriorates with one's growing age. This is no wonder.

But who can say how much longer I shall be able to serve the revolution, the Homeland and the people?

I therefore leave these few lines in anticipation of the day when I shall go and join Karl Marx, Lenin and other revolutionary elders; this way, our people throughout the country, our comrades in the Party, and our friends in the world will not be taken by surprise.

First about the Party: Thanks to its close unity and total dedication to the working class, the people and the Homeland, our Party has been able, since its founding to unite, organise and lead our people from success to success in a resolute struggle.

Unity is an extremely precious tradition of our Party and people. All Comrades, from the Central Committee down to the cell, must preserve the unity and oneness of mind in the Party like the apple of their eye.

Within the Party, to establish broad democracy and to practice self-criticism and criticism regularly and seriously is the best way to consolidate and develop solidarity and unity. Comradely affection should prevail.

Ours is a Party in power. Each Party member, each cadre must be deeply imbued with revolutionary morality and show industry, thrift, integrity, uprightness, total dedication to the public interest and complete selflessness. Our Party should preserve absolute purity and prove worthy of its role as the leader and very loyal servant of the people.

The Working Youth Union members and our

young people in general are good; they are always ready to come forward, fearless of difficulties, and eager for progress.

The Party must foster their revolutionary virtues and train them to be our successors, both "red" and "expert", in the building of socialism.

The training and education of future revolutionary generations is of great importance and necessity.

Our labouring people, in the plains as in the mountains, have for generation after generation endured hardships, feudal and colonial oppression and exploitation; they have in addition experienced many years of war.

Yet, our people have shown great heroism, courage, enthusiasm, and industriousness.

They have always followed the Party since it came into being, with unqualified loyalty.

The Party must work out effective plans for economic and cultural development so as constantly to improve the life of our people.

The war of resistance against U. S. aggression may drag on. Our people may have to face new sacrifices in life and property. Whatever happens, we must keep firm our resolve to fight the U. S. aggressors till total victory.

Our mountains will always be, our rivers will always be, our people will always be;

The American invaders defeated, we will rebuild our land ten times more beautiful.

No matter what difficulties and hardships lie ahead, our people are sure to total victory. The U. S. imperialists will certainly have to quit. Our Homeland will certainly be reunified. Our fellow-countrymen in the South and in the North will certainly be reunited under the same roof. We, a small nation, will have earned the signal honour of defeating through heroic struggle, two big imperialists—the French and the American and of making a worthy contribution to the world's national liberation movement.

About the world communist movement: Being a man who devoted his whole life to the revolution, the more proud I am of the growth of the international communist and workers' movement, the more pained I am by the current discord among the fraternal parties.

I hope that our Party will do its best to contribute effectively to the restoration of unity among the fraternal parties on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, in a way which

(Cont'd on page 11)

# Observance of Centenary May Day

The CITU, observed the May Day centenary in different states by taking processions, rallies, meetings, etc. The following are the reports from some states :

**Tamilnadu :** Working people of Tamilnadu observed the Centenary of Mayday with massive rallies and other celebrations.

Trade union offices, industrial areas and residential areas were decorated with flags and festoons.

In the evening, massive processions were taken out and meetings were held. Participation of women in large numbers in many centres were an important factor this year. The meetings in many centres were addressed by leaders of CITU, AIKS, DYFI and DWA. In some centres Unions and Associations of Govt. Employees, bank and insurance employees also joined the rallies.

In Madras a massive procession with hundreds of women was taken out from Tondiarpet Bus Terminus. Cultural squads and martial art groups also participated in the procession. The public meeting at Thiruvottiyur was addressed by R. Umanath, Mythily Sivaraman, A. Bakkiyam and others. P.G.K. Krishanan, District Secretary of CITU presided over the meeting.

Massive processions and meetings were conducted in all other districts and industrial centres. In Coimbatore N. Sankariah and others addressed the rally. Among those who addressed the meetings were State leaders of CPI(M), CITU, Kisan Sabha, DYFI and DWA including P.R. Parameswaran, N. Varadhara- jan, K. Ramani MLA, K. Varadarajan, T.K. Ranga- rajan, K. Vaithyanathan, G. Ramakrishnan, W. R. Varadarajan MLA, G. Veerayyan MLA, Papa Uma- nath MLA and S.P. Agathiyalingam.

In Pondicherry, hundreds of men and women participated in the procession and public meeting. The Mayday rally was preceded by the 2nd Conference of Pondicherry CITU on 30th April and forenoon of 1st May. Mayday rally, presided by district CITU President P. Sankarn, was addressed by Padmanabhan, Dorai Arumugam (CITU Secretary), S. Padmanabhan (AIKS), Malarvizhi (DWA) and Mahendran (DYFI).

## May Day Memorial

One feature of this years May Day celebration in Tamilnadu was the unveiling of a May Day Memorial (Constructed by the State Government) by the Chief Minister of Tamilnadu. The Chief Minister also renamed the Napier Park, where this memorial was erected, as May Day Park. It may be recalled that in 1986, CITU had requested the then Tamilnadu Govt. to arrange to erect a memorial in honour of Mayday. In the alternative the Govt. was requested to allot a land to enable the CITU and other

Trade Unions to get the memorial erected. No action was taken by the Govt. at that time. The request was renewed during budget discussions this year by Comrade W.R. Varadarajan, Secretary State CITU and the Chief Minister Mr. M. Karunanidhi, responded immediately by declaring that the foundation stone for the memorial would be laid on May Day this year. But he got the memorial itself erected to commemorate the May Day Centenary this year,

**Karnataka :** On 1.5.90 evening about 5000 workers came in processions from different parts of the city, holding red banners and raising slogans to the Silver Jubilee Part at Bangalore and participated in the May Day Centenary rally organised by CITU and AITUC jointly. Com. M.C. Narasimhan, AITUC State President, presided over the meeting. Com. K.S. Subrahmanya, CITU District General Secretary welcomed the gathering. Before the commencement of the meeting five minutes silence was observed paying homage to Com. B.T. Ranadive, CITU President.

CITU State President Com. S Suryanarayana Rao analysed the political and economic situation and reminded the workers of their political tasks in addition to struggling for economic demands. AITUC district President Com. Mahadevan appealed to the workers to agitate for getting the Right to Work as Fundamental Right. CITU leader Com. Srinivas appealed to the working class to fight against the communal and divisive forces and protect the unity and integrity of the country. Com M.C. Narasimhan stated that the National Front Govt was continuing the Cong (I) Govt.'s economic policy and called upon the working class to pressurise the Central Govt through united struggles, to adopt alternate economic policy in favour of common people.

The meeting ended after adopting the following pledges:—

Defend national unity, defeat terrorism and communalism, withdraw all taxes on common man in the budgets, ban lockout, closures, and retrenchment, enforce right to work as Fundamental Right, Down with imperialism, long live world peace.

**West Bengal :** A massive rally was held at Saheed Minar, Calcutta to observe the May Day centenary. Addressing the rally, Jyoti Basu, Chief Minister of W. Bengal and Vice-president of the CITU called upon the working class to unite and fight the divisive and communal forces backed by the imperialists and safeguard the unity and integrity of the country. He further called upon the working class to hold high the banner of proletarian internationalism and defend socialism from the attacks of imperialism.

The rally was jointly organised by CITU, AITUC TUCC, UTUC, 12th July Committee and Mercantile Federation. It was presided over by Manoranjan Roy, the State CITU General Secretary. Among others who addressed were Niren Ghosh (CITU),

July Committee). Rallies and meetings were organised all over the State.

**Rajasthan :** The state CITU organised rallies and meetings at Jaipur, Udaipur, Kota and other places. At Jaipur a public meeting, a trade union class and a seminar were held which were addressed by P.K. Ganguly, Secretary, CITU among others.

**Himachal Pradesh :** At Himachal Pradesh rallies and meetings were held at Parwanoo, Simla and other places and thousands of leaflets were distributed. The rally at Simla was addressed among others by M.K. Pandhe, Secretary CITU and D.N. Kapoor, the State General Secretary.

**Orissa :** A large number of workers and employees under CITU Bhubaneswar Co-ordination committee of unions and Associations took a procession from Master Canteen Square to Rajmahal Chhak. Belonging to a number of unions under CITU, local committee Bhubaneswar and different offices like State Govt. Central Govt, banks, insurance, Central Govt. undertakings affiliated to BCCUA, these workers and employees raised slogans of solidarity among the workers all over the world. A public meeting was held at Rajmahal Chhak having a joint presidium represented by CITU Co-ordination Committee and HMS. The meeting was addressed by Com. Bighneswar Swain, CITU. Com. Kulamani Nayak BCCUA, and Bhagabat Behera, HMS, a member of Legislative Assembly. The meeting expressed its solidarity with rest of the workers of the world, serious concern over increasing communal tension, price rise, unemployment, etc.

Similar rallies were held at Jharsuguda and other places.

**Meghalaya :** The May Day Committee, consisting of various trade unions observed the centenary day with great enthusiasm. In the morning there was flag hoisting at the State Central Library Shillong by the veteran trade union leader Com. (Mrs.) Mira Roy. In the afternoon workers and employees took out a joint procession and held meeting in the State Central Library auditorium. The meeting was presided over by Coms. B.P. Bhattacharya, (Mrs.) Mira Roy, H.C. Marwein, D.C. Bhowmick and N. Pal Chowdhury. N.K. Chakrabarty, General Secretary of the May Day Committee addressed the meeting among others. The meeting adopted a declaration with resolutions on national integration, right to work, against price rise, etc. The declaration was published in Hindi and Khasi languages also. After the meeting, the Lok Natya presented revolutionary songs and poems on May Day.

**Delhi :** A masive rally was taken out from Ramlila grounds to Town-Hall Road crossing, Chandani Chowk. The rally was addressed by Com. E. Balanandan, Com. Saifuddin Chowdhury. The May Day rally was preceded by the Delhi State CITU conference.

## Demand for New Textile Policy

Several trade unions, viz. CITU, AITUC, HMS, HMKP, BMS, Kamgar Aghadi, Sarva Shramik Sangh and Bombay Closed Mills Workers Committee jointly convened a conference of textile workers at Poddar College Hall, Bombay on April 1. About one thousand delegates from Maharashtra, Delhi, UP, MP, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Tamilnadu, Karnatka, etc attended the conference.

A presidium consisting of KL Malabade, Dinkar Kadav (CITU); Govind Rajan (AITUC); J. Bhilari (Kamgar Agadhi); G. Ahuja (BMS) and Rajarama conducted the proceedings of the Convention. Vithal Ghag of CITU gave an introductory speech and Gangadha Chitnis of AITUC placed the resolution. 25 delegates participated in the deliberations. The speakers gave vivid report as to how the textile policy by the former Rajiv Government of the Congress (I) had adversely affected all the three sectors of the industry. In the mill sector there were growing closures. 146 mills had closed down in the country. In Bombay itself, out of 63 mills; 12 were closed. Before the new textile policy there were 2.3 lakh textile workers in Bombay. But at present there were only 1.4 lakh workers. Most of the NTC Mills in the city were running with less than 50 percent capacity. While the mill owners were switching over to powerlooms, the workers were ruthlessly exploited in this sector without any labour laws. The handloom weavers were worst hit. The wages they received were not sufficient to get them two square meals a day.

In his concluding speech, P. Sanzgiri, Vice President of the CITU welcomed the change of Government at the Centre, but stressed the need for united struggle by the textile workers in the country for a new textile policy to overcome the chronic crisis in the textile industry.

The convention decided that a delegation would meet the Prime Minister and other Ministers with the demand for a new textile policy. The action programmes included observance of all India Protest Day on May 28, demonstration at Delhi during the Monsoon Session of the Parliament and preparation for strike action after that.

A public meeting was held in the afternoon at the Maharashtra High School Maidan. The meeting was addressed among others by KL Malabade, Ashok Dhawale (CITU); A B Bardhan, GV Chitnis, Shivaji Deshmuch (AITUC); Dada Samant, Dade Atyalkar (Kamgar Agadhi); Yashwat Chavan (Sarva Shramik Sangh); Raman Shah (BMS); Vithal Ghag and Datta Iswalkar (Bombay Closed Mills Workers' Struggle Committee).

# When will the Victimised be Back to their Jobs ?

The one big question that is haunting the minds of lakhs of railwaymen today is: How much more time will the Railway Minister need to bring their victimised colleagues back to their job. There are several hundreds of them, they were thrown out of their job by vindictive anti-democratic, anti-worker Cong (I) Govt for the 'crime' of responding to the call of their trade unions to take part in union's programme and its day to day activities. Most of them were dismissed as far back as 1980-81 in connection with locomen's agitation under the Rule 14 (ii) which corresponds to the notorious Art 311 (2) (b) of the Constitution.

Minds of the railwaymen are exercised also over the fate of thousands of others who had been subjected to victimisation by the previous Cong(I) Govts in various other forms such as break in service, penal transfer etc during the last decade. They are also worried about the many long pending grievances and legitimate demands to which the Cong (I) Govts had persistently maintained a criminally indifferent attitude.

However, the anxiety for the vindictively dismissed colleagues who have been out of job for almost a decade is upper most in their minds today.

When the National Front Govt came to power and reiterated its election promises that not only undemocratic laws and rules will be repealed, but new measures to expand democracy would also be adopted and injustice done by the previous Govt would be remedied, the workers passing through horrors of repression for a whole decade felt elated. With the induction of George Fernandes, the leader of the glorious 1974 rail strike as the Railway Minister, the railwaymen began confidently to look forward for the day when their victimised colleagues would once again be in their midst. Some democratic measures initiated by the Govt immediately on assuming office, reinforced their confidence. The Railway Minister kept repeating his assurance to the representatives of various trade unions of railwaymen that he would by all means end the victimisation. He reiterated his assurance to the members of Parliament as well.

But as days and months rolled by, the confidence of the workers began to dwindle. The hope that a positive declaration might be made by the Minister in his Rail Budget speech was also belied. Reiteration of his assurance in the course of his concluding speech during Rail Budget debate failed to reassure the workers because he declared that all the cases of victimisation would be reviewed.

Three months had already elapsed after the installation of the National Front Govt. And now the Minister says he will 'review' the cases. What

for is the review? When the Janata Govt came to power in 1977, Madhu Dandavate as Rail Minister took back hundreds of employees victimised in connection with 1974 strike within 6 weeks; and he proudly declared this in his first budget speech. He did not have to conduct any review. Then why does Fernandes require to conduct review? Moreover the Minister himself has declared that not only he but the National Front Govt as a whole is against the arbitrary powers given to the administration by Art 311 of the Constitution. If the Minister and the Govt is against this undemocratic provision of the Constitution and also the rule deriving strength from it, then to bring an end to the victimisation caused by application of those rules is a matter of a single decision. A single decision to annul all victimisation under that rule. Where is the scope for review? Railwaymen have enough experience of such reviews. They know how bureaucracy use the review for confirming their arbitrary action against workers. Has the Railway Minister capitulated to the pressure of the bureaucracy? This is how the railwaymen are thinking today. Their disappointment is now being transformed into despair, into discontent, into anger. The advanced section of the workers who had a definite role in the ouster of the previous regime are worried that if the most burning grievances of workers are not mitigated, they will gradually cease to have sympathy for the NF, which will give strength to its enemies, the enemies of the workers and the people. So the organisations of workers have started thinking about steps to exert moral pressure, to conduct effective agitation with a view to removing obstacles on the way fulfillment of the vital demands, specially the demand for end of victimisation.

### **AIREC National Convention**

A national convention under the auspices of All India Railway Employees Confederation was held in Delhi at Sapru House auditorium to discuss issues relating to workers participation in management and determination of bargaining agent in the system of industrial relations, both through secret ballot. The Railway Minister consented to inaugurate the convention but under unavoidable circumstances he was unable to do so. Once again the workers who had hoped against hope that the Minister might make declaration regarding reinstatement of the victimised in the course of his inaugural address suffered disappointment.

In the absence of the Railway Minister, the AIREC President C.M. Singh who presided over the convention inaugurated it. The Convention was addressed by trade union leaders namely Samar Mukherjee MP, General Secretary CITU, Subhasini Ali M.P, also of CITU, Umraomal Purohit General Secretary, HMS and President AIRF, S. K. Sanyal, Secretary AITUC, Sri Krishna, General Secretary,

IRWF. Besides, the General Secretaries of the constituent units took part in the discussion on the approach paper which was placed before the convention by the AIREC General Secretary N.S. Bhango. The paper was adopted with some amendment.

Although the convention attended by about 13 hundred delegates engaged in a very lively discussion on the issues on agenda and the convention ended with an enthusiastic note, the anxiety for the victimised comrades, however, had cast its shadow over the convention and it was reflected in the decision of the AIREC working committee which met the next day.

The extended meeting of the AIREC Central Working Committee took the following decisions on 6th May.

Firstly., the leaders will make all possible efforts to have a dialogue with the Railway Minister to seek immediate end of victimisation and also negotiating facilities for AIREC at all levels.

Secondly a campaign week on all major demands will be observed from 22nd to 28th June. 28th June will be observed as Anti-Victimisation Day. A memorandum addressed to the Prime Minister with mass signature of workers will be submitted to the Divisional authorities on 9th July.

#### **Dharna by Loco Running Staff**

The locomen staged a massive dharna at Boat Club on 7th May at the call of the AILRSA. In response to a call from AIREC convention a large number of workers of other categories also took part in the dharna, which was staged to press the demand for immediate reinstatement of the victimised.

Samar Mukherjee M.P, General Secretary CITU, Kanai Banerjee, Secretary CITU, Basudev Acharya, MP, Sri Krishna, IRWF, C.M, Singh, President and N. S. Bhango, Secretary General of AIREC, Moulavi Ram, IRLMSA, C. L. Upadhyay, AIGC, M. L. Banerjee, IRTWA, N. K. Jha, AISMA, M.N. Prasad, Joint Secretary General, AILRSA and other leaders addressed the Dharna.

A delegation led by AILRSA president K. Rajanna, and Secretary General S. K. Dhar met the Rly Minister and submitted a memorandum. Accordingly to AILRSA sources in the course of the discussion which lasted for about 30 minutes the Minister stressed the victimisation issue and said that he was seriously on the job and it will be ended within a few days.

Dharna was over after S. K. Dhar gave a report of the discussion with the Minister.

The extended Central Executive Committee of AILRSA met on 8th May and in a resolution adopted in the meeting requested the Govt. to vacate victimisation without further delay. The meeting

has called upon all its units and members to make all efforts for complete success of the programme adopted by the AIREC. The meeting also directed the Divisional Secretaries to give a telegraphic reminder to the Rail Minister between the 25th and 30th May if victimisation is not vacated by that time.

#### **The S. E. Rly Authorities bows down**

A significant victory has been achieved by the SE railway workers through united struggle led jointly by the S. E. Railwaymen's Union (AIRF) and the Divisional Unit of the All India Railway Employees Confederation. In the summer season every year the S. E. Rly workers at Chakradharpur suffers from acute shortage of water and electricity. Peculiarly, at night when workers' colonies were plunged in darkness officer's quarters were found flooded with light. All efforts to remedy this situation had failed in the past. This year the two organisations decided to fight unitedly. They demanded adequate supply of water and electricity for all. Until it is done the Special emergency supply only to officers' quarters will have to be stopped. It started with a demonstration of 5000 workers included a large number of housewives, youth and students before the Divisional authorities on 11th April. On 30th April a joint hunger strike started and on 2nd May another massive demonstration of more than 5000 people took place. The authorities agreed to fulfil other demands as early as possible but they adamantly refused to deprive the officers of the special privilege of emergency power supply. Finally the SERMU and AIREC served notice of work stoppage from 12.30 hours of 4th May. At this stage the officers association negotiated with the trade unions and offered to forego the privilege. The struggle ended after an agreement between the divisional authorities on the one hand and the SERMU and the AIREC on the other.

#### **Dakshin Railway Employees Union**

The 26th Conference of the Dakshin Railway Employees Union affiliated to CITU was held at Palghat from 4th to 6th May 1990. K. Anandan Nambiar, the outgoing president hoisted the union flag while V. S. Achuthanandan inaugurated the conference. The president being ill his address was read out by the vice president R. Umanath. The inaugural session was addressed by the leaders of many fraternal organisations. After conclusion of the deliberations the delegate session elected the executive committee for the next term with R. Umanath, Vice President CITU as President and P. V. Ramdas as General Secretary.

The open session which was held in the afternoon of 6th May was preceded by a huge procession. The mammoth gathering of the open session was addressed among others by the Chief Minister of Kerala, E. K. Nayanar. On both 4th and 5th, after the delegate session seminars and other cultural programmes were held.

# Conference of State Government Employees Federation

The Seventh National Conference of the All India State Government Employees Federation which held its session at Coimbatore from 12 May to 15 May 1990 called upon 80 lakhs of state employees and teachers of the country to observe 9 August 1990 as 'National Integration Day' by holding rallies and demonstrations at all levels and to defeat the divisive, secessionist, fundamentalist and communal forces who have raised their ugly heads in different parts of the country.

The conference at the same time strongly urged the Central Government to formulate a National Wage Policy and to take steps for its implementation in different sectors of the working class and the state employees and simultaneously demanded deletion of the atrocious Articles 310 and 311(2) A, B & C of the Constitution which provide the colonial pleasure doctrine and vest the Central and State Governments with powers to dismiss government employees without showing any reason or giving any scope of the self defence. The conference warned that if the Government fails to concede the above demands without delay then the All India State Government Employees' Federation would be left with no alternative but to call upon the 80 lakhs of state employees and teachers for a countrywide strike action.

The conference was attended by more than 1,500 delegates from all over the states, although a few hundred delegates could not attend the conference as they were held up on the way for cancellation of trains due to severe cyclonic devastation.

The conference was presided over by Com. K.A. Keshvamoorthy and was inaugurated by Justice (Retd) V.R. Krishna Iyer, the conference was greeted by representatives of different central trade unions and national federations. From the CITU Com. R. Umanath, Vice President greeted the conference. General Secretary, Trade Union International of Public & Allied Employees sent telegraphic message of greetings. Greetings were also received from the Speaker of Lok Sabha and several Chief Ministers and Central Ministers.

The report placed by the General Secretary, Com. Sukomal Sen, M.P. was discussed from different aspects and after his summing up, the report was unanimously accepted. The report dealt with the international & national situation and the general condition of the trade union movement of the country along with a review of the activities of the All India State Government Employees' Federation and the tasks ahead.

The following resolutions were passed in the conference unanimously : National Integration, deletion of Articles 310 and 311(2) A, B and C of the Constitution, victimisation, working women, legislating service rules, automation and computerisation,

ILO Convention, opposing change of price index base year, compulsory retirement, representation in Tripartite Labour Conference, Housing and other social welfare measures, and policy and programme resolution with the following 10 Point demands :

1. Radical changes in the fiscal policy of the Government to be made for holding the price line and the public distribution system to be strengthened ensuring supply of the essential commodities.

2. National Wage policy on scientific norms ensuring a decent standard of living to all section of workers and employees should be evolved and appropriate steps should be taken by the Central Govt. for the purpose. Implementation of such a national wage policy for the state govt. employees, teachers and state boards, corporation panchayat and municipal employees has to be ensured by suitable financial arrangement between the Centre and States. Pending formulation of such a national wage policy, a general parity of pay between the Govt. employees and the Central public sector employees should be evolved immediately.

3. Articles 310 and 311(2) A B, & C of the Constitution and Article 126(2) of the Kashmir Constitution which provide for the colonial pleasure doctrine and vest the Central and State Governments with arbitrary power to dismiss Govt. employees without showing any reasons whatsoever giving the employees any scope of self-defence to be deleted immediately. The service rules and regulations of the employees should be amended accordingly and should get legislative sanction.

4. 8.33% bonus to be ensured to the state govt. employees and ceiling on bonus to be raised to Rs. 3,500/- for all (instead of the present Rs. 2,500/-).

5. The deceptive consumer price index series of 1982 which has resulted in a recurring financial loss to employees and workers should be formulated on a scientific basis and in future Govt. of India should revise consumer price index series once in five years as stipulated by ILO Convention.

6. Right to work to be enshrined in the Constitution as a fundamental right and at the same time measures to be taken for filling up of existing vacancy posts and creation of adequate jobs in rural and urban sectors and opportunities for self-employment so as to make the constitutional guarantee a meaningful one ensuring job to the jobless. Pending jobs, measures to be taken for granting unemployment allowance to the unemployed. Strict instruction to be issued to all Central & State Govt. Departments, autonomous corporations and other public and private sector units to stop retrenchment and to fill up all vacancies.

7. Employees' participation in the management

at all levels on equal footing to be implemented in a meaningful and effective way by a suitable scheme in this regard.

8. All black acts like ESMA, NSA etc. which are indiscriminately used against trade union movement to be repealed and all measures of victimisations to be withdrawn immediately.

9. Adequate financial powers to the States to be guaranteed by necessary restructuring of the existing centre-state financial relations.

10. Recognition should be accorded to the All India State Government Employees' Federation by the Central Government and all State Governments and the federation should be invited for consultation in all matters in regard to labour.

The Conference elected R.G. Karnik as the Chairman, K.A. Keshavamurthy as the Hon'y President and Sukomal Sen, MP as General Secretary.

The Conference ended with a massive and colourful procession which wended the city of Coimbatore and a rally of more than 20 thousand employees and teachers and other sections of the working people were held.

The newly elected Chairman Com. R.G. Karnik presided and spoke. Other speakers were Com. K.A. Keshavamurthy and Com. Sukomal Sen. Com. E.K. Nayanar, Chief Minister of Kerala addressed the rally as special guest.

Com. Ramani, Chairman of the Reception Committee, Com. Gangadharan and Com. Shankaran of the Tamilnadu Govt. Employees' Association and Com. K.V. Rajendran of FSETO of Kerala also spoke. The Conference ended amidst great enthusiasm and with a firm pledge for forging widest possible unity and militant struggle.

## Meeting of TUs With Finance Minister

The extended meeting of the CPSTU held in New Delhi on 9th April 1990 decided to observe All India Protest Day on 24th April in all the public sector undertakings in the country on the 5 point charter of demands. According to reports the Day was well observed all over the country.

The meeting also decided to organise one day strike in the month of May, the date to be announced by the CPSTU after meeting the Union Finance and the Labour Ministers. The trade unions expressed their strong feelings to the Union Labour Minister when they met him on 21st April 1990 during the Indian Labour Conference. He agreed to fix up the time to meet the Union Finance Minister.

The Union Finance Minister met the Central

Union representatives on 21st May at his Chamber in Parliament. On behalf of CITU Comrade M.K. Pandhe participated in the meeting. In the meeting the trade unions expressed their strong resentment at the unilateral dissolution of the Tripartite DA Committee and the announcement of Rs. 1.90 as the flat rate of DA.

After detailed discussions the Union Finance Minister agreed to revive the Tripartite DA Committee and keep in abeyance the announcement of the Central Government regarding Rs. 1.90 per point of flat rate of DA.

On the intervention by the CITU the Union Minister of Finance agreed that within 2 months, the Tripartite DA Committee would complete the deliberations and the Central Govt. would give their considered views on the proposals given by the central trade unions for a multi-rate DA for the public sector workers. The Union Labour Minister who was present in the meeting agreed to call a meeting of the Committee on 29th May 1990 in the office of the Labour Ministry.

In views of this development the CPSTU felt that the strike decision in May has to be deferred for some time.

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# Right to Work Convention at Durgapur

Jibon Roy

Under the projection of Com. B. T. Ranadive's elucidatory note which incidentally happened to be his last message to the working class, the two days' convention on Right to Work concluded at Durgapur on 3d April 1990. The note Com. BTR wrote for the convention from his sick bed has been an excellent piece of work with profound introspection of the society elucidating the cause and character of unemployment in urban and rural India and formed the ideological guideline for the convention.

## Broad Based Platform in the Making

Forty four All India Industrial Federations, eight All India Unions / Associations and two All India Confederations representing both the private and public sector workers and employees, state and central government employees, Insurance, Bank, Railways and Mercantile employees/workers had jointly convened the convention.

It was the biggest trade union platform ever formed in the country, to discuss an issue which is not directly concerned with any immediate economic gains of the working class. The immediate purpose has been to evolve a line of joint campaign for an alternative economic line which can form the economic basis of the Right to Work. 1010 delegates attended the convention. Excepting a few states from the North-Eastern Region, Andaman & Nicobar, Goa and Pondicherry, the delegates came from all over the country. The presence of 40 fraternal delegates from DYFI, SFI, AIKS, AIDWA, All India Agricultural Workers' Union and Democratic Lawyers' Association was significant.

## Documents Placed

The note written by Com. BTR, the CITU President, together with the approach paper placed on behalf of the Preparatory Committee and the inaugural address by Com. Samar Mukherjee, the CITU General Secretary formed the basis of the deliberations on which 41 delegates participated. The speech made by Dr. Ashok Mitra, the eminent economist, further contributed in expanding the area of discussions. The concluding address by Com. Jyoti Basu, the West Bengal Chief Minister was inspiringly assertive on the need of developing a mass awareness and movement on the issue. Besides, the excellent key note address, the superb preparatory work by the Preparatory Committee with Com. Dilip Mazumdar as Convenor and the Reception Committee contributed in creating an atmosphere of spirit, commitment and involvement.

## Grand Preparations

The Reception Committee which was formed taking representatives from all trade unions in Burdwan district did a commendable job in hosting

the convention. It organised 50 local conventions on the issue and also 'padayatras' all round the district.

The convention at the outset paid homage to Com. Saroj Mukherjee, the CPI(M) leader and other national and working class leaders who passed away in the recent past. A presidium was elected with the following members :

Com. S. K. Vyas, General Secretary, Confederation of Central Government Employees and Workers' Union; Ajoy Mukhopadhyay, MP, Member, National Executive All India State Govt. Employees' Federation; Shanti Bhattacharya, Joint Secretary, All India Insurance Employees' Association, J. S. Majumdar, General Secretary, Federation of Medical and Sales Representatives Association of India; R. Ramanathan, Regional Secretary, Air Corporation Employees Union; E. Padmanabhan, General Secretary, All India Road Transport Workers Federation; K. K. Tripathi, Vice President, Steel Workers Federation of India; Kanai Banerjee (Railways); T. K. Rangarajan, All India Co-ordination Committee of BHEL Unions; Dipali Bose, All India Co-ordination Committee of Working Women; Sunil Basu Roy, MP, General Secretary, All India Coal Workers Federation.

The speech of the Reception Committee Chairman Com. Haradhan Roy MP, who could not attend the convention due to illness was read out by Com Sunil Basu Roy.

## Need for Socio-Economic Change

Com. Samar Mukherjee, General Secretary, CITU while inaugurating the convention laid immense significance over the issue. While welcoming the National Front Government's decision to enshrine the right to work as fundamental right, he cautioned against drawing any conclusion that the acceptance of the right as fundamental right itself will automatically fetch jobs to all. Since the right to work as fundamental right meant constitutional guarantee of work to all, the struggle to achieve the same was inseparably linked with the struggle for basic fundamental socio-economic change of the Indian society, he said. It is expected, Com-Samar Mukherjee mentioned, the National Front Government in the pursuit of the election commitment to enshrine the right to work as fundamental right will shortly bring some legislation in the Parliament. But the budget proposals with the usual concessions to big business houses and landlords and continued dependence on indirect taxation showed the limitations of the present Government to bring about the desired basic change in the economy, he regretted. Therefore while highlighting the basic issues to which the Convention was to concentrate, he stressed the urgent necessity of placing an alternative policy before the

**CENTENARY CELEBRATION  
OF  
MAY DAY**

Against Communalism and Secessionism  
And to hold aloft Trade Unionism and Democratic Rights  
To obtain the Constitutional Recognition of  
The Right to Work and to fight against Unemployment  
In the struggle for elevating quality of life and living  
Workers of the World, Unite.

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**GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL**

government and the people.

After the inaugural session the note prepared by Com. BTR on the problem of unemployment and right to work was read out by Com. P. K. Ganguly Secretary CITU. (The full text of Com. BTR's write up has been published in the April issue of the Working Class).

On behalf of the Preparatory Committee an Approach Paper was placed by Com. M.K. Pandhe, Secretary, CITU for discussion.

As suggested in the note of Com. BTR, the approach paper highlighted both the long term and short term measures to translate the right to work into reality. The demand for restructuring the property relations and bringing all the means of production under social control was put forward in the paper as a measure for long term solution. The short term measures suggested included radical land reforms and distribution of surplus land to the peasantry, schemes for rural betterment and democratisation and decentralisation of distribution machineries, steps to open the closed mills and factories and total nationalisation of textile and jute industries, meaningful participation of workers in management reducing the authority of the management to hire and fire the workers at its whims and for optimum utilisation of plant capacities, lifting of ban on recruitment in government departments and public sector, stop to thoughtless process of modernisation, reduction of hours of work, protection for traditional industries, a stop to the infiltration of multinationals, an end to the discrimination against women in jobs, massive programme for children and women welfare, a massive literacy programme and public health, involving unemployed youth, unemployment relief, distribution of 14 essential commodities through government agencies and central legislation on issues touching the implementation of this right. The approach paper also stressed for a change in approach towards choice of technology and emphasised adoption of labour intensive technology.

### Need to Eliminate Causes

Dr Ashok Mitra, in his address expanded the scope of the discussion. In highlighting the correlation between the creation of new jobs and economic reform, Dr. Mitra affirmed that the working class alongwith all exploited mass will inevitably continue to create pressure over the existing bourgeois—landlord government for right to work and economic reform. Land reform and land distribution assume paramount importance than any other reforms. Reorientation of export and import policies was an important issue which Dr Mitra stressed in the context of discussing self-reliance and the danger of Indian economy being trapped into foreign debt. The credit policy and the policy of extending autonomous status to the credit institutions came under heavy criticism in Dr. Mitra's speech.

Com. Santi Ghatak, West Bengal Labour

Minister greeted the convention. He stressed the need for a Central legislation to stop closures and lock-outs. Com. Shivaji Patnaik, MP. also greeted the convention. Amongst the fraternal delegates Com. Binoy Konar from All India Kisan Sabha Com. Suneet Chopra from All India Agricultural Workers' Union, Com. Hannan Molla MP on behalf of the DYFI, Com. Nilotpal Basu from SFI, Com. Shyamali Gupta from AIDWA and Com. Bikash Bhattacharjee of Democratic Lawyers Association greeted the convention.

Besides the fraternal delegates, 42 comrades from All India Unions, National Confederations and Industrial Federations spoke on the approach paper Com. Sukomal Sen MP. and Com. S. K. Vyas, General Secretary addressed the convention on behalf of the All India State Govt Employees' Federation and Confederation of Central Govt. Employees' respectively. Sukomal Sen in his address ruled out the possibility of employment to all under the existing economic system, even if the right to work is accepted as fundamental right. He asserted supreme importance of developing unified trade union movement along with the other democratic mass. He expressed confidence that at the pressure of the mass movement government can be compelled for bringing at least some reforms which can generate new employment opportunities both in rural and urban sectors. Com. Vyas assured the convention that the confederation will extend all support to the struggle for right to work. He said that because of ban on recruitment by the Central Govt no recruitment is taking place. It is because the Govt departments by this time have reduced the number of duty post by 20%. Com. Ashis Sen MP. and General Secretary, BEFI said that the unemployment has become the breeding ground of divisive forces. On behalf of the AIEA Com. Govindarajan; Com. Kedar Bhattacharjee from Mercantile Employees' Federation; S.K. Dhar, All India Loco Running Staff Association; Bhabotosh Roy, 12th July Committee; S. Kumar, All India Coal Workers' Federation; Mrinal Banerjee, Steel Workers' Federation of India; Rabin Mukherjee, Engg. & Metal Workers Federation; Debanjan Chakraborty, Construction Workers Federation of India; S. K. Sultan, Jute Workers Federation; Sukanta Doloi, Water Transport Workers Federation of India; S. Dev Roye, Fertilizer Workers' Federation of India, Sunder Singh, Sugar Workers Federation of India; Ravindra Shukla, Co-ordination of Atomic Workers' Unions; E. Pamanabhan, All India Road Transport Workers' Federation; Jagadish Chand, Electricity Workers' Federation of India; D.P. Dubey, FMRAI; Amal Ghosh Dastidar, All India Plantation Workers Federation; Haider, BHEL Co-ordination participated in the discussion. Comrades R. K. Bhattacharjee, Air Copration Employees Union and from the state level federations Com. T. K. Rangarajan, Tamilnadu; A. D. Shastry, Maharashtra; Narasimha Reddy, Hyderabad; Suryanarayana Rao, Karnataka; Lambodhar Nayak, Orissa; N. Patel, Gujarat and from Working Women Com. Ramanika Gupta, Sabita Chatterjee spoke. Com. Jibon Roy, Secretary, CITU also spoke.

**Popularise Right to Work and Immediate Tasks**

Com. M.K. Pandhe summed up the discussion and said that while finalising the approach paper the various suggestions for improvement put forward by the delegates will be taken care of. He also put forward a number of suggestions on organisational approach and campaign for the furtherance of the struggle.

On the suggestion of the Preparatory Committee the convention decided to form a Steering Committee for continuing and furthering the struggle on right to work. Com. B.T. Ranadive in his address to the convention had suggested to consider the formation of a permanent platform taking representatives from both the employed and unemployed section of the working class and destitute rural masses and other sections of democratic public opinion so that they can join hands and throw the full strength of millions in the struggle for the right to work. The Steering Committee was formed taking one representative from each of the federations, confederations and All India Unions with Com. Pandhe as convenor. The convention authorised the Committee to finalise the Approach Paper by 10th of April 1990 and submit the final Declaration to the Prime Minister, Finance Minister and Labour Minister of the Government of India. The Convention also decided to authorise the Steering Committee to convene a National Seminar on the role of mass organisations in achieving right to work as fundamental right inviting the mass organisations of all affiliations working among the students, youths, kisans, agricultural workers, women, lawyers, intellectuals, writers etc. besides the working class.

In the mean time the Convention called upon the constituents to hold state level and industry level seminars/conventions so that the declaration of the convention can be popularised all over the country and a basis is created to launch a powerful country wide movement all over the country.

**Concluding Speech by Com. Jyoti Basu**

In his concluding speech Com. Jyoti Basu stated that it was the Cong(I) rule that perpetuated the unemployment and impoverishment in the country. Even in their approach to Five Year Plans, no concern had at all been expressed for such cancerous growth of unemployment. The Congress rule consistently refused to recognise the right to work as fundamental right. It is the achievement of the democratic movement, Com. Basu stressed that the demands for constitutional guarantee of right to work has figured important place in the slogans of political parties except Cong(I), and specially in the election manifesto of National Front Govt.

At the same time we must not confuse, Com. Basu stated, that mere enshrinement of the right in constitution as fundamental right can guarantee jobs for all unless there is basic structural change in the economy and society. This necessitates channe-

lisation of our concerted organisational efforts towards that direction of structural change, Com. Basu asserted. Com. Jyoti Basu affirmed that it is a known fact that full employment for all and capitalism are incompatible phenomena and only socialism can guarantee full employment. But that does not mean, Com. Basu told that we should wait till socialism. Such a position necessitates more active concentrated efforts to build up widest awareness on this reality and at the same time development of united movement of all sections of people to pressurise the Government to improve the situation. This convention, both by its representative character and composition makes a good beginning to that direction, he concluded.

The convention was followed by a massive public meeting which was attended by about 50,000 people. The meeting was presided over by Com. Dilip Mazumdar and was addressed by Coms. Jyoti Basu, M.K. Pandhe, Sukomal Sen and S.K. Vyas.

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was his undying faith in its correctness that sustained him through every crisis.

Comrades like BTR are so few. These are men of a different mould. When we would be overwhelmed by a serious problem, he would always point to the glorious achievements of the working class of Russia, China, Vietnam and Korea. 'If lakhs of them could do it, could do the impossible, surely you can do it' he told.

It is with that undying faith that we shall have to march on, true without our BTR, but truly in his footsteps. That could be our only tribute, only truly following his teachings.

### CITU's Message to Vietnamese Trade Unions on Birth Centenary of Ho Chi Minh

Nguyen Thuyet  
Head of International Department  
Vietnam General Confederation of Labour  
65, Quan SU  
Hanoi  
Socialist Republic of Vietnam

Centre of Indian Trade Unions conveys Revolutionary greetings to Vietnam General Confederation of Labour on the occasion of the birth centenary of Com. Ho Chi Minh, the great leader of Vietnamese Revolution, International Communist Movement and the outstanding fighter against imperialism for National Liberation Movements. CITU has decided to celebrate the year long birth centenary all over the country. We look forward towards further consolidation of the fraternal bond between our two organisations in the common struggle against imperialism, for world peace and for socialism.

**P.K. Ganguly**  
Secretary, CITU