



THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITU

Red Carpet Reception to Nelson Mandela

Just as February 11, 1990 was the red letter day for the oppressed people and the democratic forces of the world, when Nelson Mandela, the legendary leader of the South African people was released unconditionally by the apartheid regime of Pretoria, so also October 15, 1990 became a red letter day for the Indian people, when this legendary hero of the oppressed people visited India on invitation by the National Front Government.

With the zeal of struggle against apartheid, Nelson Mandela joined the African National Congress at the age of 25 and soon became a driving force along with Oliver Tambo, the present President of ANC, Walter Sisulu and others to transform the ANC into a mass people's movement against apartheid. He played a key role in convening the Congress of the Peoples in June, 1955, where the famous Freedom Charter was adopted, vowing to uproot apartheid in its entirety and transforming South Africa into a free, non-racial and democratic country.

The struggle of ANC was initially non-violent. But the escalating inhuman violence perpetrated by the racist regime resulting in mass massacre of the people leading to the Sharpeville massacre on 21st March, 1960 forced the ANC to take to arms and fight to finish. Mandela declared, "If the Government reaction is to crush by naked force our non-violent struggle, we will have to reconsider our tactics. In my mind we are closing a chapter on the question of a non-violent policy." The Umkhonto-we-Sizwe, the Spear of the Nation was formed to carry forward the armed struggle to fight to finish apartheid, and Nelson Mandela became its first Commander-in-Chief. On 5th August 1962 he was arrested, put to trial and sentenced to five years imprisonment. He was brought from prison to reappear in Court as Accused No. 1 in the Rivonia Trial on 9th October, 1963 and then on 12th June 1964 he was sentenced to life imprisonment, being found guilty of preparing to overthrow the apartheid state.

The world knows the history of the life and death struggle thereafter. The savage repression unleashed by the barbarous white minority regime on the freedom loving people of South Africa and the third degree tortures perpetrated by it on the black majority following up the foot prints of Nazi fascism, beggar all descriptions. The savage nature of the apartheid regime and the shameless support



given to it by the imperialist countries like Britain and USA got exposed day by day with the rising struggles and the demand for the release of Nelson Mandela and all other political and trade union activists and for the dismantling of apartheid were reverberated throughout the world.

The struggle spearheaded by the ANC along with the South African Communist Party, the United Democratic Front, the Natal Indian Congress and other anti-apartheid organisations took a new turn when the main black trade union viz the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) took initiative to form the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) to bring in the white and mixed unions also under the fold of the struggle.

The world community, the socialist countries, the third world countries, the NAM extended full support to the struggle. The contradiction between the forces of national liberation and democracy on one hand and those of apartheid and imperialism on the other was sharpened further. Serious contradictions developed within the ruling apartheid clique and amongst their imperialist cohorts. P.W. Botha had to go and Britain and USA were isolated due to their repeated Vetoes against the demand for mandatory sanctions against the apartheid regime.

In this background of relentless struggles Nelson Mandela had to be released. The objective of the apartheid regime to crush the ANC and the black people's struggles by putting Mandela into life imprisonment was totally defeated. Instead, the ANC grew stronger and powerful enough to force the Pretoria regime to release him unconditionally. Coming in the wake of the Namibian independence, the release of Nelson Mandela further tilted the correlation of class forces in favour of the democratic and freedom loving forces of the world, sounding the warning bell to the Pretoria regime to dismantle apartheid totally.

Reception at Delhi

India which consistently supported the South African people's struggle, naturally gave a red carpet welcome to the living legendary when he landed at Delhi on October 15, by President R. Venkataramanan and Prime Minister V.P. Singh. He was given the honour as the Head of a State and he stayed at the Rashtrapati Bhawan. He was also given the Bharat Ratna, the highest State honour given by India. He was only the second foreign dignitary being bestowed with Bharat Ratna after Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan. India extended full support to the ongoing struggle of the South African people. It endorsed the stand that full sanctions against South Africa must continue till the regime totally dismantles apartheid. It hoped that the ongoing negotiations and the agreement, termed as the Pretoria Minute will be directed and implemented by the South African Government to dismantle the apartheid structure entirely.

Among others who met Nelson Mandela and extended support to the struggle against apartheid were the CPI(M) leaders E.M.S. Namboodiripad, H.K.S. Surjeet and Somnath Chatterjee, the leader of the CPI(M) group in Lok Sabha.

In the evening a grand civic reception was given

to him at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium. The Vice President, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma welcomed Nelson Mandela as one of the greatest heroes of the downtrodden people of world. A large contingent of the cadres of CPI(M), CITU, SFI and other mass organisations gave red flag salute to Mandela and reverberated the vast auditorium with repeated slogans of Lal Salam.

Thanking India for the support extended to their struggle, Nelson Mandela recalled how Mahatma Gandhi had formed the Natal Indian Congress in 1894 and put his idea of fighting racial discriminations and, said, "we still need to walk the last mile together to achieve the objective of transforming South Africa into an united, non-racial and democratic South Africa having completely broken the shackles of apartheid." I.K. Gujral, the Foreign Minister gave the thanks.

The reception was followed by cultural functions staged by folk artistes from Manipur, Tamilnadu, Rajasthan and other states including a Siddi Dance from Gujarat.

Reception at Calcutta

From Delhi Nelson Mandela came to Calcutta via Agra and Varanasi. A magnificent reception was given to him in the Ranji Stadium at the historic Eden Gardens, where about one lakh people had gathered. The entire route from Dum Dum Airport was thronged on both sides by thousands of workers and people who greeted Mandela with flags and festoons, by showering flowers and by shouting slogans.

A big dais was constructed within a huge structure cut out as the map of Africa, tri-coloured in black, green and yellow depicting the flag of ANC. The people roared in greetings as Mandela walked on the dais with Nurul Hassan, the Governor and Jyoti Basu, the Chief Minister of W. Bengal. The Calcutta Youth Choir led by Ruma Guha Thakurta, Bhupen Hazarika and others greeted Mandela by rendering three revolutionary songs on him and the struggle in South Africa. Mandela was visibly moved by the meaningful songs and the greetings.

After the introductory speech by Nurul Hassan, the Governor, Chief Minister Jyoti Basu greeted Mandela. In his brief speech, Jyoti Basu described Nelson Mandela as the symbol of liberation struggles. He said that there are still obstacles on the way, but there is no doubt that the victory struggle that has been led by the ANC under the leadership of Nelson Mandela will soon succeed in smashing the entire apparatus of the apartheid system. The struggle will not only dismantle apartheid, but it will also throw back the imperialist powers into the dustbin of history. The hated racist regime was still there only because of the support given by imperialism.

(Cont'd on page 4)

31st October—Deadline for Strike

Jibon Roy

The Government of India had probably taken the working class support for granted for whatever stand they take about them. Not only that the various ministries were making policy statements concerning industries and industrial development without caring for working class opinion, they were bluntly refusing to hear the pressing economic demands of the workers. The issues like D. A. rates, ceilings in bonus payment, finalisation of pension scheme, withdrawal of ban on recruitment, raising of exemption limit for calculating income tax are the issues requiring immediate attention of the Government.

The Government of India woke up only when the CPSTU, having failed to impress upon the Government through persuasive measures, called for a nationwide strike in public sector on October 12th. The CPSTU demanded immediate settlement on the first three items mentioned above. The Government this time was apologetic about the delay but wanted more time to consider the demands. The CPSTU has responded to the Govt assurance that it will put forward concrete proposals on DA before the next Tripartite meeting which was scheduled for 15th October.

The Co-ordination Committee of public sector Officers Associations which had also declared strike on 11th & 12th October synchronising with the CPSTU call was ultimately forced to go on strike consequent upon Government failure to initiate discussions. The response to the strike was tremendous and barring some islands, it affected the entire public sector.

The CITU, while taking the decision to postpone the strike, was not much optimistic about a speedy resolution of the issues since the government has failed to resolve the D.A. issue in course of last one and half years. The Govt has not yet reacted to the demand of introducing pension scheme as a third retirement benefit and waiving of bonus ceilings. The strike deferrment was a deliberate move to see that the Government cannot come out with any more excuses and also to ensure the fullest mobilisation.

The meeting of the Tripartite Committee on D.A. held on 15th October failed to resolve the issue of D A though the dialogue continued on 16th also. The Government representatives informed that the Cabinet is seized with the problem. The trade union representatives have unanimously informed the Government that they cannot wait beyond 31st October and will be free to take any step after that date. At the suggestion of the Government representatives the next meeting is fixed on 31st October.

As the situation stands today, the strike in public sector is impending. Our unions should step up their campaign to explain the total position before the broader democratic opinion and at the same time should continue the preparation for strike.

The Government has got to blame only its own delay for the impasse in the public sector. The greatest bungling they made was on the D. A. issue. It is a matter of great surprise, when the Govt of India has already agreed for 100 per cent D. A. neutralisation upto the basic of Rs.3500/- for Central Govt employees and near hundred per cent in banking industry, it has failed to realise the logic that with the existing meagre rate of neutralisation, protection of skill in public sector is extremely impossible. It is a very sorry state of affairs that when the National Tripartite body for the determination of D.A. in Public Sector, which is chaired by no less a person than the Union Labour Minister himself, the Union Minister for Industry unilaterally declared a single rate D.A. of Rs. 1.90 per point on the floor of Parliament. However, after very hard persuasion by the Central Trade Unions, the Govt. of India agreed to revive the Tripartite Committee and to settle the D.A. question through mutual discussions.

Six months have elapsed after the revival of the D.A. Committee, but the Govt of India has failed to put forward any concrete proposal in response to the offer of the unions to accept the multi-rate D.A. system against their original demand of 100% neutralisation at all stages.

The most disgusting experience was the postponement of the D. A. Committee meeting on several occasions on account of the failure of the Cabinet to take a decision. Such a situation never arose in the past.

The working class was expecting that the Govt would respond to their demand and withdraw both the ceilings on bonus payment and entitlement. Unfortunately, the Government has refused to pay any heed to the joint demand of all the National Trade Unions on this question. Even if the component of DA, which has been added to the wages, ever since the fixation of the present ceilings on entitlement and payment of bonus, would have been added to the ceilings of bonus, workers' wages will not be attacked by income tax law. The Government of India has most disgracefully shown total reluctance of making an overall settlement on bonus,

while it has asked a number of public sector units to make sneaking settlements individually with the workers. This tactics deprives a large number of workers who are weaker in collective bargaining.

The wage agreements signed in the public sector during 1988-89 after protracted negotiations at national level are having specific clauses to the effect that the public sector workers will be covered by post retirement pension scheme to be jointly worked out by the union and management. Implementation of these agreements became statutory obligation of the management after these agreements are registered with the Labour Directorate of the Governments. In Steel & Coal industries there was concrete agreements that the scheme will be co-contributory and in coal the scheme had been finalised even before the wage agreement was signed. The Government of India has virtually stalled the implementation of the scheme by introducing income-tax paraphernalias, while negotiations are stalled in other cases delaying the clearance of industry's contribution in the schemes.

When a government makes the managements of PSUs to be disloyal of their statutory obligations to the workers, how can the Govt demand of the workers to keep quiet when their earned gains are allowed to be eroded. In steel industry with the plea that the 'Pension Fund' will attract income tax the Govt is trying to introduce LIC into the picture, for the operation of the scheme through it. This will enable the LIC to plough back a substantial percentage of pension fund in the name of commission. Government of India should realise that this tactics will prove self-defeating in the end. If laws really come in the way, the Govt should waive them by introducing necessary amendments to the concerned laws.

Non-enhancement of income tax exemption limits atleast to the proportion of inflation rate has resulted in further erosion of real wages. The 1960 exemption limit which was fixed at Rs. 3000/- converted to current money value for the higher limit of non-taxable income comes to Rs. 30,000/-. But unfortunately, the last budget raised the limit to only Rs. 22,000 to follow the long tradition of squeezing the wage of workers.

Another sour point for the deteriorating industrial relations is the Government's inaction to withdraw the ban on recruitment which has been proclaimed in 1982 by the Indira Gandhi Government. The ban has drastically cut down the employment potential in the public sector, which has come down from an average of 20.5% growth rate to 0.5 per cent per year during 69-70 and 78-79 to 2.4% rate during 79-80 and 88-89. During the last five years the average growth has been only 1.3%. However, stoppage of fresh intake has depleted the workers strength in most of the public sector enterprises and also created a serious problem in maintaining balance of standard crews which is a must in modernised industries.

It is not that the public sector workers do not appreciate the financial and political problems which the National Front Govt faces today by way of inheritance from its predecessor. The working class has commended its resoluteness on the enactment of legislations about workers' participation in management and recognition of unions through secret ballot. The working class do not expect that its basic political demands can be resolved by the National Front Government, nor it believes that from the general industrial relations policy the concept of master-servant relation may be eliminated by this government. But the working class from its own rights of supporting this government can claim that the Government would atleast take some effective steps in resolving the immediate economic problems of the workers. Unfortunately, not unlike its predecessor, it has taken a most unconcerned attitude towards this.

It is hoped that the Government would stick to its commitment of putting forward concrete proposal before the next D. A. committee meeting which is scheduled for 31st October. At the same time the workers must be on guard against any complacency. The CITU has warned the Government that if the matter is not settled by 31st October the D. A. Committee should be dissolved and the workers would be free to go on strike. The deferment of the strike should therefore be utilised for broader mobilisation.

(From page 2)

The working class and the people of India will continue to extend unstinted support to the South African people's struggle till the entire apartheid system was demolished.

Vividly moved, Nelson Mandela thanked the people, described Calcutta as a great revolutionary centre in the world and said that he felt as if he was in his own country, among his own revolutionary comrades at arms, in the thick of the struggle against apartheid. He briefed their valiant struggle, the inhuman ghastly tortures still perpetrated by the racist regime and the open support given to it by the imperialists. He said that still nearly 3000 prisoners were languishing in the jails and emergency had not yet been fully lifted. He referred to the recent fight between the black and the black and squarely blamed the apartheid regime for it. He appealed for continuous help and expressed the confidence that with the support of the people of India, they will soon be able to demolish the very system of apartheid and convert South Africa into a free, non-racial and democratic country as per the ANC's Freedom Charter.

The programme ended with another round of revolutionary songs. Mandela stood up and clapped with rhythm alongwith the entire audience in the Eden Gardens. Later he was awarded the prestigious special Jannalal Bajaj Centenary award for his relentless struggle for human freedom and dignity and was conferred a Doctorate in Literature by the Jadavpur University. Earlier, the BHU conferred on him a Doctorate in Law.

Maharashtra Pledges Solidarity

Ashok Dhawale

“During the first twenty months of the barbaric regime of the Congress(I)—TUJS Government in Tripura from February 1988 to September 1989, there have been 282 murders, 132 rapes, 167 kidnappings, 166 dacoities, 598 cases of arson, 618 armed attacks and 1324 assaults on houses, in all of which 3078 people have been severely wounded. During the ten months since then, these atrocities, if anything, have multiplied manifold. During the last thirty months, 140 leaders, cadres and supporters of the Left Front in Tripura have been murdered, and 125 Left Front activists have been brutally tortured in police custody. 46 offices of the party and mass organisations have been forcibly occupied, 78 offices have been ransacked and looted, and 89 offices have been burnt to ashes. Under the umbrella of the Congress regime in Tripura, terror and crime have reached such massive proportions that out of the State’s population of barely 24 lakhs, 24,413 people are facing police cases. The astonishing fact is that if you leave out the very old and the very young, 1 out of every 37 people in Tripura is today an accused in police charges”.

It was with these words that CPI(M) Politbureau member and former Tripura Chief Minister Nripen Chakraborty addressed the jam-packed public meeting organised by the CPI(M) in Bombay on August 23 to pledge fighting solidarity to the grim struggle for democracy and justice that is being waged by the valiant people and the working class of Tripura for the last two and a half years. Nripen Chakraborty was visiting Maharashtra as a part of his country-wide tour to create a nationwide public opinion against the Congress(I)—TUJS reign of terror. The CITU mobilised maximum number of workers from various industries. In a widely attended Press Conference in Bombay held the same afternoon, Nripen Chakraborty released a detailed statement of the inhuman atrocities in Tripura and also presented copies of the National Front Parliamentary Team’s memorandum on the Tripura situation. The national and regional press in Bombay, which had thus far largely ignored the Cong(I) semi-fascist terror in Tripura, this time made a welcome departure from its past practices and gave good coverage of the Press Conference.

The public meeting organised in the evening was bursting at its seams, with people standing in the aisles and squatting on the floor. The meeting was permeated with an unmistakable atmosphere of rage and indignation against the monstrous Congress(I) repression against the party and people of Tripura. Nripen Chakraborty was given a rousing guard of honour by 100 young red volunteers, and as he entered

the hall, the entire auditorium rose as one man to give its revered leader the Red Salute. CPI(M) Central Committee member and CITU Vice President Ahilya Rangnekar presided over the meeting. After the introductory remarks by CPI(M) Bombay Committee Secretary Mahendra Singh, CITU Maharashtra General Secretary K. L. Bajaj gave a call for observing “Tripura Solidarity Day” on September 10 as decided in the CITU General Council.

Nripen Chakraborty began his speech by paying his revolutionary homage to Comrade B T Ranadive. Reminding the audience that the struggle against authoritarianism and separatism, be it in any part of the country, is a common and indivisible struggle to be fought unitedly by all, he went on to the situation in Tripura. Dwelling at length on the falsification and repression in the 1988 Assembly elections. The shameless Congress(I)—TNV understanding, the sterling contribution of the Left Front Government in the uplift of the tribals, the atrocities on tribals and the Bengali chauvinism of the Cong(I) Government, the despicable role of Rajiv Gandhi, Santosh Mohan Deb and Sudhir Ranjan Majumdar in the ongoing reign of terror, the Ujanmaidan mass rapes, the Birchandranagar massacre of Left Front activists, assaults on democracy in the form of dissolution of all local self-government institutions, and the unheard of repression at the time of the Tribal Autonomous District Council elections, Nripen Chakraborty then referred to the findings of the National Front Parliamentary Team that had visited Tripura last month. Giving an account of the grim struggle being waged by the CPI(M), the Left Front and various mass organisations against the Congress (I) terror regime, he called upon the mass organisations and the people of Maharashtra to support this death-defying struggle.

Responding to this call, innumerable organisations including CPI(M) committees and units, CITU unions and other mass organisations like the DYFI, SFI, AIDWA, BEFI as well as organisations of the Rahiwasi Mahasangh, middle-class employees, college teachers, cultural groups showered Nripen Chakraborty with their amounts of the Tripura Solidarity Fund that was collected at very short notice. As the first instalment from Maharashtra a total sum of over Rs. 55,000 was presented at the meeting, most of it being from the party, CITU and other organisations in Bombay. An appeal was made to other districts in Maharashtra also to contribute their mite, and it is expected that the total contribution to the Tripura Fund from Maharashtra will soon cross Rupees One lakh.

Textile and other Workers on Strike

Nearly a lakh of textile workers in private and NTC mills in Tamilnadu and Pondicherry have gone on strike demanding just bonus. The strike had begun in the major textile centres of Coimbatore and Periyar districts from 27th September. The call for the strike was given jointly by all the major central trade union organisations.

Textile workers in the State had a tradition of getting Bonus over and above the stipulations of the Bonus Act. This they could achieve through united struggles over a long period. But during the last few years, workers have been denied this just Bonus in the name of crisis in Textile industry and to the fact that the unions were also not united in their approach on this vital issue.

During the last two years, however, although a number of the mills continue to be closed, yet those functioning mills owned by the big textile barons have been earning good profits. Madurai Coats has increased its gross profit from Rs. 2078 lakhs in 1988-89 to Rs. 3420 lakhs in 1990. Lakshmi mills groups has earned more than Rs. 365 lakhs, Kannabiran mill Rs. 407 lakhs, Kadiri mills Rs. 280 lakhs. Many NTC mills also have wiped out all the accumulated losses and earned profits.

Even during the last year, workers had expected more Bonus. All unions had demanded ensuring a minimum of 12% bonus and upwards. Workers have learnt from their experience that even while gross profits increase manifold, the allocable surplus as per Bonus Act continues to be nil. This is the way the accounts are being manipulated. It was under these circumstances that the workers demanded more bonus. But all unions except CITU agreed to bonus as per Act and an exgratia amount according to their attendance during the Account year and that too for a period of 3 years. There was virtual revolt against this settlement and in many mills, united movement of the workers forced the management to agree for additional amounts.

This Year's Demands : As the profits of the mills had increased, workers in general were not prepared to accept the last year's settlement. There was also general acceptance that the Bonus cannot be as per the outdated Bonus Act. CITU proposed and campaigned that 40 percent of the gross profit should be allocated to Bonus. There were many other proposals and for the sake of unity, all unions agreed that minimum bonus should be 20% and maximum 50% i.e. 2½ times of the bonus as per the Act.

By this time negotiations had started but without any results. It was unanimously decided that workers will go on strike from 30th September. On 25th September, the Labour Commissioner had initiated conciliation proceedings. But the managements in-

cluding the leaders of South Indian Mills Association (SIMA) were trying to wreck an industrywise settlement by forcing local settlements. Protesting against this, the unions decided that the strike will be pre-poned and the strike began from 27th morning.

As SIMA members are mainly in Coimbatore and the adjacent Periyar district, the immediate call for strike was given to the private and NTC mills in two districts. But workers of some mills in other districts have also gone on strike.

The massive militant and united demonstrations in front of the NTC offices and SIMA offices on 25th and 26th of September, had shown the preparedness of the workers for the struggle.

Meanwhile some managements have come forward for settling bonus issue by paying 35 percent and above also.

For Amendments in Bonus Act : The massive strike action in Textile industry and struggles and settlements in various other industries and units have clearly shown the necessity of amending the Bonus Act which has become out dated for all purposes.

The CITU State Committee called for observance of 14th September as Bonus Day all over the State. Demonstrations and meetings were held in various centres, demanding amendments to the Bonus Act removing all Bonus ceilings and increase in minimum Bonus.

Central Public Sector Unions observed demands day on 14th September by wearing badges and holding demonstrations. Their demand also included amendments to Bonus Act.

CITU unions in the State Electricity Board and State Transport undertakings organised joint demonstrations and rallies in various parts of the State, demanding just Bonus, and Bonus to all irrespective of their wages. They also demanded that the State Govt. put an end to the practice of 'announcing' Bonus instead of a negotiated settlement with the unions. These CITU unions also held meetings and processions all over the state on the Bonus issue.

Struggle for Trade Union Rights

Nearly 150 workers, majority of them women, in an Electronics unit near Madras City have been on strike from May 1990 against victimisations for joining in CITU union.

In another unit, the Mohan Breweries, in the suburbs of city, the management has declared a lock-out, because the workers, numbering nearly 600, majority of them women, had dared to form a CITU union. This management, belonging to the Udayar

group, the liquor barons, have been indulging in all sorts of illegal activities violating all the labour and factory laws and treating the workers as slaves. Protesting against all this, workers formed CITU union and conducted a procession. Infuriated by this action, the management declared lockout and let loose terror upon the workers.

In both these companies, police have foisted cases upon the leaders and workers. Many of them have been arrested. CITU State Committee has protested against the police action, and demanded immediate settlement of the demands of the workers and withdrawal of cases.

Contract Workers' Convention

More than 500 contract workers including 70 women participated in a day long district level convention of contract workers in Thirunelveli Kattabomman district. Contract workers from Textile, Beedi Electricity and other industries participated in the convention. A Soundara Rajan, Secretary, CITU State Committee and other leaders participated in the convention. This convention was part of the district level conventions being organised by the State CITU.

Beedi Workers get Wage Increase

Beedi workers in the State will get an increase of Rs. 1.75 in basis wages for rolling 1000 beedies. The present basic wage will be 13.00 in addition to D.A. of Rs. 4.90 per 1000 beedies. They will also get Rs. 1.10 per 1000 beedies as bonus, an increase of 30 paise. The settlement was reached on the eve of a statewide strike decided jointly by all T.U. Centres.

While the settlement has come into effect from 10th September, some of the employers, especially in the major beedi centre of Thirunelveli, are refusing to implement it. Their argument is that they are not party to the settlement, and will be only implementing the statutory wages. Unions in Thirunelveli district are conducting struggles, demanding implementation of wages and at the same time pressing the Govt. to notify the wages as per the settlement as statutory wages. It was agreed at the time of the settlement that steps will be taken to notify the wages.

Right to Work Convention in Bihar

A State level trade union convention on the Right to Work was held on August 11 at the P&T Recreation Club, Patna. The convention was presided over by a presidium consisting of Chandi Prasad (CITU), Ramanika Gupta (All India Coal Workers Federation), T.N. Singh (Steel Workers Federation of India), G.P. Varma (Insurance Employees Association, Patna Division), L.N. Chakraborty (BSSR-

Union), Amaresh Thakur (Confederation of Central Government Employees and Workers) N.L. Kakkar (Bank Employees' Federation, Bihar) and Baleshwar Singh (Bihar Rajya Non-Gazetted Employees Federation). It was attended by 225 delegates representing different trade unions as well as peasant's, agricultural workers, youth and women's organisations from all over the State.

M.K. Pandhe, Secretary, CITU and the President, Steel Workers Federation of India inaugurated the convention. Dealing in detail with the various aspects relating to the Right to Work and stressing the need of its inclusion in the Constitution of India as a fundamental right, he said that the problem of providing jobs to the eleven crore unemployed people cannot be solved without political will and concrete planning for the same. In order to provide jobs to the unemployed people, the Government would have to effectively implement land reforms, reopen 2,05,000 closed and sick mills, lift ban on recruitment in the Central Government and public sector services, etc. But in order to force the Government, it is essential to start a systematic and sustained campaign at the national level so that people at large may be mobilised and brought under the vortex of struggle.

J.S. Majumdar (General Secretary, Federation of Medical Representatives Associations of India) while addressing the convention as the chief guest, said that the budget and industrial policy of the National Front Government were on the same rotten lines as Rajiv Gandhi's industrial policy. He also said that the United States of America has no right to decide the industrial policy of India under Super 301 of its Trade Act. He also stressed the need of a broad based movement against American intervention in service sectors, banks, insurance, pharmaceutical industry etc. A State level committee of participating unions was formed to carry forward the struggle.

Joint Initiative on Employment to All

The Trade Union Centres have initiated discussions to build up a massive joint campaign on the question of 'Right to Work' and employment to all in real terms. At the initiative of the CITU, initial consultations between the AITUC, HMS, BMS, UTUC (LS) and CITU have started. INTUC leadership also have shown interest on the question of building united campaign over the issue. The Trade Union Centres will meet together in the first week of November to finalise the course of campaign.

CITU's Complaint to ILO Against Fluid Control Research Institute

(We are publishing hereunder the complaint lodged by the CITU against the management of Fluid Control Research Institute, a Central Government Undertaking, for violation of the ILO Convention No. 87—Ed.)

Director General
International Labour Organisation
CH-1211
Geneva-22
Dear Sir,

September 25, 1990

Sub : Violation of the ILO Convention No. 87 by the management of Fluid Control Research Institute owned by Government of India.

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions is hereby lodging a complaint against the management of Fluid Control Research Institute, a Government owned institute under Ministry of Industry, Govt of India located at Palghat, Kerala for violating the ILO Convention No. 87.

The employees of Fluid Control Research Institute (FCRI) through their union, FCRI Employees' Association has long been representing for restructuring of FCRI as an autonomous institute under Government of India to ensure better productive functioning and its delinking from M/s Instrumentation Ltd, another public sector unit. The union has written letter to Minister for Industry (Annexure A) and also to National Project Director of FCRI, (Annexure B) highlighting therein the present state of management of the institute and the need for delinking the FCRI from M/s Instrumentation Ltd.

Through prolonged persuasion the Government has ultimately agreed to delink FCRI from M/s Instrumentation Ltd, as has been revealed from the letter of the Minister of Industry, Government of India to Shri A. Vijay Raghavan, Member of Parliament dated 7.8.90. (Annexure C). But the management of FCRI got severely annoyed at the Union's representing issues to National Project Director of FCRI and the Industry Minister and got flared up at the Government's decision to delink FCRI from M/s Instrumentation Ltd. Management started dealing with the union and the employees in most vindictive manner.

Management's intolerance to union and the employees has gone to such an extent that they started refusing to receive even the registered letters of the union to management and the letter from the individual employees. (Copies of envelop of the letter of the union and the employee to Additional Director FCRI on which endorsement of the Post Office regarding refusal has been recorded are enclosed as Annexure D1 & D2)

Management did not stop here. On 30-8-90 the Additional Director FCRI has issued order, suspending Shri C. G. Subramaniam, and the charge sheet issued for such suspension reveals that the charge relates to the letter issued by Shri C. G. Subramaniam to Minister of Industry and National Project Director of FCRI (Enclosed Vide Annexure A & B) in his capacity of being General Secretary of FCRI Employees Association. The suspension order along-with charge sheet are enclosed and marked as Annexure-E.

We wish to draw your attention to the fact that Shri C. G. Subramaniam, as General Secretary of FCRI Employees Association had exercised his legal and constitutional trade union right while writing to Minister of Industry and National Project Director of FCRI highlighting therein the grievances of the employees, concern of the employees on the state of management of the institute and their demands, the context of which may not be liked by the management. But for such exercise of the legal and constitutional trade union right as General Secretary of the Employees Association, creating displeasure of the concerned management cannot and should not attract suspension by the management. As such suspension and chargesheet thrust on Shri Subramaniam by the FCRI management tantamounts to infringement of trade union right of the employee and the union and violative of the ILO Convention No. 87 on Freedom of Association and protecting the Right to Organise.

Further management's refusal to accept and/or receive union's letter and the letter of the employee as revealed by Annexure D1 & D2 also amounts to denial of trade union right by the management.

In view of the complaint lodged above, I would request the ILO to enquire into the matter and intervene so that the management of FCRI is prevailed upon to withdraw the vindictive action perpetrated on the principal office bearer of the union and abide by the International Labour standards.

Thanking you,

Yours Sincerely
M. K. Pandhe
Secretary

Editorial Board

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Manoranjan Roy, Niren Ghosh,

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Mammoth Rally Against Communal Forces at Lucknow

Rajendra Sharma

The mammoth and unprecedented Rally for Communal Harmony, held at Lucknow on October 12, has given a clear-cut mandate of the Central and State Governments "to protect the Constitution by preventing demolition or shifting of the mosque, and construction of a temple in its place." The historic Rally, held in the sprawling La Martiniere grounds, spread over several miles, saw the lakhs of people present raising their hands in unison to express endorsement of the September 22 decisions of the National Integration Council meet at Madras, and appealing to the VHP, Bajrang Dal, Shiv Sena, RSS and BJP to settle the Ayodhya dispute through peaceful negotiations or abide by the court verdict, giving up their insistence on demolition of the mosque. The Rally also expressed "full support for the work being done, decisions made and the efforts taken in accordance with the Constitution and the law, by the Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister, Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav, and his Government towards the maintenance of communal harmony."

Culmination of a Mighty Campaign

The Lucknow Rally was a fitting culmination of the thorough-going campaign against communalism, which has been carried out all over the State for the last two months by the Uttar Pradesh Committee for Struggle against Communalism, based on all the major left, secular and democratic forces in the State. The Campaign included about 50 regional and district-level rallies in all parts of the State, each witnessing a participation of one to three lakhs people, where by the message of the Committee was taken to more than one crore people of the State.

The significance of the Lucknow Rally lay not only in the fact that people from all corners of the State, from all walks of life, from all religious communities took part in it, in their lakhs. It lay rather in the fact that it drew even the most downtrodden sections—the ill-fed and ill-clothed peasants and agricultural workers, industrial workers, unorganised labourers, women, youth and students. Moreover, they formed a majority of the rallyists.

The sprawling La Martiniere ground had never seen such a huge rally, the sponsors of no earlier rally having had the courage to select its vast sprawling area as a venue. If the October 12 Rally could be held in this ground, the credit goes to the toiling masses of Uttar Pradesh who, by their unprecedented presence in the district-level and regional rallies, boosted the morale of the Committee members and made them cancel the earlier-announced, usual venue for rallies—the Begum Hazrat Mahal park. When the Rally actually took place, the people standing

beyond the La Martiniere grounds must have been only a little less than those accommodated in it, while tens of thousands were still on their way. The Rally was thus simply the biggest one in the living memory of the Lucknow-Wallas.

There is still another fact to considerably add to the Rally's significance. For several days beforehand, the RSS-VHP rumour-mongering machinery had been working round the clock to create panic in the city and neighbouring places. 'News' of riots or firing having taken place, or probable to take place, were floated on a wide scale to create fear among the public. Even many regional papers became willing accomplices in this systematic ill-intentioned campaign which by itself would have been certain to create disturbances but for the vigilance maintained by the administration.

A Rally of Toilers

The overwhelming majority of the rallyists belonged to the toiling people, holding the red flags of the Left, green flags of the Janata Dal or blue ones of the BSP. For these people, communal harmony was not simply an ideal but a sine qua non for normal living, since communalism has been one of the most serious impediments in their day-to-day struggles, as well as the struggle for a better future. The sponsors of the Rally had well understood the power of this force in the task of defeating the communal forces, and had tried to mobilise and rouse it by all means. It was quite natural, therefore, that the entire campaign against communalism had to contend with the disruptive propaganda and activities of the communal forces as well as the Congress (I), which tacitly, aligned with the latter, sometimes even openly as in Banaras. It is worth noting that for the last few days before the Rally, Rajiv Gandhi was also continuing his yatra in U. P., and targeting not so much the BJP, etc., as the Janata Dal Government.

The Rally, in sum, has conclusively proved that given the political initiative, the communal forces can certainly be isolated, and that the people at large are not going to be lured by the BJP propaganda. The Rally has given a strong rebuff to the contention that "the people want to see a Ram temple at the disputed site at all costs." It has made it clear beyond doubt that the people will wholeheartedly support whatever administrative steps the Government takes to thwart the communal designs.

Support From Bengal People

The rallyist, in the most disciplined way, attentively listened to the leaders for hours together. They

gave a loud applause when the West Bengal Chief Minister, Jyoti Basu, expressed support to the campaign without any reservations, on behalf of the people of his State. Saying that the people of West Bengal were firmly with the people of Uttar Pradesh in the latter's campaign against communalism, Basu expressed confidence in the victory of the campaign. He said that today the attention of the whole nation was rivetted to the Ayodha dispute and the steps the U.P. Government was taking to deal with it. Urging strict dealing with those trying to spread lawlessness in the name of religion, Basu warned that if communalism was not buried deep, the unity of the nation would be buried by communal forces. "There are so many temples in the country and many more can be built," he added. "But none will be allowed to come up on the ruins of a mosque."

Referring to the BJP threat of withdrawing support from the Central Government, Basu pointed out that the country was far above any particular government. Several governments would come and go, but nobody would be allowed to break the country apart. A negotiated settlement or the court verdict, was the only alternative. Nobody can force his will on others.

Basu urged the people to go back to their homes with the message for others that no one was opposed to temple construction but that demolition of the mosque would not be permitted either.

Imperialist Powers Waiting in Wings

A number of Ministers of the Central and State Governments were present on the dais, as were a number of important all-India leaders of various political parties. Of these, senior Janata Dal leader, Chandra Shekhar, expressed full support to the campaign and reiterated the appeal to BJP President, L. K. Advani, to suspend his Rath Yatra. He reminded the audience that independence of the country had been accompanied by its partition, in the name of religion, and the gory happenings that had taken place at the time. Sharply attacking the communal forces for their perverted concept of religion, he maintained that up till today, Ram had been regarded as a liberator of the mankind, but now came people claiming to be the liberators of Ram himself. He also appealed to Shahi Imam and other Muslim religious leaders not to join in the competition on communal lines and thereby allow the situation to deteriorate still further.

Addressing the rally, CPI(M) Polit Bureau member, Harkishan Singh Surjeet, assured full Left support to the State Government's stern measures against communalism. He warned of the critical stage in the nation's history through which we are passing, with the imperialist powers waiting in the wings to destabilise India, and the communal forces playing consciously or unconsciously into their hands. The demand for effective government intervention in the situation did not mean that the people them-

ives have to sit idle and do nothing. There would be nothing the enemies of the country would like better, therefore the people must come out and fight against communalism at the grass roots level, particularly in this coming period from this Rally to October 30.

The rally came to a successful conclusion with the speech by the U. P. Chief Minister, Mulayam Singh Yadav, who assured all that he would respect the people's mandate in letter and spirit. He reiterated that he was not challenging anyone, nor accepting anyone's challenge, but simply asserting that nobody would be allowed to take the law into his hands. Addressing himself to some of the vituperative RSS-VHP allegations against him, and characterising some of the others as not worthy of being mentioned, Yadav asserted that this was a fight for the country's interests and for certain principles, for which he would not hesitate to sacrifice even his Government, if need be. He clarified that even if he were out of the Government, he would fight against the demolition of the mosque. If, however, the court gave its verdict in favour of a temple, he would himself urge the Muslims to shift the mosque to some other site.

The Rally was also addressed by Union Ministers Ajit Singh, K.P. Unnikrishnan, Janeswar Mishra and Anil Shastri, CPI General Secretary Indrajit Gupta, CIP(M) leader Ram Sumer Yadav and Subhashini Ali M.P., CPI's A. B. Bardhan, Jagdish Narayan Tripathi and Atul Kumar Anjan, RSP's Nani Bhattacharya, Forward Bloc's Chitta Basu, Sanjay Singh of the Janata Dal, BSP leader Kanshi Ram, Planning Commission member Rahamatullah Ansari, Pramila Dandavate of Mahila Janata Dal, and renowned Urdu Poet Kaifi Azmi.

Determination Writ Large

Though the Rally lasted for more than four hours, from 11 in the morning to past three in the afternoon, the people stayed where they were, putting up with the hot sun and parched throats, determination writ large on their faces. The same determination was visible when the people raised their fists in the air to endorse the resolution, moved by Ramashankar Kaushik, Convenor of the Committee, and seconded by Ram Sumer Yadav of the CPI(M), who is one of the two Secretaries of the Committee.

Rally Resolution

This unprecedented and massive Communal Harmony Rally of the peasants, workers, youth, women and all sections of society, organised at the call of the Uttar Pradesh Committee for Struggle Against Communalism, commit itself to the decision of the September 22, 1990, Madras meeting of the National Integration Council, a body on which are represented all trends of thought in the whole country, and makes a strong appeal to all the citi-

zens of Uttar Pradesh to resist the provocative and inciting activities of the Communal forces with moral courage, non-violence and harmony, and to maintain peace, without getting trapped into excitement. The Rally also appeals to all the organisations, and the political and religious leaders to contribute their might in maintaining communal harmony and national unity by putting an end to all the activities designed to create communal tension, the provocative slogans, meetings aimed at spreading communal hatred, Jyotis and Vijaya Rath yatras.

The Rally appeals to the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, Bajrang Dal, Shiv Sena, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and the Bharatiya Janata Party to come forward to fulfil the sacred responsibility of maintaining the country intact by accepting negotiated settlement or the court verdict on the Ramjanmabhoomi/Babri Masjid dispute, giving up their insistence on demolition of the mosque by force.

India is a secular country and the Constitution allows none to demolish any religious site. Therefore, the Rally urges the Central and the State Governments to protect the Constitution by preventing demolition or shifting of the mosque, and construction of a temple in its place.

The Rally appeals to all the citizens of the State and the entire country not to join the "Kar Seva Jathas" for demolition of the mosque or the so-called "Hifazati Jathas" for its protection, and to persuade others, who have been misguided to join these jathas, not to do so. The Rally calls upon the majority Hindus who have always followed the doctrine of tolerance and of the equality of all religions, the peasants, workers, youth, the oppressed and the exploited, and all the sections of the people, to stake their very lives for the protection of communal harmony and national unity. The Rally directs the Uttar Pradesh Committee for Struggle Against Communalism to constitute, without delay, Harmony Committee, down to the village, Nyaya Panchayat and the block levels, in order to directly involve people in the maintenance of communal harmony.

The Rally expresses appreciation, admiration and full support for the work being done, decisions made and the efforts taken, in accordance with the Constitution and the law, by the Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister, Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav, and his Government towards the maintenance of communal harmony.

Conference of Chowgule Employees Union

The eighth conference of the Chowgule Employees Union, Vasco da Gama, Goa held recently was attended by 165 delegates. A large number of Pale mine workers and other inhabitants of the locality besides the delegates assembled to salute the red flag which was unfurled by the President of the Goa

State Committee of CITU, Anand Betkikar, whereafter the portraits of Marx, Engles, Lenin, Stalin and the late Goa CITU leader Gerald Pareira were garlanded. The conference observed 2 minutes silence to pay homage to the memory of Com. BTR. After the welcome address by K. K. Gadekar President of the union, the conference was inaugurated by Anand Betkikar. A number of fraternal delegates from other CITU unions and from DYFI and SFI greeted the conference.

In the report presented to the conference, the General Secretary S. S. Naik related the experience of the glorious struggles led by the union over the past years, particularly those against lock out, and contract system. After discussion the conference adopted the General Secretary's report along with the accounts placed by the Treasurer P. N. Naik. After election of a 31 member Executive Committee for the next term, with 13 office bearers, the conference ended with the concluding speech by the President of the Goa State Committee of CITU.

The conference adopted resolutions on minimum wage, right to work, against contract system, worker's participation in management, national integration and one expressing solidarity with worker's struggle in Goa.

CITU Welcomes The Reinstatement of Victimised Railway Employees

Samar Mukherjee, M.P., General Secretary, CITU has issued the following statement on October 23 :

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions welcomes the decision of the Ministry of Railways to withdraw victimisation of over 700 railway employees under Article 14 (2) of the Railway Servants (Discipline and Appeal) Rules.

The CITU hopes that early steps will also be taken to withdraw victimisation effected by the previous Cong (I) Govt through misuse of other service rules and in other forms such as break in service, penal transfer etc along with the long pending cases pertaining to earlier periods.

The withdrawal of victimisation measure was long overdue. All the cases were of legitimate participation of the employees in normal trade union activities, a large number of them belonged to All India Loco-Running Staff Association.

The CITU congratulates the railway employees for their long drawn struggle against these victimisation measures which ultimately prevailed upon the Govt of India to end these measures. The solidarity actions organised by other sections of worker's also brought effective pressure on the Govt. of India in this regard.

The CITU hopes that the withdrawal of these victimisation measures will immensely contribute to further advancing the struggle of the railway employees for achieving their pressing demands and in struggles for strengthening their T.U. and democratic rights.

Glorious Traditions of Great October Revolution

The working class and the toiling people all over the world will fondly remember on 7th November 1990 the glorious traditions of the great October revolution which heralded a new epoch of proletarian revolutions and downfall of imperialism. They will also express their firm resolve to carry forward this great heritage in all continents so that the worldwide struggle against imperialism and neo-colonialism will ultimately be victorious.

Despite repeated imperialist machinations to subvert socialist system the Soviet Union stood firm and the first working class state built a powerful socialist economy and defence potential. The developments in USSR inspired working class all over the world and socialist ideas gained popularity in all directions. Anti-socialist, anti-communist and anti-Soviet propaganda became the main weapon in the armoury of imperialist powers. The working class of USSR gave a fitting reply to this propaganda barrage by building a planned economy and made immense sacrifice and hard work. The progressive people all over the world rallied behind the working class of USSR with the result that the imperialist propaganda failed to cut much ice.

Advancement of Socialist Economy

The first Socialist state abolished unemployment and right to work was enshrined in the Constitution itself. Social security benefits such as old age pension, free medical benefits, free education to all, massive house building programme were made available to everyone in the country. No capitalist government could achieve this. As a result of planned economy sustained economic growth was ensured. Through development of collective farms, co-operative farms, etc. substantial increase in agricultural production could be achieved. Starvation became a matter of the past and standard of living of the masses increased substantially. As a result of development of socialist consciousness the working people were united as one man for the sole cause of advancement of socialist economy. Comrade Stalin and leadership of the CPSU played a notable role in this spectacular achievement. It is only due to these achievements in a short period that Soviet Union could defeat the Hitler Fascism during the Second World War while all the imperialist powers had either surrendered or were retreating before the fascist onslaught. This only showed the superiority of the socialist system over capitalism. No falsification of history can obliterate the hard reality in the developments after October revolution. The peoples democratic revolutions in Eastern Europe after annihilation of fascism, great Chinese revolution, the glorious struggles of the valient people of Vietnam against U.S. imperialism, the revolution in Korea, the Cuban revolution just at the doorstep of U.S. imperialists are great achievements of the working class in the post second world war.

The growth of national liberation movements in Asia, Africa and Latin America were historic landmarks in the world revolutionary movement.

The armed might of the Soviet Union and socialist countries, the nuclear parity achieved by them vis-a-vis U. S. imperialism has led to a check on U. S. plans of global domination and preservation of world peace. The significance of the contributions made by the socialist system in the world peace movement are important mile stones in the worldwide struggle against imperialism and neo-colonialism.

Recent Set Back

On this anniversary of October revolution the working class will express serious concern at the developments in Eastern European countries and the Soviet Union. Last one year witnessed that in Eastern Europe socialist governments were overthrown by counter revolutionary forces and avowedly capitalist elements are seeking to restore capitalism and disowning the social ownership of means of production. The merger of GDR with West Germany has ensured the control of monopolist of FRG over the entire German population. The Communist parties have either been dissolved or have taken the name of social democratic parties. All these developments no doubt have given a big set back to the world revolutionary movement.

The Soviet Union itself is faced with acute economic crisis and threat of secession by several republics. Ethnic riots have seriously affected the revolutionary unity of nationalities. The introduction of glasnost and perestroika have led to deterioration in economic situation. Production is either stagnant or declining in some vital sectors while the steep rise in inflation and consequent price increase had added to the discontent of the people. The introduction of market economy has brought in retrograde features of capitalist system in the socialist economy. Instead of orderly improvement in production management, anarchy is prevalent all over the country. All these are causing great concern in the minds of all revolutionary forces in the world. The imperialist agencies are making full use of the situation to ensure continuation of their rule of exploitation.

The imperialist propaganda that the developments in some socialist countries show that Marxist doctrine has failed to prove its effectiveness is only meant to create confusion among the people.

As a matter of fact, these developments clearly indicate that the set-back to socialism was a direct result of deviation from socialist principles and pra-

ctices and these departures were primarily responsible for the debacle.

Struggle against Capitalist Ideology

Comrade Lenin clearly pointed out that socialism can advance only by strengthening socialist democracy. Effective functioning of socialist democracy can be realised only by enhancing the socialist consciousness of the working class. Struggle against remnants of capitalist ideology in the socialist system has to be given a top priority. After passing away of Comrade Stalin step by step this task was callously ignored with the result that the effectiveness of the leading role of the working class got eroded over a period of years. Overemphasis given on the material incentive for the advancement of economy has led to giving less and less importance in ideological development among the workers.

All this led to the phenomenon of distortions in economic developments which slowed down the rate of economic advance. Moreover, the emergence of bureaucratism in the State apparatus, communist party and the trade unions have further aggravated the situation as a result of which they failed to reflect the real aspirations of the working class and the people.

The situation can be rectified provided the party and the trade unions fight against the deviations from Marxian ideology and strengthen the leading role of the working class and the communist party in the process of strengthening of socialist democracy. The failure to do this has been responsible for these sorrowful events.

The New Realisation

The working class in Eastern European countries have already started realising from their practical experience what capitalist path means to their working and living conditions. Strike of coal miners against closures of mines in Hungary, the struggle of the Polish workers against ban on strikes imposed by Solidarity after coming to power and their struggle against steep price rise, the resistance organised by the working class in GDR against German unification and giving up the gains of socialism are only examples of initial resistance. Reverting to capitalist production is bound to create class antagonism and struggle are likely to emerge sooner or later.

In China though there was set back due to inroads of capitalist ideology in the socialist system which led to Tienamen Square incident last year, the mistakes are being corrected and leading role of the working class and the party as well as adhering to the principles of Marxism-Leninism is being emphasised. Countries like Cuba, North Korea, Vietnam etc have emphasised need for strengthening the socialist system and socialist democracy.

Growing Contradictions

In the third world countries people are experiencing the dangerous consequences of the role of multinational companies in obstructing their path of building a self-reliant economy. Their struggle for improving the standard of living of the people is closely linked with the struggle against imperialist machinations and subversion. Indian people are well aware of the imperialist machinations to subvert the unity and integrity of the country, imperialist role in making our country dependent of their aid and opposing our struggle to build a self-reliant economy. Marxism Leninism continues to guide the destiny of the third world countries in their struggle against imperialism, social progress and for world peace.

The capitalist world continues to be in the vortex of deep economic crisis. In EEC countries alone the unemployment has reached 10 million. Curtailment of production, growing unutilised capacity, increasing pollution and health hazard due to modernisation, reduction of social security benefits has become a regular phenomenon in the Western capitalist countries. Despite introduction of sophisticated technology the rate of production does not show corresponding increase in advanced capitalist countries. Thus the capitalism cannot solve the problems of the people of the world.

Carry Forward the Heritage

The historic legacy of the great October revolution is still the guiding star for the world revolutionary movement. To preserve and strengthen this legacy is extremely important for the further advancement of the struggle against imperialism and for peace and social progress. On this 7th November the working class and the toiling millions of India will take pledge to carry forward this cherished heritage with firm determination.

The difficulties created in the recent past in the world revolutionary movement will take sometime to overcome. However, history will show that it was only a passing phase in the onward march of the world working class to abolish capitalist system and ushering in all prevailing socialist system.

Long live October revolution !

Public Sector Convention

Public Sector Convention will be held on December 19-21 at Bangalore as per earlier schedule. Please ignore the insertion given on page 20.

Massive Rally by Unorganised Workers in W. Bengal

The W. Bengal State CITU organised a massive rally of unorganised workers at Sidho-Kanhu-Dahar (Esplanade East), Calcutta on October 26. Nearly, one lakh workers from the unorganised sector of industries from all the districts of W. Bengal came to join the rally. It was by far the biggest rally of unorganised sectors comprised a large contingent in the rally.

Since early morning the workers started pouring into the city from various districts with the slogan, "Calcutta Chalo". They came in trains, buses, trucks and lorries. From the various stations and bus stands in the city they came in big processions with banners and festoons to converge at Esplanade East, causing traffic jams at various crossings.

Among the unions which took major role in making the rally successful were the W. Bengal Handloom Workers' Union, Shops and Establishment Employees' Union, Richshaw and Van Drivers Union Tiles and Brick Kiln Workers Union, Head Load Workers' Union, Railway Hawkers' Union, Rice Mills Workers' Union, Newspaper Hawkers' Union, Electronics and Technicians' Union, Casual Forest Workers' Union, Road Transport Carriers' Union, Municipal Workers' Federation, Cooperative Workers' Federation, Bakery Workers' Union, Regulated Market Employees' Union, Tailers' Union, Construction Workers' Union, Security Workers' Union, Beedi and Tobacco Workers' Federation, Hosiery Workers' Union, Press Workers' Federation, Census and Enumerators' Organisation and various other districtwise unions of unorganised workers.

It is to be noted that acting upon the call of the CITU, the W. Bengal State Committee worked assiduously and systematically among the workers in various unorganised industries districtwise throughout the state for the last several years. Nearly five lakh workers have been brought under the fold of the CITU under fifteen state level unions and a number of districtwise and region level unions. Preparations for this central rally were going on for a number of days by holding districtwise and local level demonstrations, rallies and meetings. Massive poster and leaflet distribution were made all over the state for the success of the rally. The central rally was the first of its type in the State. It was targeted that nearly two lakh workers would participate in the rally. However, due to sudden turn in the situation arising out of the communal tension caused by LK Advani's Ram Mandir Ratha Yatra, workers, cadres and leaders were asked to stay back at various districts to remain guard against any communal tension.

The rally was presided over by Com. Kamal Sarkar, Secretary CITU, in place of Com. Manoranjan Roy, the State General Secretary and Vice President of CITU, who could not come due to sudden illness. The main speaker was Com. Jyoti Basu,

the Chief Minister of W. Bengal and Vice President of CITU.

In his address, Com. Jyoti Basu lashed at the BJP for causing communal riots in various states in the wake of L.K. Advani's Ratha Yatra. He castigated the Party for withdrawing support from the National Front Government because of the arrest of L. K. Advani and throwing the country into a quagmire. He said that the people were confronted with unemployment, price rise, closures and various other problems. But the BJP and its cohorts, the RSS, VHP, Shiv Sena and other communal forces had no consideration for the people's problems. On the contrary, when they required united struggle for resolution of their problems, the BJP and these communal forces deliberately played the nefarious game to cause communal riots and tear apart the united fabric of the country. Advani rejected all appeals to stop the Ratha Yatra. Not the people's problems, his only objective was to build Ram Mandir, and that too on the Babri Masjid itself by demolishing it and there by create an unprecedented communal fire up in the country, including in Bengal which had never witnessed it. It was at the same place Jhalda in Purulia district W. Bengal through which his Ratha had passed, where the riot took place. He assailed the BJP for actually making an election campaign in the name of Ram Mandir by using the BJP flag and its election symbol in the Ratha. He said that the trouble had been nipped in the bud and called upon the workers to go back and remain guard in their respective areas and take out communal harmony marches everywhere.

On the demands of the unorganised workers he congratulated them for organising such a big rally. He assured them all help and support of the left front Government.

The main resolution was moved by Com. Mrinal Das, Secretary, W. Bengal State CITU and leader of the unorganised workers in the State. Because of the turn in situation, the resolution called upon the workers to observe communal harmony marches all over the State culminating on 30th October. On the question of unorganised workers, the resolution called upon the workers to carry forward their struggle with the various demands raised by the CITU in its General Council meeting especially pinpointing to five main demands, viz, fixation of minimum wage, giving appointment letters, bankloan at low interest to the small scale sector, opening of all closed units and right to work. Mrinal Das congratulated the workers for making massive preparations before the rally and for successfully observing the demands week from October 20 to 25 at all places.

The rally was also addressed by Santi Ghatak,, the Labour Minister of W. Bengal and M K Pandhe, Niren Ghosh and P K Ganguly, Secretaries of CITU. The rally ended with defeating slogans and with a promise to carry forward the struggle of the unorganised workers.

Conference of CSIR Employees Federation

The Seventh Annual Conference of the Federation of CSIR Employees' and Workers' Unions and Associations was held at the Indian Institute of Petroleum, Dehradun from September 7 to 9, 1990.

The Conference was attended by about 200 delegates and observers from 35 National Laboratories of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) of the country. The Conference was inaugurated by K. Adinarayan, General Secretary of Postal Employees Union P.K. Ganguly, Secretary, CITU was the Chief Guest.

In his inaugural address, K. Adinarayan dealt at length with the service conditions of the Central Government employees and called upon the delegates to join the struggle to strengthen the demands of all Government employees. He further called upon them to join the mainstream of the struggle by all sections of the working people for restoration of the democratic rights of the people and trade union rights of the workers and employees, especially the Government employees, which were trampled underfoot during the Congress regime.

P.K. Ganguly congratulated the workers and employees of CSIR for acquiring the trade union rights and having organised themselves under the federation on an all India basis through struggles. He pointed out that the CSIR was the premier Research Organisation in the country, established with the objective to achieve self-reliance in the field of science and technology for industrialisation of the country by harnessing its vast resources. But because of the capitalist path of development embarked upon by the Congress Government and its economic policies tuned to the dictates of the World Bank and IMF, the country continued to depend more and more on foreign aid and technical know-how for its industrial growth. Despite the impressive infrastructure of the CSIR, there is an alarming penetration of foreign technology in the Indian industries. Analysing the labour policy of the erstwhile Congress regime, he referred to its nefarious attempts to take out the employees of CSIR, hospital employees, etc. from the purview of the Industrial Disputes Act by nullifying the historic Supreme Court judgement of Justice Krishna Iyer and make a separate Act for them, which would have curbed their trade union rights in totality. It was only due to the concerted actions of all workers and employees, in which the CSIR employees took commendable role, that the Congress Government could not pursue further and the present National Front Government had also agreed to enact a new law agreeing to include all such employees under its purview. He also drew the attention of the delegates to the growing deprivations by the communal, casteist and secessionist forces in the country, to the Khalistanis in Punjab,

the Jamaite Islami in J&K, to the ULFA in Assam and to the communal flare up attempted by the RSS-BJP-VHP on the Ramjanam Bhoomi issue at Ayodhya and called upon them to unitedly fight these forces to isolate them from the people and safeguard the unity and integrity of the country and frustrate the designs of the imperialists to destabilise the country.

B.K. Roy, General Secretary of the Federation placed his report. The report was adopted after discussions by the delegates. The report assailed the scientific and industrial policy of the Government and urged upon the NF Government to take recourse to an alternate policy of self-reliance, development of the CSIR and the process of indigenisation. The Conference decided to launch a campaign programme all over the country demanding grant of full trade union rights to CSIR employees and recognition of their unions and the federation; scrapping of the master-servant provisions of the Constitution and grant of protection under Article 226; revocation of all victimisations; declaration of CSIR as an Industry and protection of employees under the I.D. Act; uniform service conditions, etc.

Demonstration by Plantation Workers

At the call of the AIPWF about 200 workers from various Estates near Sakalespur Town, in Hassan District in Karnataka organised a demonstration before the Head Post Office at Sakalespur on 20.09.1990 to press for 21 point charter of demands. The workers shouted slogans demanding strict implementation of Plantation Labour Act, compulsory, imprisonment to defaulting employers, nationalisation of big plantations and trade etc. After the demonstration Com. V. Sukumar, General Secretary of Karnataka Thota Karmikara Sangha and working committee member of AIPWF addressed the workers and briefed about the serious problems being faced by plantation workers in different parts of the country, and explained the charter of demands.

In Arehally about 100 workers of the union organised demonstration and dharana on the same day before Arehally post Office. Com. K. Krishna, Vice President of the union led the programme. 2000 hand bills containing the charter of demands in Kannada was also distributed in both the places.

At Chikmagalore District, about 50 workers near by Chikmagalore Town organised demonstration on 20.09.1990 for about an hour in front of the Head Post Office. Com. Anni, Assistant Secretary of Karnataka Provisional Plantation workers union and Com. A. Velayudha, Treasurer of the Union led the programme. 1000 hand bills containing the charter of demands were distributed.

FCI Employees to Hold All India Convention

A meeting of the Co-ordination Committee of Food Corporation of India Union was held in New Delhi in CITU Central Office on 1st September 1990 to review the activities of the Committee and chalk out programme for further action. M K Pandhe Secretary CITU presided over the meeting.

Dipen Ghosh, Convenor of the Committee briefly reviewed the activities of the Committee and noted movements launched in different regions on common demands faced by the workers. The meeting noted the struggle of FCI workers in Nalgonda and congratulated the workers for achieving success in regularisation of some workers. The meeting expressed its concern at the gangster activities by some anti-social elements in West Bengal with the connivance of the FCI management.

The meeting highlighted the need for united movement of the FCI employees to fight the management's policy of refusal to grant proper wages to the employees and its attempt to reduce drastically the manpower in the industry. The meeting decided to campaign for inclusion of the CITU in wage negotiations.

The meeting decided to organise all India convention of FCI employees some time in February in Andhra Pradesh. The meeting directed all the unions to submit charter of demands to the management and launch campaign among the workers on its basis.

The meeting noted the non-implementation of the statutory obligations for the contract workers by the FCI management as a principal employer and decided to campaign on the subject. It was decided to take up the question of prohibition of contract labour for the permanent and perennial nature of jobs in FCI with appropriate authorities.

As per decision of the Co-ordination Committee a deputation led by Dipen Ghosh M.P met the Union Food Minister and placed before him the pressing demands of the FCI employees.

The meeting decided to observe one demands day in the month of October.

Non-Coal Workers to Observe Demands Day

The mine workers other than coal all over India will observe 13th November 1990 as All India Demands Day. Poor wages, total absence of safety measures, non-implementation of welfare measures for the workers, abolition of contract system etc are the issues agitating the minds of these most exploited section of the workers.

A meeting of the CITU affiliated unions functioning in mines other than coal was held on 16th September 1990 at CITU Centre, New Delhi. The meeting has decided to form a Co-ordination Committee with 2 representatives from the unions which has a membership of 500 and above and one each from unions having membership below 500 with Com. Ranjit Basu, Secretary as Convenor. It has also been decided that an All India Conference will be held in Bihar sometime after the CITU conference in February 1991. The Co-ordination Committee meeting for this purpose has therefore been decided to be held in Calcutta during the CITU Conference.

The meeting has decided to observe 13th November 1990 as an All India Demands Day by wearing badges and organising demonstrations, gate meetings, etc.

Two resolutions have also been adopted by the meeting on the present deplorable condition of the workers in mines other than coal and on the welfare scheme of mine workers which will be handed over to the concerned ministries shortly. An appeal to the mine workers have also been prepared by the meeting for campaigning amongst the mine workers in general and non-coal mines workers in particular to mobilise them and bring them under the fold of CITU.

First All India Conference of Anganwadi Women

Date : December 1 & 2, 1990

Place : Udaipur, Rajasthan.

Delegation Fee including Boarding and Lodging:—Rs. 50/- per Delegate.

All Delegates are requested to inform about their arrival and for return journey to:—

Com. B.L. Singvi,

Chairman, Reception Committee,

All India Anganwadi Women Conference,
CITU Office,

D.D. Shirali Bhawan,

Opp. Paras Talkies,

Machchala Magara,

UDAIPUR—313001.

Kerala Working Women's Convention

A. Nazimunniza

The Kerala State Convention of working women was held on 14-15th July, 1990 at Kozhikode. The State Co-ordination Committee met at Ernakulam on 3-5-90 and decided to hold the convention. With the guidance of Com. K. N. Ravindranath, General Secretary, CITU State Committee and Com. Susheela Gopalan, the Committee decided to hold workers' meetings in the districts and entrusted the officer bearers of the committee to study the actual problems of working women of different sectors and prepare the report so as to help the discussion. The CITU State Committee and the subcommittee of of trade union leaders also discussed the details and instructions were given to CITU District Committees and service organizations. Accordingly district committees and unions planned to send delegates from different sectors. With such a total effort of the CITU, co-ordination committee, unions and service organizations, the convention was held successfully. Working women's district committee was reconstituted before the convention and a reception committee was formed at Kozhikode. This also helped a lot to convene the 3rd State Convention.

Tributes and homage were paid to Com. BTR who had taken initiative to organise working women under CITU. Homage was also paid to martyrs and trade union and women leaders who died during the past years.

The conference was inaugurated by Prof. Nabeesa Ummal, MLA. Explaining the problems of illiteracy, unemployment etc, among women she urged working women to join the democratic movements for the uplift of the country, while fighting to achieve their demands. 60% of the illiterate of Kerala being women, she said that educated section of women should take it as their responsibility to implement the policy of the Government to eradicate illiteracy.

In her presidential address, Com. K. R. Bhanumathy said that the co-ordination committee was paying more attention to organise women in unorganised sectors.

Com. K. N. Ravindranath, General Secretary, CITU State Committee addressed the gathering. Dealing at length with the international and national political situations, he pointed out how it affected the workers' life and the class struggle. He said that despite the persistent efforts of the Soviet Union to strengthen the peace movement, the United States imperialism still reserved itself the right to intervene and attack the Third World countries. Examples were seen in Panama, in Afghanistan, in Arab-

Israel issue, etc. It was giving all assistance to train the terrorists to destabilise India. Unless we are conscious of the attempts of United States to sabotage the peace efforts we will not be able to carry on our struggles to strengthen the peace movements, he said. Explaining the recent developments in Socialist countries he said that we have to counter the anti-socialist campaign, because socialism is the only way to end exploitation and other social evils.

He said that the working class of India played a major role to oust the Cong(I) regime. But there was no sincere effort by the NF Govt to break with the old economic policies.

Expressing deep concern and anxiety over the communal riots, he stressed that trade union movement should be strengthened on the idea of secularism and as such we have to fight against communalism; working women should join the campaign against communalism, he reiterated.

He concluded his speech by saying that now the co-ordination committee was a platform of CITU and its sympathisers; it should become the platform of all working women, so that it can strengthen the total trade union movement.

Report of the Work : The report placed by Com. Nazimunniza dealt with the special sessions of working women, the increasing participation of women in trade union activities as well as in common struggles, united actions with AIDWA and separate campaigns of women's committees of different organisations on their demands. The problems of struggles of working women in various sectors like plantation, cashew, coir, fisheries, Anganwadi, private hospital, agricultural farm, teachers, central and state Govt employees were also included. The circulation of 'voice of Working Women' and 'Thulyatha' (organ of Kerala State Committee of AIDWA) was also mentioned.

Discussions on the Report : One delegate from each district spoke on the report. Commenting on the functioning of the state and district co-ordination committee, they said that while the unions of middle class workers and employees were more interested in taking up the problems of women, CITU unions were not paying that much attention. More women were organised under CITU and hence their participation in the committee meetings were essential and more important. To organise Anganwadi workers and workers in shops and private hospitals, they asked for more help from CITU.

In most of the districts, they said that joint actions with AIDWA were carried out on March 8th, on the issues of price rise, unemployment etc. Reacting on the points raised by Com. Ravindranath they said that they needed more political education.

Then, comrades representing various unions participated in the discussion. Com. Narayani from Sree Chithra Medical Centre said that because of union intervention they were able to fix their duty time as 8 hours. Com. Narayani complained that Committee was not paying attention to the problems of head load workers. Com. Vallikutty from Anganwadi asked for the co-operation of all unions and CITU to their struggles. Khadi worker Com. Geetha said that the Khadi Commission was not willing to accept them as workers and even Gandhi Jayanthi was not declared a holiday. Com. Padmini from LIC said that they had formed womens' committee; they had no creche or rest room.

Com. Ursula Francis, an Officer in the Advocate General's office and delegate of Gazetted Officers Association said that 10 delegates had come to attend the convention on invitation of the co-ordination committee. They had their own women's convention in which 300 women participated. She detailed that there was discrimination in promotion etc on the basis of sex. There must be facility for training for women.

The rubber tapping worker Com. Fathima Beevi said that she get only Rs. 13/- as daily wages. The only one delegate from ISRO, Com. Subbalakshmi said that even though more than 1000 women were working in this Central Govt institution, women were reluctant to work in this organisation. They had no creche. She asked for the help of co-ordination committee to organise their women.

Com. Santha, Engineer and delegate from the Electricity Officers Association also said that women workers were active in their unions but the officers were not taking so much interest.

Comrades from artisans, construction, co-operative sector, municipal and corporaion employees, university, government and private teachers, transport, P & T, Panchayat and NGOs also participated in the discussion. A total of 34 delegates spoke on the occasion.

Summing up the conference, Com. Susheela Gopalan spoke on the national questions on women. She said that while the Rajeev Govt had not even invited our organisations to discuss the National Perspective Plan for Women, the National Front Govt had come forward to discuss with us the details of the National Women's Commission and the Govt considered our suggestions. At the same time, she pointed out that the new industrial policy will adversely affect the job opportunities, especially

for women. She also said that the actual work of the co-ordination committee should be within the trade union organisation.

Resolutions : The conference discussed and passed the following resolutions : (1) On National Commission on Women (2) against price rise (3) New Industrial Policy (4) Against atrocities of women (5) On communal harmony & national unity (6) on complete literacy. Resolutions demanding hostels and transport facilities, abolition of child labour, ban on obscene posters & drugs were also adopted. The conference demanded of the state and Central Govt to raise the honorarium of Anganwadi workers and helpers. It also demanded of the management to reopen the Rangayyan Coffee Curing Company at Kozhikode. A fund of Rs. 583.55 raised from the delegates was given to the striking workers of the company.

The Minister of Co-operatives and Excise Com. T.K. Ramakrishnan and Com. T. Devi (Secretary, AIDWA) addressed the conference. State and district leaders of unions were also present.

The conference elected a 51 member committee with Com. K.R. Bhanumathy as President and Com. A. Nazimuneza as General Secretary. The 13 member Executive Committee included Comrades J. Saraswathi Amma, L. Premakumari, K.R. Padmini (Vice Presidents) Comrades Sony Kometh, M.K. Kamalamma, V.V. Parasannakumary, T.A. Usha Kumari (Secretaries) and Com. Girijabai (Treasurer).

326 women representing 41 unions participated in the convention: 19 State Committee members, 120 from CITU affiliated unions, 160 from other organisations, 22 Anganwadi and 5 Agricultural workers.

Publication of Com. BTR's Writings

As per the decision of the Secretariat, the CITU will publish the writings of Com. BTR on trade union movement in two or three volumes. The Secretariat has decided to publish the first volume by December 19, 1990 to commemorate the birth anniversary of Com. BTR. The first volume will contain his writings, presidential addresses, etc. from 1970 to 1980.

All unions, federations and state committees are requested to send to the Central office the articles of Com. BTR in the souvenirs etc. during this period by November 20. Photographs of Com. BTR should also be sent.—Ed.

High Court Judgement in Favour of Contract Labour

An important judgement has been pronounced in the high Court of Bombay on 16th November, 1989, by the Hon'ble Mr. Justice S. N. Variava in the matter of Contract labour under Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act, 1970 in the case between United Labour Union and others versus Union of India and others where in Air India Corporation was respondent No. 2.

The Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act 1970 was rather silent about the fate of the contract workers in any establishment, working in the perennial jobs, when the contract system is abolished in those concerned areas of work. And in many a cases, it had been observed that the Employer takes the advantage of such silence and non-specificity in the Act and plays with the service condition, job security etc of those poor contract workers. It is the experience of the trade union movement, that the nexus between the principal employer and the contractor operated every where against the meaningful implementation of the Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act, thereby frustrating the very purpose of the Act. Again in many a place, in the contract workers' movement, a kind of hesitation was experienced in respect of bringing the issue of abolition of contract system in the permanent, perennial work to the fore out of an apprehension that the Act is not that specific about the fate of contract workers working in the perennial work after abolition of contract system in those areas. The judgement of Bombay High Court by Hon'ble Mr. Justice S. N. Variava has no doubt taken care of the said lacunae of silence and/or non-specificity of the Contract Labour Act. Section 10 of the Contract Labour Act provides for abolition of engagement of contract labour in perennial nature of job and the appropriate Government has to initiate the process for the same.

The Govt of India issued a notification on 9.12.76 prohibiting employment of contract labour for the sweeping, cleaning, dusting, washing of buildings owned and occupied by establishments in respect of which Central Govt is the appropriate Govt.

The United Labour Union representing employees engaged for sweeping, cleaning etc in Air India building at Nariman Point, through contractor appointed by Air India filed a writ petition demanding implementation of the above notification, ie abolition of deployment of contract labour in sweeping cleaning work in Air India building and absorption of the concerned workmen in Air India on 24.6.1985.

Air India Management being the respondent No.2 has contested to the last against the petitioner's application but the Bombay High Court ultimately upheld the prayer of the Union. In the judgement, the view expressed on the purpose and implication of the Contract Labour Act bears significance and

specified the silent and nonspecified aspect of the Act in clear terms.

While referring to the contention of the Air India that the Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act does not provide that employees of the contractor becomes direct employee of the employer on termination or abolition of Contract, the judgement noted:

"Whilst considering the provisions of the Act, it must be kept in mind that this Act is a piece of beneficial legislation. The aim of the Act is to regulate conditions of Service of Contract Labourers and to abolish contract labour under certain circumstances. It is therefore meant for securing proper conditions of service to workmen under contract labour. It is not the purpose of the Act to render workmen jobless. The interpretation which must be given is one which further these objects and not one which results in greater hardship. It must be noted that there is no provision which states that the relationship of Principal employer and workmen comes to an end on the abolition of contract labour. On the contrary, as already stated, there is a deemed contract labour only if the two conditions of registration and licence are fulfilled. In such a case, i.e. where either or both the conditions are not fulfilled, the necessary implication would be that the workmen remain workmen of the Principal employer."

Interesting to note that the Air India tried to evade its responsibility of absorption of the concerned contract labourers, pleading that Air India was not registered for any particular period (for engagement of Contract Labour), nor Air India can ascertain whether the contractors were licensed or not. Air India also pleaded their ignorance about the details of the labourers employed by the Contractor appointed by Air India itself.

The judgement, while refuting their pleading noted "It must be remembered that on a failure of the contractor to provide amenities or to pay wages, the principal employer remains liable for the same. The same would be the position on a failure by reason of there being no valid contract labour."

"The fact that the 2nd respondent (Air India) have not cared to ensure that the Contracts are licenced, coupled with the fact that irrespective of the Contractor at any given points of time, the same persons have continued to work for so many years does suggest that the Contractors were mere name lenders." "The second respondent (Air India) is however directed not to terminate the services of any workmen either by itself or through its Contractors"

CITU Delegation's Visit to China

Kali Ghosh

On an invitation from All China Federation of Trade Unions a five member goodwill delegation of CITU visited China from July 5 to July 20, 1990. The delegation consisted of Kali Ghosh (West-Bengal)—leader of the delegation, G. Raghupal (Andhra Pradesh), P.M. Kumar (Tamilnadu), Narsya Adam (Maharashtra) and S. Debroye (Centre). The delegation visited the following places: Beijing, Yantai, Qing Dao, Sanghai, Changsha and Guangzhou (Canton).

Throughout the journey, Chen Zinglong, a member of the Committee on International Affairs of ACFTU and Zhou Yang, Interpreter accompanied the delegation. Everywhere the reception of the delegation was very warm and hospitality excellent.

During our stay in China we had discussions with the ACFTU leaders both at Central level as also local or provincial level. At central level we had two rounds of discussions with ACFTU central leadership at ACFTU Hd. Qrs. Qian da Dong, Director, International Liaison Deptt was the spokesman, others present were Chen Ruhia, Dy. Director and Zen Guoshun, Dy. Section Chief.

According to ACFTU leaders China has built up a complete independent economy. It has advanced both in industrial and agricultural areas. The living standards of the people have increased considerably. The problem of food and cloth have been solved. Production of coal has been increased from 30 million tons to 1 billion tons and the petroleum production has increased to 1.30 million ton a year.

But ten years of the Cultural Revolution period they said had damaged China in a big way, it had retarded its economy. During the cultural revolution too much enthusiastic programmes were tried to be introduced. All these moves were politically immature, they said. After 1978-79 the 3rd Plenary Session of the 11th Central Communist Party of China adopted a programme of reforms based on 4 cardinal principles i.e. (i) adherence to the socialist road, (ii) leadership of the Communist Party, (iii) People Democratic Leadership and (iv) adherence to the Marxism-Leninism and Mao Ze Dong's thought.

The features of the new reforms policy included opening up to outside world by allowing foreign technology and investment and investment and private entrepreneurs, while keeping the goal of self-reliance—all under a centrally planned commodity economy and incentives under the above four cardinal principles.

After the introduction of reforms 14 coastal cities have been developed as Special Economic Zones to attract foreign investments. Among the

important foreign investing companies are one open cast mining in collaboration with an American company with capacity of 5 million ton per year. An automobile company has also been set up with West German Santana company. National Panasonic of Japan have also set up joint ventures. Apart from joint ventures there are some companies which are absolutely foreign funded but managed by the Chinese.

In spite of all these the total investment in socialist enterprises are 97% and 3 percent in private and joint ventures, and of the total employment of 140 million, 1.32 million are in joint ventures and 1.42 million in private sector.

During the last 10 years the industrial output has increased by 9.%, and average income of workers have increased by 6.%. Industrial growth rate of January-May 1990 is 4.2%.

In agriculture also reform has been introduced. The old commune system has been replaced by two tier contract system i.e. (i) house hold contract system and (ii) collective cooperatives. According to the new system the Govt is the owner of the land but land is distributed to households or co-operatives with specific contract to give a minimum quantity of grains produced to the Govt and the remaining part they can sell it to the open market or keep for their own use. Presently the Govt is encouraging cooperatives than house-hold contracts. They are also to pay a rent for the land to the Govt. After the reforms are introduced, the output of grain have increased by 1/3rd during the period of 1979-84 (5 years only).

ACFTU leaders also volunteered an explanation of the June 1989 Tiananmen Square incident. According to them a group of students influenced by bourgeois ideologies wanted to subvert socialism but that was successfully countered. There was no involvement of the working class. They could mobilise some support from the people because of some negative phenomenon of corruption in Party and Govt which the people did not like.

After this turbulence the party has self critically analysed the situation and 6th Plenary Session of the Party Central Committee adopted some corrective steps. According to the Party the ideological education was minimised. Now the party has taken up the task of imparting Marxist education amongst the workers and also within the party and to strengthening contact with the people, adhering to the principle of democratic centralism.

Members of the delegation placed some questions seeking clarifications relating to private and joint ventures particularly inviting of foreign capital and also reintroduction of individual holdings in land. The clarifications that we received were as under :

Private Enterprises : The private enterprises are mainly in small and light industry employing 10/20 workers, in construction, trade and commerce. The initial capital came from private savings, profits of shops and loans from banks. The schemes are to be approved by the Govt. It was also admitted that this has just been introduced and they have no previous experience. Steps will be taken on the basis of the experience and as and when the problems will crop up.

Joint Ventures and Foreign Invested Companies : The joint ventures and foreign invested companies are controlled by the law of the land and on the basis of contract with them. So far no industrial relations problems have cropped up in these companies, but unions are there. They admitted that there is disparity in income of a worker of a state controlled enterprise and a foreign funded enterprise. It was admitted that though the new reform policy had made economic developments but at the same time brought some ill effects. Since the door is open for foreign investments, some bougeois ideologies are infiltrating. Urge for more material benefits are also there. But the present day world is changing rapidly and they said, "we cannot close our door to outside world. We need it for our development. We are putting more emphasis on political ideological education and we are confident that we shall be able to overcome all evil effects."

I may say in this connection that all the places, factories and one co-operative that we visited, everywhere rapid economic developments were visible. They are making profits and earning foreign exchange. The factories were modernised and surplus workers were absorbed with new jobs. There was no question of retrenchment of workers.

On the question of developments in the East European countries they said it is a set back for the International Communist movement.

At Canton, during our discussion with the provincial ACFTU leaders the question of future status of Hongkong and Macao came up. We raised the question of 'one country—two systems'. The Chinese comrades said that the State has passed a law about the future status of Hongkong retaining capitalist system and the broad masses of Hongkong have welcomed it.

Herein below I also state some of our experiences and informations that we could gather about the working and living conditions of the Chinese people in course of various discussions.

Unemployment : At Beijing the ACFTU leaders told us that there is no dearth of job for workers. But the new job-seekers are there and they have their choosings also. Some people were preferring to wait for job of their choice. But at Shanghai during discussion with comrades of local trade unions who are running an 'employment exchange' we came to know that there exists some unemployment problem and according to them the rate of unemployment is 2.6%. There are employment exchanges in almost all the cities and provinces. The main function of these exchanges are to find out suitable jobs for new job seekers and also to those who want to change their jobs. In Shanghai 50 Yuan per month is paid to each unemployed for two years. Moreover, the families whose earnings are below 50 Yuan per head per month, they are considered poor families. They also get some relief to maintain their livelihood. They also give financial advances to the unemployed persons to run small business in self employment schemes.

Administration of Govt.-run Enterprises : The Directors are appointed by the Congress of the workers of the establishment by secret ballot, which takes place every two years. The Chairman of the Trade Union is an ex-officio Director. This Congress also elects several committees viz Welfare Committee, Housing Committee, Safety Committee etc. The Congress of the workers also decides what percentage of profit would be re-invested, what percentage for welfare measures and what percentage for wage increases and bonus to the workers. Every factory have its own welfare schemes i.e. housing, medical and hospital facilities, cultural places, kindergartens and nurseries, middle schools, training and re-training of workers. Some factories also run their own polytechnics. There are statutes regulating responsibilities of the Directors.

Industrial Relations Management : Any difference between management and union is resolved through mutual discussion. Management cannot take any action against any worker or terminate service of a worker without the approval of the trade union. In the case of difference between the management and the trade union the matter is referred to the higher body of the trade union for decision.

But in the joint ventures Directors are appointed on equal basis both from the Govt and the foreign investory. Normally, trade union Chairman attends the meeting as special invitee or Govt nominated Directors consult the trade union before the meeting.

Wages, Leave and Other Benefits : There is no national level minimum wage fixed by any statute. It varies from province and industry to industry. At present there are several wage payment systems, i.e.

time wage, piece wage, bonus and job subsidies. With time wages, wage standards are fixed according to technical complexity involved, labour intensity,

working conditions and responsibility. Piece wages, are calculated according to number of acceptable products turned out and pre-determined rates per unit. Bonus is paid in case of time rated workers if they fulfil their quota with excellence, efficiency, safety and economy of raw material. Job subsidies are paid for hazardous work, i.e. underground work, work in high temperature etc. With bonus etc wages of many workers surpass a Director's salary.

Wage rates of administrative and technical persons are fixed on grade basis. This has been fixed by statute. Even the Communist Party officials are to be paid on the above basis.

In the factories that we visited, average annual earning including bonus varied between 1,600 Yuan to 5,300 Yuan. On a rough estimate average came to 2,200 Yuan per year. Minimum salary of a Govt administrative staff came to 260 Yuan per month.

In addition, workers and their children get free medical service, free education for children, leave with pay for sickness, accident benefits and pension or retirement benefits. For housing nominal rent is charged on the basis of covered area allotted, which includes electricity charge.

56 days maternity leave with pay is granted to pregnant mothers. Presently China is encouraging one family—one child and for which an incentive is given. 6 months maternity leave is allowed for the first child if the parents adopt family planning.

It was found that after bearing all expenses a family saves 30 to 50 Yuans per month. This is possible because there are more than one earning member in a family. There is equal opportunity of women to be employed even in Army, Navy and Air Force. In every factory that we visited employment of women varied between 25% to 45%.

Functions of Trade Unions : In every industrial unit there is only one union and All China Federation of Trade Unions is the supreme leading body of local federations of trade unions and industrial federations. The basic tasks of the trade unions are :

1. To contribute to socialist modernisation, improvement in system and technology.
2. To increase production and constantly raising productivity in order to improve the people's material and cultural life.
3. To protect the democratic rights of the workers and individual interests while safeguarding the interests of the State and Collective.
4. To protect against all ill attacks that goes against the interests and rights of the workers.
5. To educate the workers to raise their socialist consciousness, acquire knowledge of science and culture and form a good sense of discipline.

6. To build close link with the Communist Party of China.

Historically, the trade unions are organised by the Communist Party of China but they are independent organisations. Party does not interfere in day to day affairs of the union. Only political guidance of the party is there.

In China there are mass organisations of workers, students, youth and women but there is no separate organisation of peasants. But village committees are there who look after the general interests of the people of the village.

During our talks and speeches in the receptions we mentioned about the traditional bond of friendship between the Indian and Chinese people as well as the need for developing closer contact with CITU and ACFTU for strengthening the bonds of friendship between the Indian and Chinese working class.

We stated about the present political situation in India and the struggle of the Indian working class and people against communal and secessionist forces, for the unity of the country.

We also explained about the working and living conditions of the Indian working class and their fight against unemployment, against capitalist onslaught in the form of closures, lock-outs, retrenchment, attack on their wages and hard earned rights and benefits, their struggle against multinationals.

During our talks with them we referred to how repressions were let loose against us by the ruling class for our principled stand based on proletarian internationalism during Sino-Indian border conflict. We also stated how our comrades were murdered by the Naxalites in the name of 'Long live Mao-Ze-Dong and Long Live Lin Piao.' They remarked that those were black days. On the whole our tour was very pleasant and we have earned a very rich and valuable experience.

Left Trade Unions Reject Ramanujam's Report on New Industrial Relations Law

The CITU, AITUC, UTUC, TUCC and UTUC(LS) rejected the report prepared by G. Ramanujam, Chairman of the Bipartite Committee on the New Industrial Relations Law. Having already submitted a joint letter to this effect earlier, the five left trade unions submitted a joint note of dissent to the Committee on October 22. A summary of the joint note of dissent was released to the press in a press conference held at the CITU Central office the same day. A report will be published in the next issue of the Working Class.

ANC Press Statement on The Wave of Violence

13 September, 1990

Since the Sebokeng massacre of July 22nd 1990, an unprecedented wave of violence has swept across the face of the Transvaal. Despite numerous attempts to end it, undertaken by community leaders, the regional leadership of the ANC and the intervention of the ANC's national leaders, it has not abated and seems set to continue unchecked unless taken in hand.

During the night commencing 3rd September, a brutal pre-dawn raid was launched on the inhabitants of the hostels in Sebokeng. During the course of that incident it emerged that no less than four white persons, their faces concealed by balaclava helmets, participated in the carnage that followed.

After the residents of Sebokeng had surrounded the hostels, trapping the raiders inside, the SADF units were called in by the police. In an unprovoked attack they opened fire on the crowd, killing 11 people. In the ensuing confusion, the pre-dawn raiders, including four whites were taken out of the hostels and bussed out of the area, still fully armed, reportedly in police casspirs.

On 24th August 1990, The Weekly Mail carried a lengthy account by a 'frightened hostel dweller' who had been coerced into joining Inkatha and forced to commit acts of violence against other hostel dwellers and township residents. It was clear from this report that the violence was not a spontaneous eruption but rather a well orchestrated plan, conceived by some diabolical agency with a view to spreading death and mayhem. The Weekly Mail's informant unequivocally stated that the police are involved in both organising and transporting the attackers from place to place at night.

On the 26th July, 1990, three days before the official launch of the SACP, an Inkatha leader addressed meetings in the Jabulani Hostel inciting his audience to launch attacks on persons displaying the insignia of the South African Communist Party. These activities and the name of the speaker were brought to the notice of the police.

On the weekend of the 28th July, a number of crudely forged leaflets, ostensibly issued by the ANC, were distributed in Soweto and other townships. Their intention was to create a climate of fear and apprehension among the Zulu-speaking population of the township, especially the migrant workers, by giving the impression that the ANC, COSATU, SAYCO and the UDF intended attacking them and driving them out of the hostels. These too were brought to the attention of the authorities and the media. A similar leaflet appeared in townships of the East Rand during the week of August 26th.

The mounting evidence and the avalanche of allegations of police and other security force personnel involvement with the vigilantes of Inkatha convinces us that we are confronting a phenomenon which has become quite familiar in the Frontline States. We witnessed it when the bandit gang of Renamo, established, trained and provisioned by the illegal Smith regime of former Rhodesia, first went into action. It is a matter of record that since 1979 the South African government has taken over the function.

The intention of the campaign of violence is quite clear. Its purpose is:

- * To incite violence among different sections of the African population and thus distract their attention from the root causes of poverty, hunger, low wages and economic exploitation in this country.
- * To destroy the African National Congress and other democratic formations in the townships by the piecemeal murder of their personnel and supporters.
- * To build up a psychosis of fear, insecurity and terror among the people so as to make them more amenable to a regime of martial law.
- * To derail the process of peaceful transition presently underway.

The fact of the matter is that while the ANC has sincerely been talking peace with the government, war has been declared on the ANC, its allies and the other democratic formations of our people.

The South African government has been called upon to put an end to this violence by every quarter of public opinion in this country. Yet:

- * It has failed to act against the perpetrators of the massacre of July 22nd in Sebokeng.
- * It has failed to take action against these individuals who have deliberately stirred up the violence in the Transvaal.
- * It has failed to take the appropriate steps to uncover those in its security forces, including the police, who are implicated in these acts of terror and violence.

The National Working Committee of the ANC, after lengthy deliberations has decided to convene an emergency meeting of the National Executive Committee, which will specifically focus on the violence which has now become endemic, review the prevailing situation in our country, and our strategic and tactical options in the light of the current circumstances. The NEC meeting is scheduled to commence on Tuesday, September 18th, 1990 in Johannesburg.