

Working Committee Meeting of CITU

Jamshedpur, November 30-December 2, 1983

Presidential Speech

—B. T. Ranadive

COMRADES, We are meeting for the first time since our Fifth Conference.

Our meeting should have been held earlier but usual events crowded one after another and we could not keep to the schedule.

It is unfortunate that death is taking away from us our valuable comrades, leaving us forlorn and desolate. You all will join me in expressing our grief over the passing away of Comrade M.R. Venkataraman, an outstanding Marxist-Leninist, member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and a great revolutionary fighter who guided the working class movement in Tamilnadu for years. May his memory remain ever green in our minds inspiring us.

You will join me in honouring the memory of all our workers and leaders who fell victims to brutal repression of the Government and the organised goondas in several States, Gujarat (Kandla), Bihar, Haryana, U.P., Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan (Kota), all have again experienced the terror of administration, to facilitate the attacks of the employers. They have also again experienced the murderous attacks of goondas and hirelings. It is unfortunate that sometimes such attacks come from members and supporters of rival organisations bringing grist to the mill of the employers and supplying the Government with the excuse of trade union rivalries. The gruesome story of murders of our CITU comrades in Modinagar in U.P. is the direct result of adoption of gangster methods by the manipulators of a loosing organisation. We honour the memory of our comrades who were murdered because they stood by the CITU and would not renege even under threat of death. The CITU has developed and got steeled by the martyrdom of our cadres, our workers in factories. We send our warm greetings to our comrades who have been unjustly detained in jail and we ask all our unions to demand their release.

Comrades the same gruesome story is repeated in Kalta near Rourkela in Orissa. Unable to meet our growing strength among the miners and steel employees by genuine trade union work, those who have vested interests in a rival union, organised a cowardly attack against our leader Comrade Ananta Raut. Failing to get him they attacked his house, assaulted his family members and killed his five year old child. We cannot find words to condemn this dastardly and inhuman outrage against an innocent child. Those who did it and those who hired them alike are criminals deserving the maximum punishment under the law.

We express our sympathy for Com. Raut and his family and appreciate the courage with which they have faced the tragedy. It is this uncommon courage of our comrades like Raut that steels our workers and cadres and make CITU synonym for sacrifice in the cause of the workers and revolutionary steadfastness in face of the great odds.

International Situation — Danger of War

Comrades at our fifth conference we noted the growing danger of war and the worsening of the international situation. Last six months have seen further deterioration leading to arms race and increased danger of war. The situation is created by the determination of U.S. imperialists and their European allies to site new missiles in Europe which can directly reach deep inside the Soviet territory. Armed with these weapons of aggression the U.S.A. in the name of negotiations demands nuclear and military superiority over the U.S.S.R. It, therefore, refused to take into consideration the missile power of both France and Britain which constitutes 20 per cent of the nuclear power of the NATO war camp.

Soviet Peace Proposals

The U.S.S.R. has made several concrete proposals to ease the situation and avert the danger of war for the peoples of the world. It made a unilateral declaration that it would not be the first to use the nuclear strike. The people of the world expected that response would come from the Governments of Europe and the U.S.A. They refused to respond and say they would not be the first to use nuclear strike.

As late as October 5 this year the Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko submitted two resolutions — one for condemning the nuclear war and the other advocating nuclear freeze — for inclusion in the agenda of the 38th Session of the U.N. Assembly. The first resolution says "The General Assembly, expressing the concern at the growing threat of nuclear war which can result in the annihilation of the civilisation on earth, calling attention to all States and peoples to the conclusion ... that it is impossible to limit the deadly consequences of a nuclear war, if it were to be started, and that there can be no winners in a nuclear war —

(1) Resolutely, unconditionally and for all times condemns nuclear war as being contrary to human conscience, and reason as the most hideous crime against the people, as the violation of the foremost human right — the right to life.

(2) Declare as criminal acts the formulation, enunciation, dissemination and propagation of political and military doctrines and concepts designed to substantiate both the legitimacy of the first use of nuclear weapons and generally the admissibility of unleashing of nuclear war.

The second resolution urges all nuclear weapons states to agree to freeze ... all nuclear weapons in their possession and not to deploy nuclear arms of new kinds.

Calls upon the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A., which possess the largest nuclear arsenals, to freeze in the first place their nuclear arsenals, and simultaneously, their nuclear arms on a liberal basis by way of example to other nuclear States. Believes that all other nuclear weapons States should subsequently and as soon as possible freeze their nuclear arms”.

The imperialists of course did not respond to this clear offer to relieve the world of the nuclear war, remove the atmosphere of fear and suspicion between nations.

Besides, the U.S.S.R. made concrete proposals to scale down armaments gradually step by step and proposed to solve the problem through negotiations at Geneva. It made an offer to scale down its missiles in Europe provided other side also agreed to an equal reduction. It said that in the absence of elimination of nuclear weapons and a process of mutually agreed nuclear disarmament, needs of security of concerned nations can be best served by accepting the principle of parity in arms and not disturbing the present military equilibrium. Deployment of new U.S. missiles like Cruise and Pershing it said was nothing but an attempt to establish military superiority and it would not allow it. It therefore offered again to agree to mutual reduction of missiles if new weapons were not deployed in Europe. But the U.S. imperialists in their aggressive mood refuse to respond and are determined to pursue their drive for nuclear aggressive war against the Soviet Union and Socialist countries.

Preparation for Defence — Responsibility to Socialism

Today therefore the U.S.S.R. is faced with the question of defending herself when the U.S. imperialists are plotting their aggressive designs and preparing for nuclear supremacy. It would be a complete abandonment of all responsibilities to socialism, to the USSR itself, if adequate and effective steps are not taken to meet the challenge and the aggressors are not made aware that severe deterrents await them. The leaders of the USSR have not failed in this respect. While they worked strenuously for peace, for reduction and diminution of nuclear armaments, they took note of what the imperialists were doing, of their piling up of armaments, and ensured that there was no laxity in their capacity to defend their country. The defence capacity of the socialist camp has been a strong deterrent restraining the war mongers who want to reshape the world to

suit the needs of imperialism, to the global ambitions of U.S. imperialists. On May 28, 1983, the Soviet Union Government declared that in case the new American missiles are deployed in Europe it will have to take retaliatory measures, to consider the decision on the unilateral moratorium on deployment of medium range missiles in European zone, to carry out measures for deploying additional means for creating counter balance to the growing nuclear weapons of the USA and other NATO countries in Europe, take measures with the view of the territory of the USA itself.

This of course is necessary and fully justified. The war mongers and aggressors cannot be conceded weapons supremacy. That will be just helping the imperialists against the socialist system. It is impossible to ignore the fact that the entry of new missiles in Europe will signify a qualitative change in the military strategic situation and leave to the USSR no other choice but to take retaliatory action.

The working class of the world and people of all countries will hail this statement of the USSR which shows that the imperialists cannot cow down the socialist world. The statement besides shows the extreme gravity of the situation. The socialist camp and the Soviet Union do not lightly talk about retaliation unless the situation is getting out of hand. It is, therefore, a call to the people of the world, including the people of India, to intervene in time, bring into action the force of public opinion against the imperialists and curb the nuclear adventurers.

War Against the Socialist System

The working class of India, our trade union movement must understand what is at stake. The war that is being prepared is not a war between two super-powers — but between two social systems. The U.S. imperialists and their European allies, now aided by Japan, are out to destroy the socialist system — the achievements of the world working class during the course of a struggle lasting over more than hundred years. They want to restore the socialist world — one-third of the world — to capitalist and imperialist exploitation and turn the workers and peoples of these countries into their slaves. They seek to restore the situation obtaining before 1914 when there was no socialist country and the entire world lay at their feet. They seek to restore the old colonial order and destroy the freedom and liberty of countries who have come into their own after the emergence of the socialist camp. They consider this camp to be the main deterrent in their way of global domination. Imperialism cannot change its character. It seeks repartitioning and redistribution of the world at the expense of the freedom of millions of people. The war will thus be a war for destruction of socialism, for enslavement of the world including India.

And for this the imperialists are prepared to slaughter millions and millions of people — in their country as well as in other countries. Some of them openly say only 100 million Americans will die in a

nuclear war. There will be enough Americans left to enjoy the fruits of a nuclear war.

Our trade unions and the working class has to face the reality and play its role in countering this danger to humanity, to freedom and socialism. Our exposure of the war mongers and our struggle for peace must be immensely strengthened and full support must be lent to the peace proposals of the USSR. We must realise that the U.S. imperialists and their agents do everything possible to mislead public opinion. You are all aware how in their unscrupulousness they organised the South Korean airliner incident to get a propaganda advantage. This provocation can be compared only with Reichstag fire provocation of Hitler. The entire world has condemned the cowardly American attack on tiny Grenada under the plea of a search for armed Cubans. And now in Labanon they openly act as an occupying power to help the Israeli aggressors. The U.S. imperialists are on a rampage and every provocation and war move of theirs must be exposed.

Role of the Ruling Party

This is a task before all patriotic and democratic forces. The ruling party which appropriates to itself the monopoly of patriotism and democracy however thinks otherwise. It does not criticise the despicable and provocative role of U.S. Imperialism in creating a bellicose war atmosphere. The Resolution on International Situation passed by AICC Session in Bombay nowhere mentions U.S. imperialism. It resorts to talk about super powers. It says "The discourse among the Super Powers on the great and abiding issue of peace is no longer based on grounds of reason. The conflicts, actual and practical abound. Plausible means for resolving such conflicts do not appear to be within the grasp of world organisations. Tensions proliferate in every corner of the world. An ever deepening crisis threatens human civilization." Who is doing all this — both super powers — the people are told.

You will not educate the people about the real source of danger, though you may issue statements on peace as Smt. Indira Gandhi does. The war is not going to be prevented, peace cannot be protected by a few conscience raising statements of the leader of the ruling party. To save it the intervention of the people is required and this is precisely the Congress (I) does not do by concealing the real source of war danger.

However formal support for peace is better than no support, than support for war. The struggle for peace in India will be ten times more difficult with a Government committed in the opposite direction.

India Being Surrounded

The same imperialist power — the USA — having failed to get India into its net, is busy supporting reactionary dictatorships in neighbouring countries, dictators who are hostile to India, who seek to divert

the discontent of their people into anti-India channel. The game of the imperialists is quite clear. It is to hold a permanent threat of hostility and war from across the border, and pressurise India to give up its non-alignment policy, give up its friendship with the USSR and join the bandwagon of the U.S. imperialists, compromising Indian independence and sovereignty.

The induction of military weapons in Pakistan, the supply of F 16 Planes followed by Harpoon missiles is nothing but preparation for military hostilities started by the U.S. with the aid of a pliant dictator. On the other side is Ershad, the Bangladesh dictator, who threatens to stir hostile atmosphere on the question of a border fence to protect illegal immigration from Bangladesh into this country. And there is the Hindu king of Nepal whose Government is also adopting an anti-Indian posture to create a wall between India and Nepal. Nepal no doubt has certain genuine grievances against its neighbour, but they are now exploited to create distrust between peoples which facilitates the imperialist game of setting one people of the sub-continent against another. And finally the Buddhist Lanka whose President openly denounced India during the massacre of the Tamil minority in July-August and called for help from imperialist forces — the USA and Britain. The Sri Lanka part of Trincomalee is already controlled by the U.S. Navy and is virtually a U.S. naval base, only a few miles from India.

The autocratic, dictatorial regimes surrounding India are becoming a threat to India's independence and the freedom of their own countries. The democratic and working class movement in India is therefore vitally interested in the advance of democracy in these countries so that both the dictators and the imperialists are checked.

Vital importance therefore attaches to the courageous struggle of the people of Pakistan against the military dictator. The success of the popular movement will release forces of liberation throughout the subcontinent shattering the bases of all dictatorships and strengthening the democratic forces in this country.

But Zia is suppressing the people with the utmost brutality. Men, women, children are attacked, arrested, jailed and flogged. Many are killed in Sind which is the storm-centre of the struggle. This is how common people — all Muslims — are treated in an Islamic State which professes to follow the teachings of the Koran. The cry of Islamic brotherhood and Islamic State in the mouth of the ruling classes is a hypocritical cry to keep the people divided and deny them their basic rights. The rapes and atrocities in the former East Pakistan, the formation of Bangladesh and the present movement in Pakistan all prove it. Appeal to the people in the name of religion — Hindu, Muslim, etc — is a reactionary appeal to disrupt the unity of the toilers against common exploiters, of the international working class against capitalist exploitation.

If in Pakistan the people's anger has boiled over, people in other neighbouring countries are not quiet. In Bangladesh several parties have demanded end of the Martial Law, restoration of the parliamentary system and elections and are embarking upon mass agitations to force sanctions for their demands. In Nepal the hoax of a panchayati raj is being seen. People's voice is penetrating through the iron wall of partyless panchayati democracy and the hand-picked Ministry finds it difficult to cope with the rising discontent. Both the Muslim dictator Zia and the Hindu autocratic King of Nepal are equally opposed to political parties, i.e., they are opposed to any popular organisation giving systematic expression to popular demands, shaping policies on behalf of the people and organising them. They want the people to be without organisation and leadership so that they cannot unite against the regime easily. Representing the class interests of a narrow section, unable to tolerate democracy in their countries, these regimes tend to rely more and more on foreign economic help from the West and come under its influence.

The people of Sri Lanka have gone through a traumatic experience. Here the reactionary class Government of Lanka could not solve the problem of the Tamil minority nationality on the basis of justice and equality. It ended in massacre of the Tamils under Government aegis, large-scale looting of the people and murders in jails.

Overwhelmed by these uncontrollable events Jayewardene, the Sri Lankan President summoned the help of imperialists to fight his own countrymen. To rouse chauvinism he also raised a scare about Indian invasion, making it appear that he was seeking U.S. help to protect Sinhalese freedom against Indian interference.

Inability of Bourgeois-Landlord Governments

The turmoil in Pakistan, the happenings in Sri Lanka and popular discontent and attack on democratic rights in countries like India all originate from the same cause — the inability of the bourgeois — landlord Governments of Third World countries to solve the economic and social problems of their people, their inability to maintain the democratic rights of the people and the system of parliamentary democracy, and further, their inability to solve on the basis of democratic norms the problems of minorities and nationalities of their countries.

Centre-State Relations

In India also the problems of Centre-State relations has come to the forefront. Under the capitalist path urgent economic developments of States is not possible. Assam suffers from this backwardness. Besides, under the Indian Constitution the State Government has very little power. Without a thorough agrarian revolution in the country and power in the hands of the people, the way cannot be opened for a rapid and equal economic development

of all the States. In the absence of this realisation, advocates of regionalism and separatism succeed in misleading the people. It is not realised that division of the country into small independent States will only help imperialism to enslave them.

From almost all States the demand for equal status is coming forth. It has not taken a disruptive form. It raises the necessary and correct demand for restructuring of Centre-State relations. There is a general demand to reduce concentrated powers of the Centre and its monopoly of economic resources. It is at the same time agreed that the Centre must be a strong Centre capable of discharging its responsibility for defence and other vital responsibilities. The working class must support the demand for more powers to the States combined with adequate powers for the Centre.

In the internal battle for democracy, in the fight against authoritarianism, left forces headed by the CPI(M) have inflicted retreats on the Congress(I) in West Bengal. The big victory in the panchayat elections in West Bengal despite differences in the front and the victory in the Agartala Municipal election have strengthened the Left forces in the country.

Worsening Law & Order Situation: Corruption

The rapid deterioration in the internal situation is marked by a growing collapse of law and order threatening the life of ordinary citizen. Dacoities, murders, rapes take place in increasing numbers, with the administration overcome by a creeping paralysis of inaction. The will to move against anti-socials seems to have been lost. On the other hand when it comes to dealing with the struggles of the people, of the working class, the same administration is over-active with a zeal which can be spared for better causes. I have already referred to the terror which our CITU cadres have experienced in the last few months.

Corruption has become the badge of the ruling party. It is all pervasive in that party and no one seems to be an exception. The beef-tallow scandal, though — some people are using it to rouse religious passions, has something to do with the spread of corruption in the Congress(I). As a leading daily in its editorial has said, the person concerned with the scandal is a financier of the Congress(I) party. This adulteration of people's food goes on unchecked under Congress(I) regime. Equally full of stench is the Karnataka affair concerning an attempt to buy over an independent supporter of the Janata Government. But this is no surprise. The ruling party is corroded by corruption and inner factionalism. There can be more disgraceful than factional conspiracies to set up and bring down ministries. It is extremely unfortunate that at this critical juncture in world history India is ruled by a party whose leaders excel each other in selfishness and corruption and are devoid of all sense of responsibility to the nation.

In this selfish atmosphere the Punjab problem becomes more and more grave every day giving scope to the anti-national forces to sow the poison of division. No wonder that the Assam situation also has not returned to normal. It will not so long as the ruling party relies only on administrative measures and takes no steps to counter the feeling of alienation and bitterness and educate the people.

The Holocaust in Sri Lanka

The atrocities on Lankan and Indian Tamils in Sri Lanka sent a wave of shock and anger throughout India. A bankrupt bourgeois-landlord government was holding the minority as hostage for its own failure and misdeeds and directing the anger of Lankan people against the minority. But it was a question between Tamil minority and the Lankan Government only. Other conspirators were waiting on the side lines. The USA which virtually controls the Trincomalee base would have been happy to enact a Grenada in Sri Lanka. The Government of India judged the situation correctly and intervened with the intention of restoring peace. There were of course certain foolish voices who wanted India to take steps which would have raised the national feelings in Sri Lanka and hastened the arrival of the USA on the scene. This would have meant enslavement of Tamils and Lankans and danger to India's freedom. We must congratulate the Communist Party of Sri Lanka and other Left parties for raising their voice of protest against the attacks on minorities and standing firmly by the unity of the working class and unity of Sri Lanka. It is in the interest of Tamils and Lankans both that the unity of the country is preserved. It is at the same time essential that guarantee of equality and equal treatment be assured to the Tamils and proper constitutional provisions be enacted for the purpose.

We do hope that with the help of India Government's representative Mr. Parthasarathi, a satisfactory solution will be found to restore amity and friendship between the Tamils and Lankans and the common people belonging to both communities will be able to devote their attention to the urgent tasks facing them—the task of defending Lanka's freedom and unity against U.S. conspiracies and the task of expanding the economic and democratic rights of the people. It is obvious that there cannot be a full and final solution of the problem under the present Government and economic system. But any solution which restores mutual confidence between common people and helps them to unite in the struggle for common advance and social change should find ready acceptance at the present time.

Divisive Forces

Comrades, we must denounce the communal killings in Punjab organised by so-called extremists but who are in reality anti-national secessionists encouraged from abroad. The repeated murders of innocent people belonging to one community at the hands of desperadoes belonging to another, are intended to

create communal holocaust in the Punjab. It is a tribute to the people of Punjab that they have foiled this dastardly plot. But the enemies of the nation are busy all the time to create an Assam-like situation in this border State. We have already mentioned how the selfish policy of Indira Government is passing the initiative to the anti-national sections.

But these murders also show utter helplessness of Akali leadership. They have every time condemned them but at the same time shown their inability to prevent them. Have they not sufficient authority with the mass of Sikhs who follow them to brand the murderers as enemies of the people, to isolate and paralyse all their mischief. The leadership must draw proper lessons from its own experience. Whatever may be the justice of your demand, if in fighting for them you appeal only to one community, gather its support with the aid of religious authority, the initiative passes into the hands of the extremists communal wing. The Akali leadership must take steps to heal the wounds and restore communal harmony in the Punjab.

The Punjab and Assam are a sharp reminder of the intense activities of the divisive forces in the country. It has to be recognised that the assault of these agencies have intensified during the last six months, clashes and conflicts over processions, places of worship etc. are taking place. It appears as if some agencies are only looking for an excuse to organise communal riots. In this atmosphere attempts backed by large-scale disbursement of money are made to rouse revivalism and orthodoxy, to intensify the feeling of separatism between the various religious communities. The Hindu Ektamata and several other calls are not the product of sudden concern for ancient heritage; They are planned instruments to annihilate all sense of national unity and solidarity.

Comrades, the working class with its all-India consciousness has to fight against these forces. If the ruling party and the Government are unable to check this attack, if they abandon this responsibility, we cannot abandon ours, we cannot satisfy ourselves only blaming the Government.

The Price Rise

Our people and the working class had to undergo further suffering in the last six months. The rise in prices and the cost of living index have deflated the hard-earned incomes of the people and the workers. The all India Consumer Price Index of industrial workers (1960-100) rose by 13.4 per cent in 1981-82. In this same period wholesale price of rice rose by 22 per cent and wheat by 9.8 per cent, pulses by 4.4 per cent, fruits and vegetables 11.2 per cent, milk and milk products 3.4 per cent and other food articles 47.2 per cent, tea by 58.2 per cent, edible oil rose by 10.2 per cent. Commenting on this rise in the six months between December 1982 and June 1983 the Annual Report of the Reserve Bank of India observes "in this phase

the index also rose in respect of cereals, pulses and edible oils which would have a long term impact on the price level. It is this feature that is of significance in the immediate outlook for prices". In short be prepared for continuous rise in the coming months. One can imagine the havoc done to retail prices and the extent of suffering of the common people.

We are now facing double digit inflation. The purchasing power of the rupee fell to 18 paise by August this year. The All-India Consumer Price Index has been continuously rising without check. These facts are known and their impact on the life of the people is deeply felt.

But the ruling Congress (I) party does not own responsibility for this situation. It wants the people to believe that the mischief was started with the Janata Government and the Congress(I) has organised a magnificent rescue operation to save the Indian people. Listen to the Congress(I) satisfaction noted in the AICC resolution on Economic Situation passed in Bombay "The AICC(I) notes with satisfaction the steady recovery affected the national economy after the disastrous years of Janata Party rule which culminated in a decline in the national income by 5 per cent, an unprecedented rise in prices of 21.4 per cent, an all time low capacity utilisation...Against this dismal background, the Congress Government in the subsequent three years through its effective policies backed by participation and support of the people at all levels, was able to achieve a growth in national income at an average rate of 5 per cent, contain the inflationary situation and restore the health of the infrastructure."

Only the jesters at the court of Delhi could make such claims and get excited over them in face of more than 2 crores of registered unemployed, prospects of a double digit inflation and the growth rate in the net national product in real terms of between 1 to 2 per cent in 1982-83 in contrast to the higher growth rate of earlier two years. All this reveals only callousness towards the suffering people and shows that the ruling party has no remedy other than making false propagandist claims.

Depressing Purchasing Power

The price phenomenon, the continuous fall in the purchasing power of the monetary unit is embedded in the credit and monetary policy of the Government in its resort to deficit-financing. It is a device to transfer the burdens of the capitalist path and its crisis to the workers and the people. The workers cannot hold their standard of living, cannot prevent its deterioration unless they unitedly fight against this policy, against the budgetary policies of the Government and defeat them. While the Congress (I) Government claims that it has succeeded in raising millions above the poverty line (the AICC resolution on Economic Situation claims that 120 millions have broken through the poverty line), it seems that the Indian people

are consuming less and less cloth. The per capita consumption of cloth fell down from 16.44 metres in 1965 to 14.76 metres in 1981 and 13.50 metres in 1982. (The last two are years to which the AICC resolution refers with particular satisfaction for Congress Government's performance). What else could happen when the common man's purchasing power was drastically cut because of rising prices and had to be diverted mainly to meet the inflated prices of food and other essential articles. No wonder that in spite of the colossal loss of production due to the prolonged textile strike of Bombay workers, stocks with mills continue to rise. The total stocks with the organised sector of the cotton textile industry rose from 162,000 bales in August 1982, to 202,000 bales by August 1983—a 25 per cent rise. This accumulation of stocks has taken place despite the estimated loss of 1300 million metres due to the Bombay strike.

The situation worsened further in October. Yarn stocks with mills went up from 27.4 million kg. in May this year to 31.3 million kg. in October. The accumulated stocks with mills have gone by as much as over 100 million metres from 249 million metres to 353.5 million meters between May and October. Dussera and Diwali brought no improvement in offtake. It is reported in the press that there are signs of distress sales by mills in view of the persistent demand recession.

The Loot by Bombay Millowners

The evil effects of Government policies, of increased inflation have been multiplied by unscrupulous and profit hunting methods and outlook of the Bombay millowners. They for sake of profit, tried to starve into submission two lakh workers, prolonged the strike and inflicted an enormous production loss of production on the country. When dacoits loot a bank and decamp with a few lakhs of rupees it becomes a sensation. But when moneyed barons inflict a loss of Rs. 1200 crores on the country and the people it is not taken note of, or the blame is passed on to the workers. The Bombay mill owners must be condemned for their anti-social outlook and behaviour, for holding the country to ransom. They have shown that they cannot be trusted with the management of the industry. This applies to the millowners in other centres also. They cannot be trusted with the management of production of cloth which is a vital necessity for the people.

Nationalise the Entire Textile Industry

All trade unions, all central trade unions must demand immediate nationalisation of the cotton textile industry. This is a demand which is now directly related to the security of workers' jobs and the interests of the people.

In Bombay most of the mills have stopped the third shift and in Ahmedabad 15 per cent of the looms have been sealed. This growing offensive can be met only by ending private ownership of the

industry. The CITU supports the take-over of 13 sick textile mills of Bombay pending their nationalisation. The reasons detailed in the Ordinance for take-over throw light on the unscrupulous character of the management and their inefficiency which led to waste of assets piling of debts and loss of productive power.

The Ordinance says "by reason of mismanagement of the affairs of the textile undertakings — their financial condition became wholly unsatisfactory even before the commencement in January 1982 of the textile strike in Bombay and their financial condition has therefore further deteriorated", it further says "certain financial institutions have advanced large sums of money to the companies owning the said undertakings with a view to making the said undertaking viable", it further add "further investment of very large sums of money is necessary for reorganising and revitalising the said undertakings and thereby to protect the interests of the workmen employed therein and to augment the production and distribution at fair prices of different varieties of cloth and yarn so as to subserve the interests of general public — pending acquisition it is necessary to take over the management of the said undertakings."

Thirtyfive thousand workers were employed in these mills and they were jobless for the last 20 months. The take over opens prospects of immediate jobs for them. The millowners had no intention of opening the mills. The millowners had paid liabilities amounting to Rs. 270 crores including Rs. 130 crores from banks. The investment of the owners was only Rs. 12 crores. Under these circumstances there was no need to offer any compensation. This is one of the crassest instance of mismanagement and unscrupulousness and gives us an insight into the functioning of the private sector and its morality. It will be correct to say that the private ownership of big concerns is nothing but the organisation of the underworld at the top of society.

The millowners and the Federation of Chambers have raised a howl over the measure. What else was expected of them? They have been quick to point out that the 103 mills that the National Textile Corporation runs now have shown a total carry-forward loss of as on July 1983 in excess of Rs. 432 crores. They argue that with this bleak record why should the Government rush to take charge of other mills.

Workers' Participation with Equal Status

Here the Government is at its weakest spot. It is not in a position to give a convincing answer, though it is there. The experience of take-over and nationalisation, of running the Public Sector shows that these undertakings cannot be run efficiently under a bureaucratic management and without the participation and cooperation of the workers concerned. It is idle to think that the mills taken over now or the 103 mills under the National Textile Corporation will be run efficiently to serve the people without

inviting the cooperation and participation of the workers on equal terms in their management. The CITU has repeatedly urged such participation where workers and management have equal responsibility to run the concern. But this is anathema both to the Government and the private sector.

May we quote Dr. Manmohan Singh, Governor of Reserve Bank of India for the benefit of the private sector and the Government. Addressing the National Productivity Council the Governor said "workers' participation in decision-making processes is increasingly being accepted as a superior alternative to autocratic management patterns where all decision-making powers are concentrated in the hands of a few individuals at the top of the hierarchy — It is therefore, essential that our entrepreneurs develop an effective long range perspective with regard to industrial relations. Any such perspective must recognise that the workers want to be involved and consulted, that trade unions are an essential element of the institutional structure of a democratic policy and that, therefore, their influence on public policies cannot be wished away — in a democracy" (RBI Bulletin March 1983).

Nationalisation of the Jute Industry

The jute industry of West Bengal has perhaps a record worse than that of the Bombay mill magnates. Nationalisation of the industry has become urgent in view of the scandalous mismanagement and the loss of jobs inflicted on thousands of workers. This urgent need is accepted by all in the State. All Central Trade unions including the INTUC have demanded nationalisation. The State Assembly which gets sharply divided on every issue with the left front parties and the Congress (I) sharing opposite views, has adopted a unanimous resolution calling for the nationalisation of the industry. An All-Party delegation from the State recently submitted the demand to the Prime Minister. Very rarely has there been such unanimity on the question of nationalisation of an industry. The need is felt by all parties, all organisations. But the Centre refuses to move. It spreads its protecting wing over the private management.

What is the record of this management? It was revealed recently at the Labour Ministers' Conference that there was a significant drop in the number of strikes from 43 in 1981 to 29 in 1982 but the number of lockouts at 115 remained nearly the same when compared to 117 lockouts in 1981. There are at present 19 jute mills employing about 63,400 workers which are either under lockout or closed.

The employers refuse to implement the settlement arrived at a Tripartite Conference. The State Government have informed the Labour Ministers' Conference that the IJMA is not agreeable to implement the recommendations regarding grades and scales of pay and changes in workload as per

tripartite settlement of 1979. The Association is not agreeable to any increase in wages at present. They are also not prepared to concede other demands made by the Central Trade Unions. No wonder all the trade unions have unitedly given notice of strike in the industry by January next.

All our trade unions must support the demand for nationalisation of the industry and campaign for it among the workers. They must bring pressure on the Central Government to fulfil this demand which has the support of all unions and all political parties including the Congress (I) in West Bengal.

Government's Refusal for Nationalisation

Comrades, The Government of India pursues a different policy. Instead of following take over by outright nationalisation it resorts to denotification, handing over the concerns to the private owners and leaving the workers to their mercy. The West Bengal Labour Minister Com. Krishnapada Ghosh recently complained against delay in promised nationalisation of certain concerns and unilateral denotification of others. In his speech at the recent Labour Minister's meeting specifically mentioned the delay in nationalisation of NRM and Incheck Tyres which the Central Government had earlier agreed to. He also asked the Government to rescind its decision of denotification of several concerns.

Lockouts

Comrades, At our 5th Conference we noted the increasing use of lockouts to break down workers resistance and compel them to submit to the dictates of the employers. The anti-social character of lockouts is self-evident. The ownership of means of production in the hands of a small coterie is used to starve thousands into submission and reduce democratic and fundamental rights to a force. The right to earn, live by one's labour is challenged and needed production is withheld from society to satisfy the profit lust of a few magnets. This offensive still continues and in the first five months of this year the number of mandays lost through lockouts exceeded those lost through strikes. The following figures appearing in the press are significant.

Number of Mandays lost (in Millions 1980-1983)

Year	Strikes	Lockouts	Total
1980	12.00 (55)	9.90 (45)	21.90 (100)
1981	21.20 (58)	15.30 (42)	36.60 (100)
1982	15.60 (47)	17.70 (53)	33.40 (100)
1983 (January-May)	4.90 (48)	5.30 (52)	10.1 (100)

(Figures in brackets show percentage to total).

[Excluding mandays lost due to textile strike in Bombay.]

In 1982 and the first five months of 1983 more than 50 per cent of the loss is due to lockouts. The Bombay strike was prolonged because it was virtually turned into a lockout and the loss in 1982 through lockout is much bigger.

The official statement submitted to the Labour Conference therefore had to accept "a shift in the pattern in the last two years with lockouts accounting for a higher show of total mandays lost than strikes.

But there is a tendency to show that the production loss due to lockout is much less than that due to strikes. The official memorandum observes "Analysis of production loss due to strikes and lockouts show the losses on account of strikes have consistently been more than losses due to lockouts. In substantiation of this the memorandum presents the following figures which make strange reading.

Production loss due to Strikes, Lockouts (1980-83) Till May in Rs, Crores.

	Strikes	Lockouts	Total
1980	172.51	124.53	297.54
1981	465.11	163.66	628.76
1982	123.69	51.01	174.69
1983 January-May	26.11	20.37	46.49

In 1981, 42 per cent of mandays lost was due to lockouts but the loss due to production is 55 per cent, in 1982 mandays lost due to lockouts are 63 per cent, but the lost in production is only 29 per cent, in 1982 lockouts account for 53 per cent of total mandays lost but the production loss is 43 per cent. Were the lockouts confined only to low-valued goods and strikes in high priced goods.

Industrial Sickness

The mismanagement of the economy and its growing collapse leading to waste of productive power of society and loss of jobs for the workers is seen in the increasing number of sick industries — official euphemism for recession and mismanagement. The Annual Report of the Reserve Bank of India 1982-83 gives the following figures. It says that the provisional data on sick units with credit limits of Rs. 1 crore and above showed that the number of sick units in this category at the end of June 1982 was 439 involving aggregate bank credit of Rs. 1728.40 crores as compared to 422 units with aggregate outstanding bank credit of Rs. 1429.29 crores at the end of June 1981. Of the 439 large sick units identified by banks, viability studies in respect of 374 units have been completed; of these 320 have been considered as potentially viable, which means the rest 50 or so — will have to close permanently. As at the end of June 1982, banks identified 26,973

small scale sick units including aggregate bank finances of Rs. 393.67 crores as compared to 22,360 sick units involving aggregate bank finance of Rs. 321.53 crores at the end of June 1981. Of these 5316 units were considered by banks as potentially viable and 14, 576 units non-viable which again means they must close. This is a picture of recession, mismanagement and bankruptcy. Sickness is spreading in an epidemic from in small-scale units. During the last year it has increased by nearly 20 per cent. And a majority of these are destined to go out of production. Society must step in to stop this rot. All these industries can be put on their feet if the workers are taken into confidence and the owners share with them the responsibility of the management. Nationalisation of big sick industries accompanied by workers' participation in management, timely help to small-scale units to be run with the help of the workers will rehabilitate all the sick industries and save enormous productive power from going waste.

Secret Ballot

Comrades, the recent Conference of Labour Ministers' revealed again the opposition of the Congress (I) rulers to allow the workers to choose their own representatives in negotiations with the employers. Going against the wishes of the workers and contrary to all democratic norms the employers and the Government extend their patronage to an organisation of their choice — generally belonging to the INTUC. This anti-democratic practice of the Government and the employers was fully revealed during the prolonged strike of Bombay textile workers who repudiated the INTUC union and formed a new one to represent them. But it did not secure recognition. The CITU has repeatedly called for recognition through ballot so that agreements entered into with the union will have sanction of the workers. But the Government has refused to accept the principle. It does not allow the State Governments to adopt this democratic methods for choosing the bargaining agent.

No wonder then that the West Bengal Labour Minister had the following to say in this question at the Labour Ministers' Conference. "We all along have been of the view that in a democratic system the most appropriate method of selection of bargaining agents is the method of secret ballot. As we are connected with this, the State Legislative Assembly has very recently passed the Trade Union Amendment Bill, 1983 wherein provisions have been made for selection and recognition of bargaining agents. Where there can be no consensus, in a democratic system, individual states should be allowed to make their own provisions and make a beginning instead of continuing a constant dialogue which has gone on for more than a decade, without a solution." We all congratulate the Labour Minister and the Left Front Ministry for adopting this bill and incorporating a basic right of the workers in it. But will the Government of India give up its dog in the manger policy? Did they not kill a previous bill. All this calls for a

drastic change in the Centre-State relations.

Surge of United Struggles

Comrades, We have pursued with greater vigour our efforts to strengthen trade union unity, our CITU alongwith several other organisations organised a massive bandh—in West Bengal in September. It was a mighty protest against the policies of the Central Government and voiced the demand for a restructuring of Central-State relations. Our Chatkal Mazdoor Union has succeeded in uniting all jute workers' unions for an indefinite strike against the IJMA which has refused to implement the agreement reached in tripartite consultations in 1979 and rejected other urgent demands of the workers.

In Kerala we have been all the time in the field for united actions of all unions and all Central organisations. We have succeeded on many occasions to secure the participation of the INTUC unions on some issues. We, helped by other unions, have been continuously fighting the reactionary policies of the employees and the Karunakaran Ministry. Kerala like West Bengal shows repeated successes in expanding the framework of united activities.

In Tamilnadu also the CITU has again succeeded in drawing together several unions and organisations in the fight against the policies of the MGR Ministry. The AITUC, CITU, the DMK Unions and others have made common cause on several occasions to protect the workers rights from the depredations of illconceived legislation of the MGR Government. It is necessary to broaden this unity and give it a more stable base in the State. In all other States our unions are pursuing this line and achieving success.

We have reason to congratulate ourselves on the fruits of this unity. You all know that the Federation of Steel workers and the Federation of Coal Workers affiliated to the CITU have succeeded in reaching satisfactory wage agreements with the authorities. The agreements secured many of the urgent demands of the workers and raised the basic minimum wage in the industries.

The agreements were products of hard bargaining and negotiations. They would not have been possible without the firm and united stand of all Central Trade union organisations including the INTUC. The coal negotiations proved specially difficult and the unions had to give a call for a strike. The INTUC also supported the call. However better counsels prevailed with the authorities and the demands of the workers could be properly settled.

The settlement of wage negotiations in steel, coal and other public sector industries, in the midst of a serious economic situation, is a tribute to the strength of workers unity and common feeling.

It must be recorded at the same time that some settlements (as in Bangalore) which were arrived

behind the back of the CITU and other organisations by breaking the spirit and strength of unity have gone against the interests of the workers and roused their anger. Such kind of collusion between one section of the trade unions and management is disruptive of unity and it will not protect the influence of the organisation concerned.

The Central Government has agreed to extend bonus to all its employees. Perhaps some sections are still to be covered by the agreement but the principle of bonus for all employees has been accepted. This is an important advance for the Central Employees movement. The Confederation of Central Government employees made strenuous efforts to unite all sections, the other federations backed its efforts, agitations were carried on focusing on the demand and the employees have won it. This unity must be preserved and consolidated.

Frankly speaking we do not like the extreme compartmentalisation and departmentalisation in the C.G. movement. Many still think too much in terms of their own department, their specific demands often allow the authorities to divide the employees. We do hope that a new sense of unity will soon emerge overcoming sectional and departmental outlook. It is quite clear that the Central Government has its own plans and designs in granting the bonus. It has plans for increased workload, reduction of staff etc. so that what it gives with one hand it takes back with the other. The C.G. employees movement will no doubt exercise vigilance over these moves.

Comrades, the General Secretary's report tells us about the Second Convention of National Campaign Committee. Com. P. Ramamurti our esteemed leader has written an article in the Working Class explaining the importance of the Convention and the tasks arising from it. It is not necessary to add to what they have already said. It no doubt consolidated further advance in our struggle for trade union unity. We welcome its decision to call Working Women's Convention, and also its call for a Convention against lockouts.

It is clear from our experience that the appeal for unity, joint action is reaching wider stratas and larger organisations. In times when the working class is under a furious attack of lockouts, closures, retrenchment, it is difficult to resist the call for unity. We once more stress our call for confederation of all trade unions to discuss common problems, promote unity and prepare a blue print for economic management of society so that our people are spared of the present misery. We cannot ignore the growing destitution of our agricultural workers and peasants under present conditions and must do everything to relieve their distress.

We congratulate the left front ministries of Tripura and West Bengal on all that they have done and are doing to protect the interests, of the workers peasants agricultural workers and employees in the

midst of the present crisis. We congratulate them on their excellent record in protecting and expanding the democratic rights of the people in the midst of the worst provocations organised by the Congress(I) followers. We consider them as advanced outposts of democracy which must be fully supported and protected by all our unions, our CITU, the entire trade union movement.

Marx's Teachings

Comrades, in this year of Marx Centenary it will be apt to remind ourselves of what Marx said about the tasks of the Trade Unions.

"Too exclusively bent upon the local and immediate struggles with capital, the Trade Unions have not yet fully understood their power of acting against the system of wage-slavery itself. They therefore kept too much aloof from genuine social and political movements. Of late, however, they seem to awaken to some sense of their great historical mission, as appears, for instance, from their participation, in England, in the recent political movement....

"Their future-apart from their original purposes. they must now learn to act deliberately as organising centre of the working class in the broad interest of its *complete emancipation*. They must aid every social and political movement tending in that direction. Considering themselves and acting as the champions and representatives of the whole working class, they cannot fail to enlist the non-society men in their ranks. They must look carefully after the interests of the worst paid trades, such as the agricultural labourers, rendered powerless by exceptional circumstances. They must convince the world at large that their efforts, far from being narrow and selfish, aim at the emancipation of the downtrodden millions."

Asian Metal Workers' Seminar

Mrinal Banerjee, Treasurer, Steel Workers' Federation of India attended a seminar of Asian Metal Workers at Moscow from November 10 to December 10. The total participants in the seminar were — 12 from India, 8 from Philippines and 2 from Bangladesh. The delegates from Sri Lanka could not attend the seminar.

The seminar dealt with a variety of subjects viz. Political economy, General crisis of capitalism, international monopolies, transnationals, struggle of ITU metal workers, TU movement of metal workers in Asian countries, socio economic problem in developing countries, role and place of Trade Union in a socialist society, Problem of War and Peace, trade union struggle for peace etc.

The team of delegation also visited many industrial centres in BAKU and KIEV.

CITU Working Committee

● Step Up Peace Struggles

THE Working Committee of CITU met at Jamshedpur from November 30 to December 2, 1983. The meeting analysed the international and national developments since the fifth conference held at Kanpur and reviewed the struggles and organisational functioning to meet the situation.

The meeting was attended by 72 members and three invitess, viz. Sujit Das, Narayan Saha of All India Road Transport Workers' Federation and S. Punyavathi of All India Coordination Committee of Working Women.

Com. B.T. Ranadive, President of CITU hoisted the red flag before the start of the meeting and placed wreath on the Martyrs' Column. This was followed by other members of the Working Committee. More than 100 red shirt volunteers marched past and saluted the red flag.

Yogeshwar Gope, President of the Bihar State Committee of CITU red out the welcome address.

After the condolence resolutions on Com. M.R. Venkataraman, Com. Hrishi Banerjee, Com. Nirod Chakrabarty and martyrs were moved by Com. P. Ramamurti, Com. B.T.R. delivered his Presidential Speech (*full text printed*).

Resolution Sub-Committee

The Resolution Sub-Committee was formed with the following:

P.K. Ganguly-Convenor; Shivaji Patnaik; K. Ramani; K.N. Ravindranath; Sunil Basu Roy and Biren Roy.

Credential Sub-Committee

The Credential Sub-Committee was formed with the following:

P. Satyanarayana-Convenor; N. Padmalochanan and Raghunath Kushari.

General Secretary's Report

Com. Samar Mukherjee thereafter placed the General Secretary's report. While reviewing the international and national situation and the struggles waged by CITU and the working class, Samar Mukherjee specifically pinpointed to the heightened danger of war created by the Reagan administration by sabotaging the Geneva talks and deploying new nuclear missiles at England and West Germany. He emphasised on the urgent necessity to wage conti-

● Fight Against Lockouts, Closures, Price-rise

nuous struggles for peace and draw up programmes accordingly in cooperation with other trade unions. He called upon the CITU unions to demonstrate as the largest anti-war force in the interest of the working class and for the defence of socialism. He also drew attention of the members to the galloping price rise and the new offensive launched by the employers and the Government in the form of lockouts, closures and retrenchments to pass on the burden of the deepening crisis on the working class. The IMF conditionalities have further aggravated the situation. He stressed the necessity to evolve new forms of struggle and gearing up democratic functioning of the unions at all levels of the organisations to meet the new challenges. (*Abridged report of the General Secretary has been printed herewith*).

Com. Nrisingha Chakrabarty, Secretary, CITU further elaborated the growing incidence of lockouts, closures, industrial sickness and retrenchments which have further accelerated the growth of unemployment and suggested different forms of struggles from demonstrations, rallies to occupation of factories, courting arrests and strikes. He urged upon the unions to furnish datas on lockouts, closures, etc.

Discussions on Report

Participating in the discussions, Md. Amin (West Bengal) explained the situation in the jute industry. He said that there is in fact no crisis in the jute industry. The jute barons are amassing huge profits and shouting hoarse about crisis for minting more profits while throwing the workers and the jute growers under ruination. The consumption of jute goods has increased from 3.5 lakh tonnes to over 10 lakh tonnes during the last decade. The total production is sold out. In the matter of export the jute barons want foreign exchange and not rupee payment. The Government of India even refuses to supply to USSR. This year again there will be a bumper production. The owners have been pursuing a rabid anti-labour policy supported by the Government of India. They have refused to implement the agreement on grades and scales and on workload and the recommendations of the West Bengal Labour Minister. Through years of struggles, a unique situation has now reached in West Bengal. All the unions including the INTUC and all the parties including the Congress(I) have jointly demanded nationalisation of the entire jute industry. All the fourteen unions have jointly decided to go in for indefinite strike from January 16.

Jiban Roy of Steel Workers' Federation of India

reported about the successful steel agreement wherein the guidelines of the BPE were thrown overboard. He however, pointed to the conditions of the contract workers and said that the struggles have to be waged on national level to secure permanency of their job. He also pointed to the increasing computerisations which have threatened job security and urged for countrywide movement against this.

Robin Mukherjee (West Bengal) said that over 80 thousand workers are affected by lockouts or closures in West Bengal. He suggested that in case of closures the other sections of workers who are not affected should be mobilised for solidarity actions including solidarity strikes. He gave the example of Metal Box where workers of two units went on strike in support of the workers of another unit which was closed by the management. He said that West Bengal Government cannot take over all the closed or sick units and suggested for all India movement on the issue of lockouts and closures.

Hari Sadhan Mitra (West Bengal) reported that on the issue of war and peace general meetings, demonstrations, etc. are being held in different factories in West Bengal to raise the consciousness of the workers against the danger of nuclear catastrophe created by the U.S. imperialists. Massive peace demonstrations were held on September 1. Another peace demonstration will be held on December 20. However there is a lag as per the demands of the situation. He said that continuous struggles have to be waged to pinpoint the main enemy—the U.S. imperialists. Regarding the problem of lockouts and closures he said that the State Government is not having adequate powers to curb the offensives. The consciousness of the workers regarding the causes of lockouts, closures and industrial sickness has to be raised through struggles. United struggles are being waged in West Bengal and a successful bundh was held on September 28. He referred to the united struggles being waged in jute and engineering industries. He also referred to the solidarity strike actions being launched in Metal Box. In the colliery belt, he narrated the attacks launched by the CISF and urged for further development of united struggles to be initiated by the CITU unions.

V.P. Chintan (Tamilnadu) narrated about the united struggles initiated by CITU in the State against lockouts and closures in various industries, which included a general strike action in Madras. He pinpointed to the recession, diversion of funds, import policy of the Government of India, etc. as the causes of closures. He gave example of the fibre industry which is being affected by the Government's import policy. He said that various forms of struggle are being initiated in Tamilnadu like picketting, rasta roko, courting arrests, etc. Even the peasants and agricultural workers were brought to town for demonstration. In Pondicherry also struggles are being waged in similar manner bringing in all the trade unions on the common platform. He also narrated about the struggles waged in the transport industry, bonus struggles in textile industry and the efforts

made by the State Committee and the affiliated unions to mobilise the working women in trade union struggles.

V.B. Cheriyan (Kerala) briefed the various struggles in Kerala and made a particular reference to the total strike by the electricity workers. He blamed the import policy of the Government and the power cuts as some major reasons for closures and lay-offs. He suggested for a general strike on the issue of lockouts and closures.

N. Padmalochanan (Kerala) referred to the various struggles waged in the State by CITU and the LDF after the Kanpur Conference. He explained about the crisis in the cashew, coir and handloom industries and the problem of lockouts particularly in the small scale sector. He urged for the necessity to focus to the people about the lockouts and closures as social evils perpetrated by the employers and the Government and develop countrywide movements drawing in all sections of workers and the people in the struggle. He also referred to the membership of CITU which did not reflect its growing force and urged for democratic functioning of the unions for proper building up of the organisations so that they can meet the challenges effectively.

Jyoti Basu's Speech

Jyoti Basu, Vice-President of CITU and Chief Minister of the West Bengal said that consciousness of the workers must be focussed to the economic situation of the country which is going from bad to worse because of the capitalist path of development. So the Left Front Government in a bourgeois-Landlord State cannot meet the basic necessities of the workers. Only an united struggle by the workers supported by the Left Front Government against the policies of the Government of India can meet their demands. He pointed to political discrimination being meted out by the Government of India towards the Left Front Government. This is being reflected by the fact that lockouts, closures and industrial sickness are maximum in West Bengal. Conspiracies are being hatched in granting industrial licenses also. The question of setting up electronic industry and the petro-chemical complex in the state has been shelved.

There are 36 lakhs registered unemployed in West Bengal. In jute industry alone over fifty thousand workers are affected by closures and lockouts. Only five or six families are exploiting the workers and the growers and looting enormous profits. Despite an all-union and all-party demand the Government of India is refusing to nationalise the jute industry. Similar is the case in various other industrial units. The Government of India, although it has funds, is refusing to nationalise the closed units, nor it is allotting funds to the State Government to take them over. With its limited resources the State Government has taken over 13 closed units. But it requires funds to modernise them to be run efficiently and made viable. Therefore since the installation of the Left Front Government in 1977 they are demanding

more fiscal powers to the States so that they can implement their developmental plans for the benefit of the people. He said that CITU has of course developed in the State but it has yet to consolidate in several vital sectors. For example, in the health services a politically motivated movement by SUCI, Congress (I) and the naxalites caused inhuman rampage in the hospitals and killed several patients including children.

On struggle for peace he said that we have to identify the enemy — the U.S. imperialists. Indira Gandhi will never directly name USA. She will go on trying to confuse the people by her two super-power theory. It is the working class that has to do that and wage the struggles for peace directed against the war preparations of the Reagan administration. He informed that another massive peace rally will be held in West Bengal on December 20.

Mangat Ram Pasla (Punjab) briefed the struggles initiated by CITU against closures, lockouts and retrenchments. In the State Convention held at Punjab on November 27, the main emphasis was laid on joint struggles against this offensive. He said, however, that response from other trade unions was not much encouraging. Out of 2500 delegates in the convention, 1800 were from CITU. CITU is also fighting tooth and nail against the divisive and separatist forces in the state. At the same time it is making ceaseless efforts to mobilise various sections of workers to launch struggles for peace and expose the imperialist games headed by the U.S.A.

S.N. Solanki (Haryana) narrated the barbarous repression let loose on the workers by the employers and their hired goondas with whom the police and the CISF are openly collaborating. Workers are being physically dragged out from the factory premises and their quarters and openly beaten on the streets when they protest against closures, lockouts, and retrenchments. He gave the example of Panipat, Sonapat, Hissar and other places where this barbarous repression is going on despite the visit of several Members of the Parliament and CITU leaders. The police are openly fanning up communal passions in collaboration with the divisive and communal forces. Led by CITU, however, the workers are waging undeterrred struggles against the offensives. In Hissar Textile Mills a successful indefinite strike has been launched from November 16 against the retrenchment of about 2000 workers. He supported a courting arrest programme on the issue of closures and lockouts and suggested that an all India morcha and courting arrest should be done at Delhi. Regarding the struggle for peace against war, he said that despite non-cooperation by some other trade unions, CITU had made programmes for rallies, but the State Government did not permit to hold them.

N. Prasad Rao (Andhra Pradesh) narrated about the various struggles and strike actions conducted by CITU in the State either singularly or in conjunction with other trade unions. He referred to the State Government employees' strike, the struggle in the

shipyards, of the railway workers, the struggle of the 6000 ILTD workers against closure, etc. He also mentioned about the State Conventions on minimum wage and of working women. Regarding the continuous jute strike proposed to start on January 16, he said that CITU is trying to mobilise the workers to participate in the strike. On peace struggle, he said that this year September 1 was observed at 60 places of the State mobilising larger number of people than last year.

Resolutions

After discussions on the General Secretary's report, the resolutions were taken up. E. Balanandan informed that Kerala had decided to hold peace rally in the state on December 28. While moving the resolution on Danger of War and Struggle for Peace, P. Ramamurti suggested to observe a peace week in all the states from December 20 (when West Bengal will hold a rally) to December 28 (when Kerala will hold the rally). It was seconded by E. Balanandan and adopted unanimously.

The resolution on Sri Lanka was moved by R. Umanath and seconded by Shivaji Patnaik.

The resolution on the Struggle of Workers in the Coal Industry was moved by M.K. Pandhe and supported by Sunil Basu Roy.

The resolution on Price-rise was moved by Ahiliya Rangnekar and supported by Parsa Satyanarayana.

The resolution on the Assam (Relief Undertaking) Bill was moved by Amal Ghosh Dastidar and supported by N. Padmalochanan.

The resolution on Working Women was moved by Vimala Ranadive and seconded by Chandi Prasad.

The resolution on Closures and Industrial Sickness was moved by Samar Mukherjee and seconded by K. Ramani.

The resolution on the Nationalisation of Jute Industry was moved by Md. Amin and seconded by Har Sahay Singh.

The resolution on the Nationalisation of Textile Industry was moved by K. Ramani and seconded by Chitta Brata Majumdar.

The Resolution Committee had suggested some amendments in some resolutions which were accepted by the house. As suggested by Jyoti Basu, it was decided that the Resolution Committee would draft a resolution on Bangladesh to be passed by the Secretariat. All other resolutions alongwith some more which were submitted by some members were passed on to the Secretariat for adoption.

(All the resolutions including those adopted by the Secretariat in its meeting held on December 13 have been printed in this issue.)

Report of Credential Committee

Parsa Satyanarayana submitted the report of the Credential Committee. 68 applications, were received for affiliation with 17, 067 membership. As suggested by the Credential Committee, the meeting approved affiliation of 52 unions with a membership of 13,848 while the affiliation of 16 unions with the membership of 3,219 was kept pending subject to their fulfilling all the requirements.

All unions were asked to make their affiliations and other records upto date so that the membership of CITU is truly reflected and the organisational machineries could be geared up in all manners.

Reply by Samar Mukherjee

Replying to the discussions, Samar Mukherjee laid particular stress on waging an unrelenting struggle for peace and raising the consciousness of the workers to perform their international task of projecting themselves as the biggest anti-war force and identify the international enemy—the U.S. imperialism. While launching united struggles in India, he said, the working class has to realise the prognosis of the capitalist path of development followed by the Congress. The situation is further worsening for the working class as the Government of India has succumbed to the conditionalities of the IMF. There is therefore a growing danger of lockouts, closures and industrial sickness taking a virulent form in the coming days. Trade union unity therefore is a must to meet the challenges with new forms of struggle directed at the root of the Government policies. Under such circumstances, all round gearing up of the organisations is a pre-condition to wage effective struggles. While CITU has to continuously go on increasing its membership, democratic functioning has to be ensured at all levels of organisational functioning. He called upon all the unions and the State Committees to prepare reports on lockouts, closures, etc. and make the special convention on lockouts and closures called by the National Cam-ful, so Committee on January 20 at Delhi successful so that organised joint struggles can be launched throughout the country thereafter.

Summing Up By B.T.R.

B.T.R. thanked the Bihar State Committee and the volunteers for successfully hosting the meeting.

He said that the country is in the throes of a serious economic crisis—the result of the capitalist path of development. But we are probably still underestimating it. The crisis has done a massacre of the jobs of all sections of the working people. Lockouts and closures have multiplied the number of the unemployed. Coupled with this, the uncontrolled price rise have put severe burdens on each

family, revealing the capitalist path as a great social curse to the workers and the common people. But the Government of India is trying to blunt it and confuse the people with its damagocic pronouncements. The working class has to assimilate the teachings of the Communist Manifesto—the real fruit of the battle lies in the growing strength of the organisation in fighting the crisis and the ruling classes. If we expect the Left Front Government to diffuse the crisis, it will be the highest form of reformism. There is no short cut. In the midst of the holocaust of job CITU must stand as a rock, intensifying the struggle against ruling classes, supported by the left front ministry. The working class is not devoid of strength. Trade union unity is the demand of the situation. But we cannot measure our strength only through N.C.C. CITU has to be the driving force for the materialisation of this trade union unity and expanding it to carry forward the struggle against the pro-monopolist, pro-feudal and pro-multinational policies of the Government. If can succeed if our independent activities are stepped up. There would bound to be conflicts in the process. But our responsibilities are to carry forward the struggles with unity and the objective. At the same time, we cannot hang on to any illusion that everything will be solved immediately. As because we are confronting the capitalist class, so solution will come only through struggles—bitter and prolonged. Our demands are gradually becoming the demands of all the unions—nationalisation of the jute industry—all the unions and political parties in West Bengal have come together. It is because of the stress of the crisis—the sign of the growing crisis and the reaction thereof.

On closures and lockouts BTR said that we are trying to unite the working class against these anti-social acts. We have to be most keen in this respect, because we have the maximum contact with the mass of the workers and we can feel their pulse better than any others. But many sections of workers are still in the factory consciousness only. We have to draw them to the platform of the NCC—the united platform. The struggle against lockouts and closures have to be taken seriously as a part of our struggle against the capitalist crisis.

On the special convention of working women also BTR urged upon the State Committees and the affiliated unions to make it successful which will go a long way to involve the working women in the trade union struggles.

Regarding the struggle against war and for peace BTR said that some other trade unions are falling prey to the propaganda of the two super-power theory. But we cannot afford to depoliticalise our workers. We must raise their consciousness to identify the main enemy—the U.S. imperialists and observe the Peace Week from December 20 to 28 in a massive way.

Calling upon the workers to unite against the divisive forces, BTR said that trade unions have to stand as the main force to withstand the communal and

(Contd on page 31)

General Secretary's Report

(Abridged Form)

Samar Mukherjee

Comrade President & Comrades,

WE are meeting here at a time when the situation, both international and national have worsened than what it was at the time we met at Kanpur during our Fifth Conference. At the same time the working class movement both internationally and nationally has made giant strides, which we have to assess and draw up our programme of activities not only to suit the situation but also to prepare the Indian working class to discharge the role history has placed on it.

Growing War Dangers

Our President, Com. B.T. Ranadive, has already drawn before you a graphic picture of escalating dangers of a nuclear holocaust, the powerful peace movement sweeping all the Continents of the world including the USA itself, the rabid recalcitrant attitude of The Reagan Administration and peace initiative taken by the USSR and other socialist countries. The USSR and the East European Socialist Countries, who are under direct threat of the fast striking weapons like Pershing II and Cruise Missiles, have contributed much in regard to mobilising world opinion on peace as will be seen from the fact that within the past 6 months, 4 international gatherings have taken place in which CITU had participated, besides many more industrial meetings in which the question of peace was one of the main topics of discussion, as survival of humanity itself is dependant on the ability of the peace loving people of the world to prevent a nuclear war.

We have made a little progress in that 1st September this year was observed as 'Peace & Solidarity Day' at the call of WFTU, jointly by CITU, AITUC, UTUC, TUCC and INTUC (Dara) and more widely observed than last year. We are continuing to warn the working class about the "War Dangers" from every platform which is available to us. There have also been spontaneous protest demonstrations in Calcutta and Delhi and various other places against the naked aggression in Grenada by the U.S. Nevertheless we must admit that the working class is yet to react sharply to these political developments and we have yet to develop a powerful peace movement drawing the working masses throughout the country as had been the guidance given to us at Kanpur.

The Sofia Conference was attended by Shri N.K. Bhatt (INTUC) and Shri Brij Mohan Toofan (HMS) to whom I proposed that some active form of our protest to nuclear war should be developed in our country, I take this opportunity to once again appeal to all the Central Trade Unions including INTUC and HMS to actively consider sponsoring a powerful movement for Peace in our country. I am sure that you would not only approve such initiative but also

take initiative at the state level in organising peace marches, because the situation is becoming graver every passing day.

Deepening crisis of Indian Economy

Com. BTR has dealt with further worsening of the economic situation in the country. I would point out to the aspect of price rise only, which is one of the major indices in gauging the economic situation. The All India Average Consumer Price Index Numbers for Industrial Workers (Base 1960 = 100) shows the following picture :

Month/Yearly Average	General Index		Food Index		Difference between the two indices
	Yearly Increase.		Yearly Increase.		
January 1980	371		384		13
Yearly Average 1980	390	19	406	22	16
Yearly Average 1981	441	51	465	59	24
Yearly Average 1982	475	34	498	33	23
July 1983	541	66	578	80	37
Percentage increase between Jan. 1980 & July 1983					
	45.8%		50.5%		

Despite tall claims of containing inflation or reducing it to a single digit by the Finance Minister, the working class of our country had to put up with inflations with double digit figure every year. The second aspect which need to be noted is that the food indices have risen more sharply than the general indices almost every year with exception of 1982. The erosion in real wages workers of all section can be well understood. The general index has increased to 554 points in September 1983 thus increasing the percentage to 50.

Now further increase in prices is on the cards. From the news reports it appears that increases in the prices of coal and railway fare and freight are imminent. The Government would try to take plea that the prices had to be increased due to rise in wages and thus misguide the public. The trade union movement in general and the CITU unions in particular should start a campaign from now on to the effect that the recent wage rises were inevitable because of the price rise. In fact the prices have risen by more than 50 per cent where as the wage rise, as claimed by various units in the public sector ranges between 14 to 28 per cent only, which means that the workers have not been able to secure cent

per cent neutralisation and their real wages have fallen. Further rise in prices, is bound to cause further erosion in their real wage unless the public sector workers could secure cent per cent D.A. neutralisation through negotiations in the Tripartite Committee which is yet to come to a decision.

The campaign against price-rise would have to be linked with strengthening public distribution system which has virtually collapsed. As price-rise affects all including the non-wage earner masses, the slogan as formulated in the convention held in August 1983 has to be popularised i.e. nationalisation of whole sale trade of foodgrains and supply of all items of daily necessities through public distribution system at cheaper price.

It has also to be noted that the Government is persistently refusing to correct the 1960 indices as unanimously recommended by the Rath Committee for 8 point on the ground that steps have already been taken to start a new series in the light of the recommendations of Seal Committee. All the workers who get variable DA linked with the Price Index are losing @ Rs. 9.10 (for those who draw the DA @ Rs. 1.30 per point) or above every month while the owning class is benefited to this extent.

The quick estimates of national income and related aggregates for the financial year 1981-82 released by The Central Statistical Organisation (Ministry of Planning) on February 9, 1983, showed that the national income has recorded an increase of 5 per cent during 1981-82 over and above a marked rise of 8.1 percent in 1980-81. Per capita income in real terms between 1980-81 and 1981-82 has shown an inciease of 2.8 percent, according to the claim of the said organisation.

A falling wage in money value while prices are rising or less of real wage at constant prices for the wage-earners and rise in national income during the same period, denotes that the capitalists and landlords, as exploiting classes have earned most at the cost of production made by the labour, the twenty big monopoly houses having doubled their assets during the past seven years.

Growth in the struggles

The period between our Kanpur Conference and this Working Committee meeting shows a tremendous growth in struggle not only of the working class but also of the democratic masses. There have been innumerable struggles at factory levels, many of which have not been reported in our journals. But from the reports received or published, one can find the intensity of the movement.

These struggles would have to be judged in the background of the rising tide of the Kisan struggle and developing democratic movement.

Though the working class took part in these movements yet, it cannot be said that they took a leading

part in these movements. This is one weakness about which we must take note of.

The second weakness which we must take note of is that all these are more or less resistance struggles to ward off the attacks or to fight against erosion in real wages. Struggles for changing the anti-people, anti-labour policies of the Government are yet to grow. But nevertheless the growth of struggles of toiling people covering various sections is a welcome development.

What stands out in sharp focus, is that the working people are already on the move in the struggle against high price, closures, lock-outs, retrenchment and their militant mood can be clearly seen. With the decision of the left and other opposition parties to organise movement against price-rise, retrenchment, lock-out, closure unemployment etc., the struggle is bound to be intensified in the coming days and the CITU must seize initiative in uniting the working class on these common issues and also to draw in the democratic masses in an increasing number so that a formidable force could be built up against the severe exploitation which is going on.

Repression

It has to be noted that these struggles have been conducted facing barbarous repressions let loose by the Police and the goonda-hirelings of the management.

Our comrades in Assam, have valiantly carried on struggles despite murderous attacks, arson, and wide spread intimidation and violence.

I denounce the firing and killing of workers by the Police at Visakhapatnam when the contractors' workers in Vishakhapatnam Steel Plant went into strike and at Kandla Free Trade Zone on September 13 at the behest of the management. The Kandla firing in which two teen-aged workers died, shows how the police is acting as mercenaries to help those owners who blatantly violate agreements and violate the laws of the land. In the name of export promotion, the owning class is being helped by the Government to impose bonded-labour like service conditions on the workers. Those who protest are beaten up or shot down in cold blood.

I also denounce the brutal police repression on the workers of J.K. Synthetics Kota, who have been fighting against illegal retrenchment of over 2,400 permanent workers. The Rajasthan Government while admitting that the retrenchment was illegal in a communication to Com. Biren Datta, Minister of Labour, Tripura and a member of our Working Committee, who had protested against this illegal retrenchment, virtually placed the entire repressive machinery of the State at the service of the Singhanias at whose behest the workers were taken to the factory after arrest and was asked to work or go to jail. When the police could not find the workers any more at their homes, they threatened the family

members including children at gun-point to divulge the whereabouts of their menfolk. Such was the nature of brutal repression. Com. Mohd. Ismail, Com. Basudev Acharya and Com. Saifuddin Chowdhury, M.Ps. visited Kota and described that Kota was a besieged city in which only the gun-power ruled and all fundamental rights were buried for sometime. Com. E. Balanandan, Treasurer CITU sent a telegram to ILO and later on details have been furnished to them which has since been registered as Case No. 1227.

We must also note the feature of the Kota struggle. Here workers who were not retrenched had gone into such a long drawn struggle to defend the jobs of the retrenched workers.

Another feature of the repression is that the managements have now started utilising the CISF against the working class movement. At NFL-Panipat, they worked as IB Officials rousing the wrath of ordinary workers and ultimately there was a clash and the workers were severely and mercilessly beaten by the Police and CISF together. In ECL the CISF is behaving like a victorious force occupying a vanquished country and belabouring the coal workers. The trade union movement must unitedly protest against the CISF forces whose duty must be limited to protection of property and not interference in trade unions movement.

Attack on CITU Activists

With profound grief I have to report to you some heinous murderous attacks on CITU activists and their family members. We have noted that in the past many of our leading cadres were subjected to murderous attacks by the members of anti-social hirelings of the rival unions mainly sponsored by the managements. But the attacks this time have gone beyond that. Now if the CITU activist is not found at the time of the assault, their relatives and family members are brutally being hacked to death. In Modinagar (U.P.) 5 persons of whom 2 were only CITU activists and the rest their relatives were done to death by some members of HMS union on July 9, 1983. This is supposed to be in retaliation of killing one of the HMS union leader. But the CITU had nothing to do with that. Investigation revealed later that a management hireling was responsible for that, like the murder of Shri Jai Prakash of the HMS union some time back. But even then two more CITU activists were killed.

On July 1, Com. Sakthivel, a leader of CITU union in Ashok Leylands, Hosur, was done to death by a member of a rival union.

On September 24, the most dastardly attack was made on the family members of Com. Ananta Rout, a member of Orissa State Committee of CITU, at Kalta Iron Ore Mines by a gang of RSS workers who belong to a rival BMS union there, killing his five-year old son Sanjay and wounding his wife and

sister-in-law who survived after fighting against death for sometime.

This is a dangerous trend developing in the trade union movement of our country. We have no language to condemn such heinous planned killings of family members and relatives of trade unions activists. Workers have every right to choose the union they like. One may, out of his experience, change over to another union but this should not lead to murder. As far as killing of family members and relatives are concerned, this should be condemned by every one. I take this occasion to pay homage to the martyrs and offer our heartfelt condolences to the members of the bereaved families.

Solidarity Action

I have to report to you that the idea that the working class would have to express solidarity with the peasantry and workers in other states also is percolating to the working class but very slowly. There are, no doubt, some instances of local or districtwise bandhs in solidarity with some struggles or in protest against repression. But this is yet to take a general form. We have to pay much attention to this aspect, as solidarity action helps growth of class consciousness and class outlook without which we cannot defeat the divisive forces or unify the working class on class basis. There is however some improvement in regard to financial assistance.

Review of the Struggle

Many of these struggles described above are conducted unitedly with other trade unions. The appeal for united struggle is now gripping the masses of workers. In some selected spheres even the INTUC is now prepared to join in the united struggle. This gives us an opportunity to expand our activities still further, provided we tune up our organisation and reorient our functioning. For this it is necessary for us to review the struggles that are being conducted by us either under our own banner or jointly with others.

Rise of Divisive Forces

We have, at the same time, be aware of the havoc which the divisive forces can create. The situation in Punjab have worsened. The proposed Second Conference of All India Road Transport Workers Federation had to be postponed at a very short notice.

A communal riot started in Hyderabad during this period from September 9 and continued for about a fortnight with Jamaat-e-Islami and RSS forces fanning both the sides.

We have to take note of the fact that Viswa Hindu Parishad which admits close RSS link openly, is fanning up Hindu obscurantism throughout the country by starting "Ektatmata Yagna" during November 1983. The CITU unions must take this

into account and intensify ideological campaign among working class.

Second National Convention of Trade Unions

It was in the background of the rising struggles, that the Second National Convention of Trade Unions was held at New Delhi on August 21, 1983. The already turbulent situation due to closure, lock-out and retrenchment was further compounded by the Government through reversal of the policy of take over and nationalisation by de-notification. The question of job security and employment for the unemployed had become a burning problem before the working class. So also the question of price-rise and virtual collapse of Public Distribution System.

Lock-Out, Closure, Retrenchment & Denotification

Given the full support to each of the programmes incorporated in the resolution, the convention may spearhead action on each of the issues. For example, the question of lock-out, closure and retrenchment on which a special convention will be held on 20th January 1984 at New Delhi, would be one issue demanding immediate action.

For the past two years or more, the working class and the trade union movement have been trying to draw the attention of the Government to the necessity of taking urgent steps for nationalisation of jute industry and the units already taken over. But the Government refuses to nationalise the same.

From the General Council meeting held at Cananore in September 1980, the trend of lock-outs being used as a weapon to break the militant struggle of the workers was noted and the working class was warned by the CITU. By 1982, the number of man-days lost on account of lock-outs surpassed those of strikes and the situation is most severe in West Bengal where the percentage of the former (i.e. lock-out) is 85 per cent and 15 per cent for the latter (i.e. strikes). In jute industry in West Bengal lock-outs were declared almost in a cyclic order while the overall production continued to increase. The demand of nationalisation arose from the point of view of protecting the workers against this ferocious attack of the jute barons.

It may be remembered that the process of take over of sick units started as a result of unanimous decision of the 25th Indian Labour Conference. The monopoly houses took advantage of the decision and diverted funds from some companies and moved out to new fields for super profits unloading the shell of a hitherto viable unit as a sick unit on the public exchequer. The corruption and mismanagement has wrought further havoc on the units taken over. The Government started moving Relief Undertaking Bills completely against the spirit of the decision of the 25th I.L.C. and passed on the burdens of the misused industries on the workers. The workers are being punished under law for the

benefit of the industrialists particularly the monopoly houses. The situation worsened when under the IMF conditionalities the Government first refused to nationalise the taken over units and then started the process of denotification.

We must understand that denotification means liquidation, because the IRCI which was entrusted with the management of these units, have mismanaged the things. In most of the cases they relied on and allowed the old owners to continue the management which gave them further opportunity to divert funds through corrupt methods.

It is worth mentioning that the Supreme Court had very recently held that the workers have a right to be heard before the unit is liquidated and this was not done. Nor the State Government was consulted although this is essentially a problem for the State Government which has not been given any opportunity to find out any alternative measure and avoid liquidation.

This is one more reason for which the CITU from the Kanpur Conference itself had demanded a review of Centre-State relations.

Working Women

Similarly we must take seriously the question of Working Women. Our consistent efforts to organise the working women and voicing their demands has now been rewarded in that the campaign committee has agreed to take up this issue.

With the decision of the Campaign Committee to hold a joint Convention of Working Women, an effort can be made now on a bigger scale for organising the working women and promoting them in the trade unions.

Industry Level Activities

There have been a lot of industry level activities in the meanwhile. During the 5th Conference itself several industrywise meetings had taken place. This process was carried forward at the time of the Second National Convention.

I take this opportunity to congratulate all the public sector employees especially the workers of the Coal industry who through their united struggle have forced the Government to back down from the rigid stand and have broken all the barriers which were sought to be imposed by the BPE. Our activities among the public sector employees have increased and alongwith it our influence among them.

I warmly greet the coal miners who have put up a determined struggle to secure betterment in their living conditions. They had to fight to ensure that adequate representation is given to all trade unions functioning among coal workers in the negotiating body. Even after an accord was reached at the industry level, the B.P.E. stood in the way of its

implementation but had to back out in face of united resistance. They have to be vigilant in regard to implementation of the agreement as some items agreed to in the earlier agreement are yet to be implemented.

From the report of the All India Coal Workers Federation (AICWF) it may be seen that the coal-miners are faced with severe attacks. Today 300 coal miners are working in unsafe conditions and there is increase in the incidence of accidents, deaths and injuries to coal miners. The attack on their lives is increasing because the management is now trying to increase production deliberately violating the safety rules. Besides, severe attacks are now being made on the trade union movement in the coal industry. I have already referred to the growing use of CISF, about which the report would give details and the resistance that is being developed. Now the coal miners are being worked for seven days a week thus taking away the common holiday for the workers making it almost impossible for them to gather together for their trade union activity. This has been done in violation of the Mines Act and a solemn assurance given before the Calcutta High Court. Vindictive penal transfers are being ordered and charge-sheets being issued indiscriminately in order to terrorise the workers.

I denounce the deployment of CISF who went to the extent of burning down the CITU Flag at Tirat. It appears that the ECL management has taken recourse to deploying the CISF as police is not available at their beck and call due to the policy of left front Government that the police should not interfere in trade union or democratic movement.

These attacks have already roused resentment among the workers. A strike notice was served after the Khottadih incident which was withdrawn only after the management had climbed down. The CITU Centre views these attacks seriously and has called upon all the unions in the coal industry to prepare for a struggle to resist this.

All unions must also prepare themselves for solidarity action, to the extent of striking work, in case the coal workers are forced to go to the extent of strike.

I greet the heroic Jute Workers of West Bengal who are now preparing for a continuous strike from 16th January 1984. They have been fighting back the jute barons unitedly all these years suffering privation as over seventy thousand of them being affected by closures for the past three years. It is when every other method has failed and the Congress(I) Government at the Centre has not favourably responded to the unanimous all-party appeal from West Bengal Legislative Assembly that they have been forced to take this decision. On behalf of all of you I pledge full support to their struggle. I call upon all CITU unions to send telegrams to the Union Government to nationalise the jute industry.

I hope all State Committees should take steps for solidarity action after the struggle starts.

I congratulate our comrades in the Steel Workers Federation of India, who have boldly taken up the cause of the contract labour engaged in the Steel Industry. They have helped organising them and leading their struggle. Many of our comrades at Jamshedpur have been victimised for their solidarity action with the struggle of the contractors workers and I hope this fine tradition will be carried forward in future.

I also congratulate the comrades of National Fertiliser Limited at Panipat who have also lent good support to the contractors' workers.

With the trend of increasing use of contract labour in almost all the industries, our comrades employed in the industry itself must champion their cause and thus bridge the gap which exists between organised and unorganised workers today.

I greet the Port & Dock Workers, especially the Seamen who are carrying forward their struggle despite Government's indifference.

CITU Organisation

Comrades, I would like to draw your pointed attention to the question of CITU Organisation. Comrades have shown exemplary courage and tenacity in championing the cause of the working class, many laying down their lives in the course of their struggles. Their sacrifice and martyrdom will go in vain if we do not look to the state of our organisation and ensure that the combat-readiness of our organisation improves alongwith its strength.

The first point I would like to draw your attention to is that planned work is necessary. We have to take steps to develop an all-India class outlook.

Strengthening of the Centre should be made a part of our planning. As we have given stress on industrywise functioning, for effective guidance to each industry the Central Office must have full facts which can be provided by the base unions and analytical study which has to be done by the Centre.

The second point I would like to point out is that membership has to be planned and reviewed. Despite tremendous growth of our influence and our capacity of mobilisation and struggle, during Kanpur Conference the paid up membership of 1981 was assessed at only 15 lakhs. Hence the only conclusion that can be arrived at is that many unions affiliated to CITU have either not submitted their annual returns or not shown in the return that the union is affiliated to CITU. The State Committees have to exercise check over this.

The result is that the CITU is denied a seat in the EPF Trustee Board at the Central level, whereas

(Contd. on page 31)

Resolutions

On Danger of War and Struggle for Peace

THIS Working Committee meeting of CITU, held at Jamshedpur from Nov. 30-Dec. 2, 1983, expresses serious concern over the heightened danger of nuclear war created by the Reagan Administration by sabotaging the Geneva talks on disarmament and deploying the Pershing-2 and Cruise missiles in Great Britain and West Germany. The action taken by the U.S. imperialists during the continuance of Geneva talks, rejecting every reasonable proposal made by the Soviet Union for maintaining parity in the number of missiles between the NATO and Warsaw Pact countries, lays bare their mad craze not only to maintain nuclear superiority over the Soviet Union but to vanquish the socialist system and for world domination. This dangerous unilateral step by USA left the Soviet Union with no option but to leave Geneva talks, compelling them to take appropriate defence measures for world peace and save humanity from a nuclear devastation.

In their pursuit for world domination, the U.S. imperialist have been escalating tensions in all parts of the world by their direct intervention against the national liberation movements, supporting the fascist and dictatorial regimes. To divert the world attention they deliberately created the South Korean espionage plane incident. The invasion on Grenada to overthrow the revolutionary Government was a barbarous provocation in the Caribbean as a precursor to directly attack Nicaragua and encircle Cuba. In Lebanon they are openly acting as an occupying power to help the Israeli aggressors. They have further armed up the military ruler of Pakistan with the sophisticated Harpoon missiles. And now defying the voice of the people of Europe, particularly of West Germany and Britain as demonstrated by the massive protest demonstrations and the stiff opposition in the Parliaments, the Reagan administration in collaboration with its NATO allies has deployed the new missiles making a mockery of the Geneva talks.

The Working Committee demands of the Government of India to shun its two super power theory and forthwith condemn the US-NATO action of deploying the new missiles and demand of them to stop the deployment so that the Geneva talks can be resumed to save the world from a nuclear holocaust.

Under such a perilous situation the Working Committee calls upon all the State Committees and the affiliated unions to observe the period from December 20 to December 28, 1983 for developing a powerful struggle for peace in close co-operation with other democratic and trade union organisations and mobilise public opinion so that the entire peace loving forces throughout the world are able

to force Reagan and his allies to desist from this mad course and create conditions in which talks can once again be resumed.

On Sri Lanka

This Working Committee meeting of CITU held at Jamshedpur from November 30-December 2, 1983 condemns the brutal violence on the Tamil minorities in Sri Lanka in July last. The massacre of the ethnic minorities cannot but be the concern of not only the Indian working class, but the entire Indian people also.

Following the capitalist path of development and pressurised by the IMF conditionalities, the economy of Sri Lanka was in doldrums with rising unemployment, making it a breeding ground for imperialist conspiracies to pit the majority Sinhalese against the minority Tamils. The blow at the minorities turned out to be a further blow at the Sri Lankan economy itself. Hundreds of factories were destroyed leaving more than one Lakh workers including Sinhalese workers jobless.

The meeting condemns the Government of Sri Lanka for its vilification campaign against India, while collaborating with the imperialist powers and thereby sabotaging the spirit of the Non-Aligned Movement and its decisions of the Delhi meeting which was attended by Jayewardene himself. His pro-imperialist manoeuvres were confirmed when he banned the three left parties including the Communist Party of Sri Lanka and got scores of left and trade union leaders arrested and tortured. Although the ban on the CPSL has now been lifted, it is still being imposed on the other two. The actions of the Sri Lanka Government have facilitated the efforts of the US imperialists to make a naval base at Trincomalee and thereby endangering the Indian Sub-Continent also.

The meeting urges upon the Government of Sri Lanka to take effective and appropriate measures to rehabilitate the affected people and to compensate their losses.

While condemning any chauvinistic and separatist attitude, the meeting is of the opinion that granting regional autonomy to the Tamil minorities is the only reasonable solution to the ethnic problem of Sri Lanka, which is to be meted out in cooperation with the Government of India. The meeting also urges upon the working class and the toiling people of Sri Lanka, both of Sinhalese and Tamil origin, to unite as a class and fight the divisive policies of the ruling classes of Sri Lanka as the only panacea for unemployment and poverty. It urges upon the Indian working class to assist and support all demo-

cratic measures for normalisation of the situation and solution to the problems.

On Movement for Restoration of Democracy in Pakistan

This Working Committee meeting of CITU held at Jamshedpur from November 30-December 2, 1983, hails the working class and the people of Pakistan for their glorious struggle against the military dictator for restoration of democracy and the 1973 constitution.

The people of Pakistan had been passing through the travail of successive military rules since its independence. With the increasing machinations of US imperialism, the Zia-ul-Haque regime turned out to be the most oppressive one, which subverted the constitution and blatantly trampled underfoot all democratic rights of the people. It banned all political and trade union activities and unleashed a barbarous repression on the people, throwing scores of them in jails, committing murders and even publicly flogging the women in the name of Islamic laws.

The meeting denounces the ruthless repression unleashed by the military dictator and his nefarious means to disrupt the movement. It expresses solidarity for the unrelenting struggle which has embraced all sections of the people, the working class, middle class employees, women, lawyers, students, etc and has spread to different parts of the country. The meeting further hails the people of Pakistan for condemning the military dictator's move to make Pakistan a base for the US imperialists and for demanding a reversal of the policy.

On Bangladesh

This Working Committee meeting of CITU held at Jamshedpur from November 30-December 2, 1983, hails the working class and the people of Bangladesh who are fighting for an end to the military rule and restoration of democracy in the country.

The people of Bangladesh, had fought for self-determination and democracy, overthrew the military rulers of Pakistan and established their own sovereign State. But the military in Bangladesh through a conspiracy secured power and snatched away the fruits of their struggle, ruthlessly suppressing the people. The present military dictator, Ershad with a view to remain in power has banned all political activities and unleashed once again a ruthless repression on the people killing several and injuring a large number of them. Even all Government offices and educational institutions have been closed.

Undeterred by the rigours of repression by the military dictatorship, several parties have come together and under their leadership all sections of the people, the workers, students, youth and women

have again risen up and started the struggle for restoration of democracy.

This meeting extends its full solidarity to the people of Bangladesh and is confident that they will in the long run overthrow the military regime and usher in a democratic Government in their country.

On Price Rise

This Working Committee meeting of CITU held at Jamshedpur from November 30-December 2, 1983 express serious concern at the uncontrollable rate at which prices are rising. The alarming position can be gauged from the fact that the Consumer Price Index has reached 554 points (Base 1960=100) in September, 1983, recording a rise of 59 points in nine months only, much more than the annual rises since 1975. The previous highest rise was 49 points in 1981. Thus within three years and 9 months of Indira Gandhi's regime since 1980, the prices have gone up by 50 per cent. The food prices have risen even sharper by 50.5 per cent from January to July, 1983. This has thoroughly exposed the hollow boasting of the Finance Minister who claimed the budget as of a non-inflationary character. The galloping price rise has made the D.A. instalments of the Central Government employees falling due in each month since last August as against every two months previously. According to his own assessment, the annual rate of inflation as measured on the Wholesale Price Index has reached 9.4 per cent on September 10, 1983. But in fact, as measured on the Consumer Price Index which is actually relevant to the common people, the inflation was 13.9 per cent on the date. The vast mass of the peasantry and agricultural workers are penalised and fleeced. The mass of non-wage earners is similarly hard hit by the spiralling prices. The virtual collapse of the public distribution system has further aggravated the situation.

Under such circumstances of unremitting price rise, the Working Committee is of the opinion that unless militant and joint struggles are waged along with the peasantry, agricultural workers and all sections of the working people against the fiscal policies of the Government, the workers will not be able to maintain even the minimum standard of living. The meeting expresses satisfaction that the Second National Convention has also focused on this point. The Working Committee also supports the decision of the eight opposition parties to organise joint movements on the issue. The meeting, therefore, calls upon all the State Committees and the affiliated unions to draw up action programmes in conjunction with the other trade unions demanding control on the prices, and restoration and strengthening of the public distribution system and take over of the whole sale trade in food grains.

On Growing Lockouts

This Working Committee meeting of CITU held at Jamshedpur from November 30-December 2,

1983, expresses serious concern over the growing incidence of lockouts which have been launched unscrupulously by the employers to force the workers into submission. 1982, which was declared as the productivity year by the Prime Minister, has started to be the lockout year for the workers. From the Government's own published documents, mandays lost due to lockouts have surpassed those due to strikes from 1982. It was 53 per cent despite all India General Strike on January 19. From January to May, 1983, the mandays lost due to lockouts have already reached 52 per cent. The worst offensive has been launched by the employers in West Bengal where the mandays lost due to lockouts have reached an alarming figure of 85 per cent from January, 1982 to May, 1983. In jute industry alone about 15 to 20 mills have been kept under cyclic lockout affecting about 70,000 workers. Since the last two years the workers have been fighting prolonged battles against this new offensive launched by the employers to force the workers to surrender before their pursuit for cost reduction and more profits by way of mechanisation, computerisation and automation. While the Government is refusing to intervene in the lockouts, it has been legislating draconian laws against strikes and placing its machineries to the rescue of the employers to unleash ruthless repression on the workers helped by their hirelings. The lockouts resorted to by the employers are anti-social acts against which the entire working class has to rise in action with new forms of struggles and mobilise public opinion to pressurise the Government to take steps in support of the workers. The meeting calls upon the State Committees and the affiliated unions to gear up the organisational machineries accordingly to launch the struggle.

On Closures, Industrial Sickness & Denotification

This Working Committee meeting of CITU, held at Jamshedpur from November 30 to December 2, 1983, expresses deep concern at the increasing number of closures and industrial sickness. According to the agenda papers circulated by the Government in the Labour Ministers' Conference in September last, the total number of closures due to industrial disputes in 1981 were 311, while that due to other reasons was 350. In 1982, the number of closures due to other reasons went upto 442, while that due to industrial disputes went down to 188. Although the Government does not supply the full picture of the closures and the total number of workers affected thereby, the above figures sufficiently lay bare the nature of the increasing offensive launched by the employers. Coupled with this is the problem of growing industrial sickness. Available data reveals that the total number of sick units increased by nearly 27 per cent between December, 1979 and June 1982. Sickness of the large units (378 to 422) and small units (20,975 to 25,342) increased. According to the report of Reserve Bank of India for the quarter ending December, 1979, 52 per cent of the causes of industrial sickness were due to mismanagement, diversion of funds, etc. The other reasons were recession, power cuts, shortage of raw materials, etc.

The so-called labour trouble accounts for only 2 per cent. The data clearly envisages the crisis resulting from capitalist path of development. The liberalised import policy under the IMF loan conditionalities have further caused the industries getting sick and closed. Under such circumstances, defeating the very purpose of the formation of IRCI and trying to make the units viable with a view to nationalisation, the Government has adopted the dangerous policy of denotifications, which actually means liquidation of the companies throwing thousands again into unemployment. The class bias of the Government comes to the fore as it refuses to take action against a number of MRTP houses which have fallen sick because of diversion of funds to newer pastures for quick profits. The Government refuses to nationalise even those units where the public financial institutions hold majority equity shares. The refusal of the Government to nationalise the industries is evidently due to the pressure of IMF which dictates it to strengthen the private sector. To befool the workers the Government has now floated the idea of workers' cooperatives to run the closed and sick industries, knowing fully well that they cannot be run like that as the question involves the supply of raw materials, market, etc, apart from finance.

This meeting fully supports the decision of the eight opposition parties to initiate joint movements on the issue including lockouts and calls upon the State Committees and the affiliated unions to make the special convention called by the N.C.C. on the issue successful. Closure of the industries and the refusal by the Government to nationalise them are anti-national acts. The entire working class must rise in action and mobilise public opinion demanding industrialisation of the closed and sick industries.

On Struggle Against Divisive Forces

This Working Committee meeting of CITU, held at Jamshedpur from November 30-December 2, 1983, expresses deep concern over the growing activities of the divisive forces which seek to disrupt the unity of the country and the working class. The Hyderabad communal riot was yet another incident threatening working class unity. The communal organisations like the R.S.S., Jamaite-Islami, etc. are fomenting the religious, communal and caste divisions to divert the working people from the common struggle for economic and democratic advance to fratricidal activities and thereby making the country a breeding ground for the imperialist conspiracies to further tear apart the unity and integrity of the country. Punjab and Assam are sharp pointers of intense activities of the divisive and secessionist forces in the country encouraged from abroad. The ruling Congress(I) party is not only unable to protect the unity of the country, but opportunistically allies with the secessionist and communal elements for its narrow political gains. It relies only on administrative measures and takes no steps to counter the feeling of alienation and bitterness and educate the people.

Taking advantage of the stand of the Congress(I) an attempt is being made through out the country to fan up Hindu fanaticism by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad through the so-called "Ekatmata Yagna" which is viewed with concern.

While denouncing the communal killings in Punjab and Hyderabad, the meeting condemns the Congress(I) Government at Centre for its refusal to intervene and take firm steps against the divisive forces.

The meeting congratulates the State Committees, especially of Punjab, Assam and Andhra Pradesh and all left and democratic forces who braving the dastardly attacks are defending the unity of the country and its national integration. It extends unqualified support to the decision of the eight opposition parties to organise joint movements against the divisive forces and calls upon the State Committees and the affiliated unions to further gear up the organisational machineries and mobilise all sections of workers and other trade unions to wage a determined united fight against these forces.

On Struggles of the Peasants & Agricultural Workers

This Working Committee meeting of CITU held at Jamshedpur from November 30—December 2, 1983, warmly greets the thirty lakh agricultural workers in the country for their successful strike on July 15 demanding a comprehensive Central Legislation for their protection against the ruthless exploitation by the landlords and other rural vested interests. The meeting congratulates the All India Agricultural Workers' Union and the Bharatiya Khet Mazdoor Union for jointly organising the strike. The meeting also congratulates the West Bengal Kishan Sabha and Agricultural Labour organisations for jointly organising massive strike on July, 25. The meeting congratulates the CITU State Committees for extending solidarity to the striking workers. The meeting notes with satisfaction the massive kishan rallies which were recently organised in Bihar, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Tamilnadu and other States.

The meeting protests against the Government of India for going back on its commitment on a Central Legislation made in the Parliament in 1980 under the plea that there was no unanimity among the State Governments. This was evidently done under pressure from the landlords and other rural vested interests. The action of the Government has resulted in intensification of offensives by the landlords on the agricultural labourers to suppress their struggles.

The meeting therefore calls upon the State Committees and the affiliated unions to take further initiative to forge working alliance with the kishan and agricultural workers' organisations and carry forward the struggles championing their cause as well.

On Tripartite D.A. Committee for Public Sector Undertakings

This Working Committee meeting of CITU held at Jamshedpur from November 30-December 2, 1983 notes with serious concern the recalcitrant attitude of the Government of India causing an inordinate delay in settling the question of upward revision of D.A. for the public sector employees.

The Government first delayed the constitution of the Tripartite Committee itself and then tried to sabotage the agreement as arrived at with the central trade unions of January 18, 1983 by bringing in extraneous matters in the terms of reference. Since then it has been quibbling over the quantum of increase to deprive the workers of their legitimate demands.

The meeting cautions the Government that the Finance Minister had conceded to the Central Trade Unions that the existing D.A. formula of Rs. 1.30 per point did not neutralise the cost of living even at the lowest level of pay and it was only because the Government had agreed to form the Tripartite D.A. Committee to recommend an upward revision accordingly, that the strike of the public sector employees was deferred. While the trade unions, demonstrating their gesture of cooperation, have come down from their original demand of Rs. 2.50 per point to Rs. 2.00 per point, the Government of India is not prepared to grant more than Rs. 1.50 per point which does not fully neutralise the rise in prices. On the question of the date of effect of the recommendations also, the stand of the Government has created stalemate in the negotiations. While the trade unions have rightly demanded 1st January, 1983 as the date of implementation, the Government is not prepared to go beyond 1st June, 1983.

From the adamant attitude of the Government it is evident that the issues cannot be clinched without further struggle. The meeting expresses satisfaction that the INTUC also has taken a common stand alongwith the other Central Trade Unions. This Working Committee, therefore calls upon all the State Committees to campaign and mobilise the public sector unions in cooperation of other Central Trade Unions to prepare for joint, struggles to pressurise the Government to accede to the demands of the workers for full neutralisation of the rise in prices.

On Nationalisation of the Jute Industry

This Working Committee meeting of CITU held at Jamshedpur from November 30-December 2, 1983 condemns the Government of India for its refusal to nationalise the Jute Industry despite the unanimous demands by all parties and trade unions.

Violating the tripartite agreement in 1979, following the 50-day strike by the jute workers the five

monopoly jute houses have been looting profits by rapacious exploitation of the 2.5 lakh jute workers and millions of the jute growers reducing them to virtual bondage and penury. They refused to implement the recommendations of the Committee on Grades and Scales and workload and the decision of the Labour Minister of West Bengal, violating the terms of agreement and even though the court verdict went against them. Since the last three years they have kept about 15-20 mills under cyclic lock-out affecting about 70 thousands workers. Despite repeated representations, the Government of India did not take any steps to prevail upon the jute barons to honour the agreement. On the contrary it tacitly allowed them to diversify crores of rupees, granted for purchase of raw jute, to other channels. The same exploitation is being perpetrated at Kanpur also where the management of J.K. Jute Mills have unleashed a severe repression on the workers with the help of the Government machineries.

The demand for nationalisation is now supported by all parties and sections of the people in West Bengal. The State Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution supporting the decision. A all party delegation including the Congress (I) met the Prime Minister on June 29 and pressed for the acceptance of this demand.

The meeting condemns the Government of India for rejecting this urgent demands of the workers in order to protect the interests of the jute barons. The Working Committee congratulates the jute workers and the unions for their unanimous decision to go in for indefinite strike action from January 16 next. It calls upon all the State Committees and the affiliated unions and appeals to all other trade unions to demonstrate full solidarity to the struggle demanding nationalisation of the entire jute industry including raw jute trade and export of raw jute.

On Nationalisation of the Textile Industry

This Working Committee meeting of CITU held at Jamshedpur from November 30-December 2, 1983 welcomes the decision of the Government of India to take over 13 closed textile mills of Bombay with a view to their nationalisation. The step would benefit 36,000 workers who were out of employment due to the adamant refusal of the mill owners to open them. The meeting, however, considers that take over of only 13 mills of Bombay is too inadequate a step to give succour to the thousands of workers who are affected due to closures of a large number of mills in different states. While in Bombay itself over 40 mills are still in a runious state because of the stubborn refusal of the owners and the Government of India to look to the workers' demands, the same attitude has been taken by the mill owners in several other States like Haryana, Tamilnadu, Pondicherry, Orissa, West Bengal, M.P., Rajasthan, etc. A number of mills which have been taken over by the Government and managed by the National Textile Mills have not yet been nationalised. Rampant corruption in the management of

NTC itself is being reported from all the mills. Apart from the unbearable condition of the workers, cotton growers are being ruined due to reduced prices of raw cotton. Through various racketeering and increased prices of cloth the mill owners are continuing to mint money. The meeting expresses grave concern at the proposal of the Government of India to close down 26 NTC units 12 of which are in West Bengal. It is reported that modalities are being worked out for effecting closure of these units.

The CITU, therefore, warns the Government of India that the proposal if implemented would create serious situation in the textile industry and demands that the proposal should be withdrawn forthwith so that the threat to the job security of several thousands of workers could be averted.

The meeting demands nationalisation of the entire textile industry and urges upon the working class to raise their voice in pursuance of the demand.

On Working Women

This Working Committee meeting of CITU held at Jamshedpur from November 30-December 2, 1983, condemns the Government for its recalcitrant attitude towards the deteriorating conditions of women in the country. In the sphere of womens' employment the situation has further worsened. While at the end of December 1980, there was 23.45 lakhs women registered in the Employment Exchanges, which recorded an increase of over 4 lakhs over the previous year, the figure went upto 31.38 lakhs at the end of December 1982. The number of women job seekers in increasing by 4 lakhs every year since 1979. As per datas supplied by the Labour Bureau the position of womens' employment in various factories, mines and plantations have either remained static or reduced since 1977. Women's employment constitutes only to 10 per cent of the total employment in factories and mines. Discrimination in wages continues even after the enactment of the Equal Remuneration Act in all establishments and industries.

The Working Committee condemns the attitude of the Government for its failure to take any welfare measures for women, improve their employment position or to give them protection against crimes. The meeting congratulates the working women and the various women's organisations for waging struggles against the discriminations and oppressions perpetrated against them and drawing up a programme of March to Parliament with their demands. It expresses satisfaction that as per the decision of the Second National Convention, the National Campaign Committee is making preparations for a special convention of women with their demands and calls upon the State Committees and the affiliated unions to mobilise maximum number of women cadres to attend the Convention. The meeting further draws the attention of the State Committees and the affiliated unions to mobilise maximum

number of women cadres to attend the Convention. The meeting further draws the attention of the State Committees and the affiliated unions to decision of the 5th Conference of CITU for the formation of Coordination Committees of Working Women under their guidance and mobilise them in the mainstream of the trade union struggles in the country. The meeting congratulates the State Committee of Orissa, Bihar, Tamilnadu, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh for making some headway and calls upon the other State Committees to initiate the process.

On the Struggle of Central Government Employees

This meeting of the Working Committee of CITU held at Jamshedpur from November 30-December 2, 1983 warmly congratulates the Central Government employees for having forced the Government of India to accept payment of Bonus to all as a matter of principle and declare bonus to the extent of 15 days wages. The Government of India had tried its best to drive a wedge between the Central Government employees and those who are employed in departmentally run undertaking. It is only through a determined unity which had drawn in still wider sections of the Government employees also that the employees could secure this demand.

The Central Government employees have a hard task ahead. Their demand for parity in wages with the employees of the Public Sector Undertakings is yet to be conceded.

During Third pay Commission the employees, pending securing of need-based minimum wage, demanded parity in wages with the employees of the Public Sector. The Government refused to concede the demand. On the other hand it tried to impose wage freeze on the Public Sector employees who made it impossible through determined united struggle. The paltry interim relief which the Government has granted while setting up the Fourth Pay Commission is indicative of its intention. It has been forced to concede two successive wage rises to the Public Sector employees in 1979 and 1983. The demand for Rs. 150 as interim relief was a just one. The compromise on this question has to some extent weakened the struggle for wage parity itself, specially in view of the Supreme Court Judgement which has accepted the principle of equal pay for equal work.

This meeting notes with satisfaction that the movement of the Central Government employees has now become aware of the necessity to unitedly demand wages comparable to what is prevalent in the public sector. It hopes that taking into account the experience of wage negotiations in the public sector, the united and determined struggle of the coal miners and the general support that has been mobilised through the National Campaign Committee of Trade Unions, the leaders of the Central Government Employees movement would make sincere efforts to unify the ranks drawing in all the unions, recognised and unrecognised, and make determined bid to secure the just demand of parity in wages with Public Sector employees.

The CITU pledges full support to the just struggle of the Central Government employees.

On the Struggle of Railway Employees

This meeting of the Working Committee of CITU held at Jamshedpur from November 30-December 2, 1983 notes with great concern the development in the Indian Railways and the trade union movement of railway workers. The fiasco of capitalist planning in India, has resulted in serious deficiencies in Railway System which still happens to be one of the main infrastructure for the developmental planning of the country. For some years it was not able to lift the goods offered to it and now it is not able to make transport arrangements for the passenger traffic. Over and above it is not able to maintain the health of the railway system which has resulted in an alarming growth in the accident which takes a toll of over 300 lives every year. The Government of India is resorting to indiscriminate computerisation in the Indian Railways which is going to reduce the number of Railway workers to 9 lakhs within a very short time. Already retrenchment is on in that with the storing of a steam engines, coal and ash handling workers are being retrenched en-mass. The work connected with railway track is being given to contract labour. All struggles against increased workload are being ruthlessly suppressed throwing over board the agreement with the Loco Running Staff Association for 10 hours maximum duty at a stretch.

Besides, the demands for which the Railway workers had heroically struggled in 1974 have not been fulfilled yet. The attacks on the job security and trade union rights of the Railway workers have created a very serious situation which demands immediate unification of the entire railway trade union movement. It is unfortunate that the attempts for establishing broad-based unity which were started in February last had suffered a set back. The resentment of the railway workers has found expression in the demonstration in the Boat Club on August 19 and formation of the National Campaign Committee of Railwaymen through a Convention on 28th August. The developments during the past 2 years would show that the broadest possible unity and determined struggle of the workers in the public sector has helped them to improve their wages and repulse the attacks on the trade unions. So long as the railway trade union movement remain disunited, the railway workers would not be able to secure justice in respect of parity in wages with Public Sector employees.

This meeting warns the railway workers that further attempts will be made by the Government to drive a wedge into the ranks of the railway workers and also to pit them against the public. They must note that during the past three years when there was no wage increase of the workers, the railway fares and freight charges have been doubled creating dissatisfaction among the public at large. LRSA and other categorise associations had taken up the cause

of the public. Only if the unity is broadened and all unions fight unitedly, they can face the situation. This meeting appeals to the railway workers to come together for a mighty united struggle to secure their just demands and pledges full support to their just struggle.

On the Struggle of Coal Mine Workers

This Working Committee meeting of CITU held at Jamshedpur from November 30-December 2, 1983, warmly congratulates the seven lakh mine workers for the magnificent victory they have won in defeating the Union Government's wage freeze policy and forcing it to accept the bipartite coal wage agreement in toto.

This success was possible because the CITU, INTUC, AITUC, HMS and BMS gave a joint call for one day strike on 12th November and threat of indefinite strike was also given if the Government refused to relent. The Third National Coal Wage Agreement signed on 11th November 1983 was a stunning blow to the gross interference of the Government of India and the BPE during the wage negotiations. The coal agreement achieved 23 per cent wage rise, highest in the Public Sector in the present phase of wage negotiations.

The two massive strikes of coal workers all over the country, on 8th November 1982, and on 17-19 January 1983 have played an important role in pressurising the coal managements to give more concessions to the workers. The successful observation of All India Coal Miners Protest Day on 5th October 1983 has shown to the Government of India the firm determination of the coal miners to continue their struggle for better living conditions. It is through these struggles that a remarkable unity has been achieved in the industry which must be preserved and strengthened further.

When the coal mine workers have snatched these concessions from the unwilling hands of the managements, attempts are being made to launch a new offensive against the coal mine workers. The drive against the workers has become more ferocious after Shri M.S. Gujral former Chairman of the Railway Board, has taken over as Chairman-cum-Managing Director of Coal India Limited.

Deduction of 8 days wages for one days stoppage of work, forcing workers to work for seven days in a week without giving common weekly off, penal transfer of leading union activists to far away places, issuing of charge sheets and suspension orders on a large scale on flimsy ground are some of the measures taken by the CIL management recently.

The use of notorious CISF during industrial disputes has been a matter of regular occurrence in coal mines. Combination of anti-social elements and the CISF has clandestinely encouraged revival of illegal mining in several coal bearing areas. In Raniganj coal belt the CISF personnel burned the CITU flag

but the management has not taken any action against the CISF.

The instruction issued by the CIL Chairman to increase coal production figures by 2.5% has led to increase in malpractices in coal mines. The Officers' Association has also complained against these practices but the Government of India failed to take any action against them.

The question of non-implimentation of NCWA-III has to be taken seriously by the coal workers. Without a sustained movement the coal companies will not seriously implement the provisions relating to drinking water facilities, education, medical benefits, construction of housing and civic amenities.

The threat of mechanisation is looming large in the coal belts and danger of large scale retrenchment is in the offing. The women employees continue to be the main target of attack but despite assurances the Government has done nothing so far.

The safety provisions continue to be neglected in coal mines. The decisions of the Mines Safety Conferences still remain unimplemented, with the result that the accidents continue to rise. Recent Hurralah accident has shown that no precautionary steps were taken after experience of Chasnala Colliery disaster.

The meeting, therefore, demands;

Immediate withdrawal of the CISF from all coal mines;

Full implementation of the Second & Third National Coal Wage Agreements;

Stop deduction of 8 days, wages for one day's strike and return all the amount deducted so far to the workers;

Stop seven days' work in coal mines wherever it is introduced and ensure common weekly holiday to all the coal workers;

Stop mechanisation in coal mines and ensure job security to coal workers including women workers;

Ensure all safety measures and implement the decisions of the conferences on safety.

This meeting appeals to all the Central Trade Unions and national federations working in coal industry to come together and initiate a country-wide movement so that the above demands are achieved.

It calls upon the affiliated unions to strengthen the union organisations and take initiative in building such united movements at local levels which alone will create a favourable atmosphere for a country-wide united movement.

On the Bank Agreement

This Working Committee meeting of CITU held at Jamshedpur from November 30-December 2, 1983 congratulates the Bank Employees' Federation of India for organising the glorious strike on September 6 in which over one lakh employees participated throughout the country demanding negotiated settlement of the charter of demands and against mechanisation and computerisation.

The meeting protests against the Government and the Indian Bank Association for bypassing the Bank Employees Federation of India when negotiating with the employees. It regrets that the All India Bank Employees' Association and the National Confederation of Bank Employees lost an opportunity for forging all in unity by refusing to respond to the call of the BEFI for a joint struggle against the use of computers in the banks. The agreement also imposes virtual termination of jobs in the name of voluntary abandonment of service. The agreement has done an irreparable damage to the bank employees as it is the experience in all industries including in banks that computerisation and automation in a capitalist structure kill the job of the workers. The meeting also condemns the false and politically motivated statement of the Finance Minister just prior to the strike that the Government never declined to negotiate the character demands and that BEFI had not submitted any demands at all. This was preposterous as the Deputy Minister of Finance had already acknowledged in the Lok Sabha the receipt of the demands.

While supporting the right stand taken by the BEFI in rejecting the agreement, the Working Committee urges upon all banks employees and their organisations to unite and launch joint struggles to scrap the black agreement.

On the Assam Industrial Relief Undertaking (Special Provisions) Bill, 1983

This Working Committee meeting of CITU held at Jamshedpur from November 30-December 2, 1983 denounces the Government of Assam for introducing the Assam Industrial Relief Undertaking (Special Provisions) Bill, which seeks to set at nought all trade union rights and privileges of the working class. In the name of ensuring employment, re-opening of closed units and running the sick units, the Bill seeks to suspend all labour welfare laws like the Industrial Disputes Act, Standing Orders Act, Payment of Wages Act, Minimum Wages Act, Bonus Act, Gratuity Act, Shops and Establishment Act, etc., alongwith all agreements and awards of courts and tribunals for a period of five years. Apart from above, the Bill bestows the rights to the managements to determine the number of workers and employees one would require according to its viability. This means that there would be no job security to the workers earlier engaged in the undertakings.

The Working Committee takes a serious note of

this new offensive by the Government of Assam, which instead of taking any positive step to normalise the situation in Assam and adopt positive measures for development of the industries, probe into the real causes of closures and sickness and stop diversification of funds by the corrupt managements, is going to institutionalise corruption by giving further reliefs under the provisions of the Bill. By taking advantage of the situation, the Government seeks to denude the working class of their hard won rights and privileges to the benefit of the monopolists and well as the secessionists in the State.

While congratulating the Assam State Committee for doggedly opposing the Bill, the Working Committee calls upon all State Committees and the affiliated unions to raise their voice against the retrograde and anti-working class move of the Government of Assam and demand withdrawal of Bill.

On the Trade Union (West Bengal) Amendment Bill, 1983

This Working Committee of CITU held at Jamshedpur from November 30-December 2, 1983, congratulates the Left Front Government of West Bengal for legislating the Trade Unions (West Bengal) Amendment Bill which provides for recognition of unions by secret ballot. The CITU has been demanding acceptance of the principle for long. The West Bengal Bill shows the contrast of attitude of the Left Front Government with that of the Congress(I) Governments towards the workers and upholds the democratic rights of the workers to choose the unions of their own choice. Apart from this, the Bill also provides for suitable punishment to the employers if they refuse to grant recognition as per the provisions of the Bill. It will stop favouritism, give sanctions to agreements and protect industrial peace. There are other provisions also dealing with definitions to do away with the present loopholes.

In view of the fact that a similar Bill passed by the West Bengal Assembly in 1969 was refused Presidential assent and returned after 13 years, the Working Committee calls upon all State Committees and the affiliated unions and appeals to all other trade unions to launch a campaign in support of the Bill and pressurise the Government of India to give assent to the Bill. United movements should further be launched for introduction of such Bills in all other State Assemblies and so that the Government of India is compelled to move for secret ballots for recognition of unions.

On Gangster Attacks on CITU Activists

This Working Committee meeting of CITU held at Jamshedpur from November 30-December 2, 1983 condemns the gangster attacks on the CITU activists in various parts of the country by the management hirelings and other disruptionist elements in

other trade unions. The most dastardly attack was launched at Modinagar by the HMS activists on July 9 killing five CITU activists. Two more activists were murdered later on. Perturbed by the growing influence of CITU and desertion of a large number of workers from the HMS union to CITU, the gangster elements of HMS found this as the only way to vent their frustration. The meeting protests against detention of five CITU activists under NSA. It also protests against failure of the Government to take effective steps against the gangsters. Another dastardly attack was launched by the RSS gangsters in Orissa where having failed to find out the CITU State Committee member Com. Ananta Rout, they brutally killed his 5 year old son. In Ashoke Leyland's Hosur Unit in Tamilnadu another CITU activist was killed by gangsters hired by the so-called independent leaders in collaboration with the management. Similar gangster attacks are being launched by BMS, RSS, INTUC and other elements on the CITU activists in Kerala, West Bengal, Tripura, Rajasthan, Haryana, Assam and other places.

The meeting congratulates the workers for their determined fight against these gangster attacks to uphold the banner of CITU and reiterates its stand to carry forward the struggle against the employers' disruptive designs and uphold the interest of the workers defying all impediments. While demanding of the Government to check the activities of the criminals and release all CITU activists the meeting appeals to all trade unions to maintain unity of the trade union movement in the interest of the working class against the anti-worker policies of the management and the Government.

On Hindusthan Pilkington Glass Factory

This Working Committee meeting of CITU held at Jamshedpur from November 30 to December 2, 1983, expresses serious concern at the prevailing situation in the Hindusthan Pilkington Glass Factory, Asansol. Due to the efforts of the Government of West Bengal the factory was re-opened after a long time with a new management taking over the responsibility to run the factory. But the present management also has stopped production and payment of wages, bonus, etc. to the workers from October last as a result of which 1500 workers with their family members are in distress.

This meeting condemns this act of the management of sabotaging the efforts of the Government of West Bengal to redress the difficulties of the workers and demands immediate payment of all the outstanding wages and bonus of the workers and to start productions. The meeting also demands of the Government of India to take over the factory without delay.

On Kalidaspur & Kankar Tala Coal Project

This Working Committee meeting of CITU held at Jamshedpur from November 30 to December 2,

1983, condemns the management of Coal India Ltd. for abandoning the Kalidaspur and Kankar Tala Coal projects. This step of the CIL has not only rendered hundreds of workers unemployed, but has also caused great harm to the coal industry and the interests of the common people. The meeting demands of the Government of India and CIL to start the above projects immediately with the full contingent of the workers.

On the Struggle of the Metal Box Workers

This meeting of the Working Committee of CITU held at Jamshedpur from November 30-December 2, 1983 congratulates the workers of Metal Box in West Bengal who are struggling for over 4 months against closure of its Paper and Plastic Unit and retrenchment notice served on 388 workers. This meeting strongly condemns the adamant attitude of the management for which the ardent attempt of the Left Front Government of the State for a reasonable settlement failed so far. This Working Committee demands that notice of closure of the Unit and retrenchment of the workers be withdrawn forthwith and a settlement is arrived at. This meeting also appreciates the fraternal action and assistance rendered by the working class of the state in general and Metal Box workers in other states in particular. This meeting extends its full support to the fighting workers and calls upon the working class and people of the country to render all help including financial assistance to the striking workers so that they could succeed in their resistance against the offensive of the multi-national company.

On Supply of Coal to Small Scale Industries & for Domestic Use

This Working Committee meeting held at Jamshedpur from November 30-December 12, 1983 notes with grave concern a recent change in the policy of ECL of not supplying adequate coal to the Small Scale Industries like Refractories, Engineering and Ceramic factories, Brick-kilns etc. and also to the common man for domestic purposes. This anti-people policy has resulted in a sharp rise of price of domestic coal to the range of Rs. 50/- per maund taking the same almost out the bounds of the common man. Less supply of coal of the small scale sector has resulted in lay-off and closure throwing thousands of workmen to the ranks of the employed.

This meeting demands that this anti-people policy in respect of supply of coal should be reversed and coal be supplied to the common man for domestic purposes in easy terms through public distribution system and adequately to the small scale sector, to save both the entrepreneurs and workmen.

On Closure of Bengal Paper Mill, Raniganj

This Working Committee meeting held at Jamshedpur from 30.11.1983 to 2.12.1983 notes with concern the high handedness of the management of B. P. Mills for declaring closure abruptly from

1.11.1983 thus throwing about 3,000 workmen out of employment.

This is one of the big paper mills of West Bengal owned by the Bangur and Dhanuka families.

After expiry of the date of last wage settlement on 31.12.1980 the Bengal Paper Mill Mazdoor Union placed new charter of demands on 1.1.1981. The management did not pay any heed to it and since then raised hue and cry of shortage of fund, less production, non-availability of raw materials etc.

The union tried their best for amicable settlement but failed. At last they called for protest strike for one day and later 2 days which was a great success. The management did not pay wages and bonus

(Contd. from page 16)

separatist thrusts and preserve the class unity and unity of the country.

Concluding his speech, BTR said that our objective is to protect the democratic and trade union rights of the workers. We have to function democratically. Democratic functioning has to permeate through all levels of the organisation down to the grass root. Instead of petty-bourgeois bureaucracy we must practise proletarian democracy to launch the struggles successfully.

Mass Rally

After the meeting a mass rally was held at Bari Maidan on December 2, afternoon. About 25,000 workers from the industrial belt of Jamshedpur joined the rally. Since morning a large number of processions started converging at the Bari Maidan with red flags and banners and shouting slogans. The rally was addressed by B.T. Ranadive, P. Ramamurti, Samar Mukherjee and Jyoti Basu among others.

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some other organisations who do not have any strength have secured seats by showing fictitious membership. This instance is cited not because we are enamoured of seats in Governmental Committees. But we feel that our presence in these committees has a salutary effect. We are not only able to champion the cause but also are able to find out facts about industry/organisation.

Use the Possibilities Open Before US

I would like to draw your special attention to the present situation. The picture in West Bengal, Kerala, Tamilnadu, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, U.P. and to some extent in Orissa, shows that the trade union movement is developing side by side with the development of Kisan struggle and the democratic movement, sometime one preceding the other and at times getting intertwined together. This is a very welcome feature.

I have already reported that the left democratic and opposition parties have decided to start a move-

before Poojas. The Labour Minister and leader of the CITU Com. K.P. Ghosh intervened and asked the employer to pay wages and bonus. But the management went to Calcutta High Court and got temporary injunction on payment of Bonus and then abruptly served the closure notice from 1.11.1983.

This meeting condemns the attitude of the B. P. Mill management and demands that the mill must reopen and settlement of wages etc should be made with the union. This meeting extends full support to the fighting workmen and appeals to all the workmen and miners of Raniganj Belt to extend their solidarity and help to make their struggle a success.

ment against Price-rise, Unemployment, Closures and Lockouts. A fusion of the democratic movement with the trade union movement is possible in the near future.

This opens up new possibilities before us. We must develop ourselves to the task of preparing the working class to be in forefront of these struggles. I hope all comrades would understand that this task is very important in the phase of developing democratic struggle in the background of deepening of economic crisis and growing unrest in the national political arena. Let all of us rise to a man to fulfil this task.

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Bulgaria

Bulgaria welcomed the participants in the international women's march for peace which began at Nicosia and continued through Greece. In all the cities massive demonstrations were held to greet the women marchers from Cyprus, Greece, USSR, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. The march was carried out under the slogan "For Europe and the Balkans with no nuclear weapons".

Poland

A number of demonstrations was staged throughout Poland against the U.S. missiles. The participants demanded of USA to renounce the planned deployment of Pershing-2 and Cruise Missiles and continue with constructive talks.

GDR

Massive rallies were staged throughout GDR to safeguard peace. They demanded an end to the mad arms race by imperialism and called for a stop to the deployment of U.S. missiles. Six thousand sportsmen and women demonstrated at Karl Marx Stadt demanding a stop to make Europe a second Hiroshima.

Czechoslovakia

Over 1,30,000 workers and people demonstrated at Prague waving banners—"We want peace and not war" and "Reagan, hands off Europe". Workers' meetings were organised in over 2000 enterprises, public institutions and schools against the American missiles.