

THE WORKING CLASS



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Resist The New OFFENSIVE

B. T. Ranadive, President, C. I. T. U.

The ruling classes and the Government of India, as expected, are planning blatant attacks against the workers, to meet the critical economic situation accentuated by the recent war. In this, they are directly helped by the opportunist leadership of the INTUC and also partly by the leadership of the AITUC which tails behind the former. The trade union movement and the entire working class must be vigilant in time before the attacks start in earnest.

The Government and its apologists and advertisers, seek to attack the living conditions of the workers and the common people with the catching slogan of national self-sufficiency on their lips. They make it appear that any defence of the living conditions of the workers and employees, any refusal to accept new unjust burdens, is an act against national interests.

The working class, the trade union movement and the entire people stand for economic independence from foreign monopolists, from the U.S. imperialists. It is the working class and the common man that have to bear the burden of repayment of foreign debts which today amounts to not less than the annual wage of two million workers. Apart from direct exploitation, this dependence creates a danger to our national freedom and sovereignty, placing strategic lever in the hands of U. S. A. and foreign monopolists.

How the USA used this stranglehold during the vital days of war over Bangladesh, is fresh in the memory of everybody. It threatened to paralyse our economy by withholding its so-called 'aid' and even used military pressure.

It is the successive Congress Governments from Nehru to Indira Gandhi, that have been responsible for dragging the country into abject dependence on the USA loans—all because they wanted to build capitalism in India. It is this anti-national policy that has reached its fruition without American loans the economy finds itself in a critical condition and the Government is forced to talk about self-sufficiency.

The working class movement had repeatedly warned the Congress Government against this policy and had called upon it to build solid and abiding economic ties with the Socialist countries—the USSR, People's China and others. Today, the Government is often compelled to strengthen its ties with these countries to counter the US pressure. The Government has apparently been pursuing a policy of balancing between the imperialist and

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Ghosh

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Socialist world, but in reality its dependence on the West continued to grow.

This policy has not changed. The slogan of self-sufficiency is mainly a reaction to the situation created by the stoppage of American "aid" and not a new policy of dispensing with loans from all imperialist countries.

The stoppage of American loans creates a difficult situation for Indian economy. The Government wants to belittle it because it wants to conceal from the people the depth of our dependence on the U. S. A. Twenty per cent or more of India's imports have been hitherto financed by U. S. 'aid', which roughly amounted to not less than 40 per cent of all aid secured by the country. It seems that the gap in external assistance would now widen to Rs. 850 crores and make it difficult to realise the modified targets of the Fourth Plan.

It is obvious that unless drastic measures are taken the situation cannot be brought under control. Failure to do so will lead to slow down, closures, further unemployment and attacks on the workers and the people.

To feed the industries, foreign exchange must be saved. The biggest source of drain is foreign debt repayments, especially to the USA. These payments now amount to Rs. 435 crores, a substantial part going to the USA. Any one who is serious about self-sufficiency etc. must agree to declare at least a moratorium on all debt payments of the State, at least those of the USA. The moratorium will ease the situation substantially and be a weapon of countering the American threat. It is equally necessary to nationalise all American concerns beginning with the oil companies. The American private capital has

been earning the highest rate of profit in India, higher than anywhere else and its nationalisation will place substantial funds in the hands of the State. Similarly, it is necessary to nationalise big foreign monopoly concerns in chemicals, tobacco, etc. etc. which drain huge sums out of the country. There must also be a strict control on the profit of private concerns.

This should be accompanied by the nationalisation of Indian monopoly concerns and efficient functioning of the public sector which must get rid of the bureaucratic set-up. The land ceilings and land reforms together with guaranteed living conditions for industrial and agricultural workers should give the major elements of a programme for developing independence of the economy.

But the Government has no intention of embarking on a genuine programme of this type. While Mrs. Gandhi talks about national self-sufficiency she has no intention of either declaring a moratorium on foreign debt payments nor of nationalising American concerns, much less other monopoly concerns.

As for Indian monopolists, in the name of 'increasing production, and utilising the existing capacity, they also are to be allowed to expand their production and their restrictive grip over the Indian economy. There is, of course, no talk of control of profits.

So far as the peasant is concerned, land reform in his interest has been again put in cold storage.

What about the workers? Instead of guaranteeing better conditions for production enthusiasm, there is a conspiracy to attack them, to increase their work-load, to exploit them to the maximum in the name of national self-sufficiency.

In the first place, though war has

ended, the Defence of India Act is used to attack the workers' right to strike. Further, the Govt. of India, the employers, the INTUC leaders and the AITUC leaders all continue to subscribe to the notorious December declaration which virtually sacrifices the right to strike. They all met recently to implement this shameful piece and the INTUC leaders in the most blatant manner proposed compulsory arbitration in every dispute, thus depriving the workers of the right to strike. The opportunist leadership of the AITUC did not protest against this betrayal, but only suggested that the arbitration should be voluntary.

In the meanwhile, every effort is being made to compel the workers to contribute to the National Defence Fund. Pressure is being brought on them to contribute one day's wage every month. This has really nothing to do with national defence but Government's method of countering the inflationary pressures at the expense of the workers.

And finally comes the call from President Giri to abjure strikes for three years, so that the workers can be mercilessly exploited without a stop. Giri wants to deprive the workers of their only weapon, their only check against the inhuman greed of the employers. And this to be done when prices are rising and workers' wages are getting eroded. There is to be no guarantee that prices will be checked and need-based wages will be ensured.

Defence of India Rules, Government, INTUC and AITUC, Employers, joint declaration, moratorium on strikes-these are the major weapons of Congress self-sufficiency. What has this in common with a genuine programme to end the country's

dependence on the USA ?

Once again, we find the ruling classes passing the burden to the working class and the common people while talking about national interests. They made the common man pay for the Bangla Desh struggle, and the refugees, and are appropriating all the credit for themselves.

Now faced with the prospect of stoppage of American aid they neither want to strike at debt payment nor at the profits of the monopolists. They seek to solve the crisis by making the workers and people pay for it, while keeping their profits intact. In the bargain they do not wish to take the basic measures to end all dependence.

They are in a hurry to recoup their losses at the expense of the workers and the people. Besides, they are in a hurry to produce more to exploit the Bangla Desh market. They want the workers to work more, earn less, so that they can make huge profits in the new market. This is one of the reasons why they agreed to take over certain factories in West Bengal but at the same time denying the workers all rights guaranteed under the legislation. The Government of West Bengal is supporting the owners of the Annapurna Textile Mills in the most shameless manner for the very purpose.

Behind patriotic appeals, an attack is on against the workers. They must resist it.

The CITU Working Committee Meeting Postponed

According to the Constitution of the CITU, the Working Committee should meet at least twice in a year. During 1971 only one meeting could be held. The Second meeting scheduled to be held in December had to be postponed due to the declaration of emergency following the Indo-Pak war.

Naval Dockyard Workers Win Through United Struggle

Recently the industrial and non-industrial workers and employees of the Indian Dockyard at Bombay won a big victory through united struggle. During the Indo-Pakistan war, the working time in the Naval Dockyard, as elsewhere, was changed. After the stoppage of the war they, under the leadership of the I.N. Dockyard Employees' Union, demanded restoration of the prewar timings. But the authorities refused to restore pre-war timings; nor did they pay any heed to the representations made in that regard by the Employees' Union.

To protest against this blatantly anti-worker attitude and in support of their demand, all sections of workers and employees united and

held a massive demonstration, 6000 strong, on December 30. Instead of conceding the workers' demand, the authorities resorted to repressive measures—imposition of Sec.144 Cr.Pc., threats of arrest and trial under the DIR, ruthless harassment of workers, etc. Despite these repressive measures, the Dockyard workers again held a massive demonstration on December 31 and decided to hold another demonstration on January 4 before Vice-Admiral S. N. Kohli.

The demonstration of January 4 proved an unprecedented success and Vice-Admiral S. N. Kohli had to declare on the same day acceptance of the workers' demand for restoring prewar timings at the Dockyard.

American Oil Companies Take Away Huge Profits Each Year

How the U. S. monopoly interests in India are draining away huge amounts each year in the form of repatriation of dividends, and that also with the permission of the Government, will be evident if we examine the position in respect of American Oil companies alone. For instance, Phillips Petroleum Company of United States—which has a collaboration agreement with Govern-

ment for working the Madras Refinery, received net dividends totalling Rs. 87.81 lakhs (about Rs. 29.3 lakhs each year) during three years from 1967-68 to 1969-70. The Government allowed them to repatriate this entire amount according to an agreement signed with the company.

To stop this drain, all American concerns in India should be immediately nationalised beginning with the Oil companies.

ly. Out of 44 members 34 members sent their replies; all except one gave their consent to postpone the Working Committee meeting till the Assembly Elections.

The date and venue of the Working Committee meeting will now be announced after the elections.

SIMPSON WORKERS PUT DMK GOVERNMENT IN THE DOCK

The resounding victory of the 18000 workers of the Simpson Group of Industries in Tamilnadu has proved once again that it is the fighting unity of the working class which alone can effectively counter all terror and repression and win victory in their struggles.

The prolonged and determined struggle of the Simpson workers, culminating in an indefinite strike from December 27, came to a successful end on January 11 when an agreement was reached between the Tamilnadu Chief Minister and the Joint Action Committee, formed with representatives of four Central T.U. Organisations—CITU, AITUC, INTUC and HMS, which led the workers' struggle to victory. By this agreement, the Simpson management and the DMK Government agreed to concede the major-demands of the workers: de-recognition of the DMK union, early holding of union elections and the abrogation of the anti-worker agreement between the DMK union and the Simpson management.

The Simpson Group is one of the biggest engineering enterprises in the South engaged in the manufacture of a variety of products from diesel engines and automobile ancillaries to tractors and farm implements, etc. It even owns a daily newspaper, The Mail. Though the strike was sparked off by the issue of termination orders on 325 workers by the management, the genesis of the trouble lay elsewhere. There has been growing unrest among workers ever since the DMK leadership started attacks on the workers, with the help of goondas backed by police, in its bid to install its own nominee, Kattur Gopal, as

the President of the union. Since his assumption of office as President in May last, Kattur Gopal merely acted as a tool of the management in the implementation of its anti-worker policies which was clearly seen when he signed an agreement with the management in August last.

The Agreement bound the workers to give 'consistent and optimum production as scheduled by management'. In concrete terms, it meant enormously increased work-load for workers (more than 50 per cent above normal) for which the workers were to get paltry wage increases ranging from Rs. 7 to 11. The failure of any worker to give this arbitrarily fixed level of production would not only make him liable to lose this paltry monetary benefit but he would also be treated as guilty of misconduct and punishable under the standing orders of the company. The agreement further allowed the company to withdraw the interim wage increase as per recommendations of the Engineering Wage Board and interim dearness allowance as per an earlier settlement. This meant that some emoluments already being paid to workers would be withdrawn and substituted with paltry wage increases which, in most cases, would result in a reduction in total emoluments.

Again, the Agreement not only made over-time work obligatory for workers, it also gave absolute powers to the management to enforce the standing orders according to its own judgement thereby abrogating all rights of the union to question any wrong, vindictive or unwa-

rranted enforcement of the same.

This is not the end of the story. Under clause 14 of the Agreement, the "union" agreed to withdraw the Industrial Dispute case pending before the Industrial Tribunal, Madras, relating to an illegal lock-out for 34 days imposed on the workers by the management. The workers had a very strong case and were likely to win forcing the company to pay nearly Rs. 40 lakhs as wages for that period. The union not only agreed to forego this huge sum due to the workers, it also agreed to make workers put in additional 24 days' work (portrayed as a concession by the management to workers for foregoing the lock out wages) and for this additional work they were to receive 'single wage' and not over-time wages to which they were legally entitled.

The simmering discontent of the workers against the foisting of Kattur Gopal on the union, flared up into open revolt when this atrocious Agreement was sought to be enforced. Demanding removal of Kattur Gopal and scrapping of the Agreement, a section of workers began abstaining from work from November 22. At the request of the Reorganisation Committee, the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister intervened and gave some assurances on the basis of which the workers were to go back to work on December 16. But while entering the factory that day, they were attacked by nearly 200 goondas hired by the DMK leadership resulting in injuries to many. When the workers rallied to resist the goondas, the police rushed in defence of the goondas and fired tear gas shells at the workers. The open complicity of the police and callous silence of the management angered the workers who were left with no other alternative but to stage a stay-in strike.

Taking opportunity of this, the Chief Minister not only went back on his earlier assurances but also put the blame on the workers and their leaders. This attitude of the Chief Minister further emboldened the management which promptly issued termination orders on 325 workers. This wanton and deliberate provocation forced the workers to go on an indefinite strike from December 27. The strike was a complete success which eventually spread to other units of the Simpson Group including the SRVS Transport Company in Kumbakonam (Thanjavur) and even affected the Simpson-owned newspaper.

During the various phases of the struggle, the Simpson workers had to face all sorts of repression from the management, police and goondas. In all 110 workers were retrenched by the management, termination orders were served on 325 more and 173 of them were arrested on various charges. Many more were forced to resign due to intimidation by DMK hoodlums, while numerous others, including peaceful hunger strikers were brutally assaulted by police and goondas. Sec. 144 Cr. PC and the DIR were invoked to break the morale of the workers.

The anti-worker role played by the DMK Government during this struggle was, however, not unexpected in view of its past record. Ever since it came to power, and more particularly since the present Chief Minister assumed office, the DMK Government has all along pursued this policy. While backing the employers in their growing offensives against the workers, it has not hesitated to use all forms of repression to beat down the resistance of the workers.

Despite the resignation by Kattur Gopal from the post of union President on January 22, the diehard followers of DMK Union do not

seem to have reconciled themselves to the reality. There was a serious clash between the DMK and non-DMK workers on January 24 resulting in injuries to 57 workers, three of them of a serious nature.

The most significant achievement of the Simpson strike, however, is that of bringing almost all the non-DMK Trade Union Organisations—CITU, AITUC, INTUC and the HMS, together in support of the strike and the workers' demands. Even the TNCC (Syndicate) came forward in support of the strike. The Joint Action Committee of the Central T. U. Organisations unitedly gave a call for strike and hartal throughout Tamilnadu on January 11, which compelled the Tamilnadu Government to see reason and come to a settlement with the workers.

B. T. Ranadive, President, CITU, addressed a letter to Karunanidhi in which he extended full support to the Simpson workers and demanded immediate settlement with genuine representatives of the workers.

P. Ramamurti, General Secretary, CITU, played an important part in negotiations at the Central level and bringing about the settlement of this strike.

SOLIDARITY WITH THE WORKING CLASS OF BANGLADESH

Abdul Mannan, member of the National Assembly and Secretary, Jatiya Sramik League of Bangladesh, was in Calcutta on January 15. A meeting of all the Central trade union organisations was held in the office of the West Bengal branch of the INTUC. Representatives of all the organisations expressed their solidarity with the working class of Bangladesh. A. Mannan expressed his gratitude for the solidarity shown by the Indian working class.

M. K. Pandhe, Secretary, CITU, and Bisweshwar Ganguly, Member, West Bengal State Committee of CITU, conveyed greetings to the working class of Bangladesh on behalf of CITU.

CITU PUBLICATIONS

Forward To Unity And Struggle

Proceedings and Documents of the All-India Trade Union Conference, Calcutta, May, 1970. Rs. 3 00

Durgapur Workers Fight Back Repression

An Account of the Heroic Struggle of the Working People of Durgapur against Police Repression. 50 P.

Against Repression and Disruption

Resolutions of the CITU Working Committee Meeting held at Jaipur. October, 1970. 40P.

Constitution of the CITU

(English & Hindi) 40P.

Indian Railwaymen Forge Ahead

By Nrisingha Chakravarty
(English, Bengali & Hindi)
20P./20P./30P.

Employees' Family Pension

Scheme-A Hoax

Explanatory note submitted by Com. M. K. Pandhe to the General Council Meeting held at Coimbatore & the Resolution adopted at the Meeting. 20P.

Samyukta Trade Union Andolanki

Nayi Disha

Concluding Speech of Com. B.T. Ranadive in the CITU Foundation Conference (in Hindi) 40P.

Unmask And Defeat Anti-Labour Policies of the Congress Govt.

CITU's Appeal to all the Central T.U. Organisations and National Federations. 40P.

Surging Tide of Working Class Struggles

Report of Com. P. Ramamurti to the General Council Meeting held at Coimbatore June 11-14, 1971 & Resolutions. Rs. 1.25

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Unitedly We Must Fight Against MENACE OF US IMPERIALISM

The hostile attitude displayed by the United States Government, during the Bangladesh struggle, towards India and the freedom struggle of the people of Bangladesh, the arms help and support given by it to the Pakistani military junta, aggressive display of the Seventh Fleet during the Indo-Pak war and the blackmailing act of suspension of 'aid' have all been condemned with one voice by the trade union movement in India. However, the CITU believes that the danger posed by US imperialism is a continuing one and we must be constantly on our guard against it. To fight unitedly and effectively against this danger it is necessary to rouse the working class to the menace facing the nation.

With this end in view, Monoranjan Roy, Secretary, CITU, has addressed a letter on December 31 to various Central Trade Union Organisations which participated in the Conference of trade union representatives of Central Organisations and National Federations held in New Delhi on May 18-19, 1971. In the letter he has proposed that all the Central Trade Union Organisations and their affiliated unions should undertake a campaign for exposing the hostile policy of American imperialism towards our country.

He has further suggested that joint and united meetings, with the participation of all Central T.U. Organisations, would be the ideal way to conduct such a campaign. If, however, that is not possible, then at least separate meetings may

be held on a common day to give united expression to the protest of the entire working class against US imperialism.

He has also pointed out that the CITU considers it necessary to raise the demand for moratorium on U.S. concerns in India, beginning with the Oil companies. However, each organisation may evolve its own concrete demands. If the other Central Organisations agree with this suggestion, a mighty campaign can be built up to expose the danger of US imperialism and the working class can be roused to the need of fighting this menace unitedly.

Consumer Price Index Numbers

All India (Working Class)

Year	Base 1949	Base 1960
1966	184	151
1967	209	172
1968	215	177
1969	213	175
1970	224	184
Nov.	230	189
Dec.	226	186
1971		
Jan.	224	184
Feb.	224	184
Mar.	224	184
Apr.	224	184
May	224	184
June	227	187
July	231	190
Aug.	236	194
Sept.	238	196
Oct.	238	196

Com. Rajen Sinha No More

Com. Rajendra Kumar Sinha, a distinguished trade union leader of the Plantation workers in Darjeeling district (West Bengal), died of heart attack at the Darjeeling Sadar Hospital on the night of January 8-9. He was only 46 at the time of his death.

He was actively connected with the trade union movement in the district since 1954. He was the Treasurer of the Darjeeling District Chikaman Mazdoor Union (CITU) since its inception, Vice-President of Darjeeling Mercantile Employees' Union and a member of the General Council of CITU. His untimely death is a great blow to the trade union movement in the district.

His body was taken to his home near Kurseong and on the following day thousands of plantation workers joined his funeral procession to offer their respect to the memory of the departed leader. A condolence meeting was held on January 12 which was attended, among others, by the representatives of the Mazdoor Union (CITU), INTUC and the Sramik Sangh led by Gorkha League. A minute's silence was observed to pay homage to his memory.

The Working Class expresses its deep condolences to the bereaved members of his family.

A Recent Case On The Minimum Wages Act

A. P. Chatterjee

In an appeal preferred by Messrs. Jaydip Industries against an award passed by the Industrial Tribunal, Maharashtra and decided by the Supreme Court on 16 December 1971, being Civil Appeal 912 (N) of 1967, the point that arose for decision was whether, where an industrial dispute relating to the rates of wages payable to any of the employees employed in a scheduled employment under the Minimum Wages Act is pending for adjudication before a Tribunal, the minimum wage fixed by a notification made under section 3 (1) of the Minimum Wages Act in respect of the said Scheduled employment bound the hands of the Tribunal and whether the Tribunal could, in its award, give any award fixing minimum wages higher or lower than the minimum wage fixed by the Government.

That appeal related to a dispute relating to the rates of wages payable to the workmen and it was pending before the Maharashtra Tribunal when the Government of Maharashtra issued a notification fixing minimum wages for the employees in scheduled employments including the paper and paperboard manufacturing industry which comprises the appellant company as well. The Tribunal in its Award fixed the minimum rates of wages for the employees of the Company which were higher than the rates fixed by the notification issued under the Minimum Wages Act.

In this connection, it may be useful to recall the provisions of the Act, particularly, section 3 (2A) thereof which makes it clear that, not only when a dispute is pending in relation to the rates

of wages payable to the employees of the scheduled employment before a Tribunal or a like authority but also when an award has already been given in relation to such dispute and that award is in operation, the minimum rates of wages, if any, fixed by a notification issued under section 3 (1) of the Act "shall not apply to those employees during the period in which the proceeding is pending and the award made therein is in operation or as the case may be, where the notification is issued during the period of operation of an award, during that period."

Mr. Justice Matthew, in delivering the opinion of the Court, held, in

LEGAL NOTES

view of the provisions of section 3(2A) of the Act, that "it was open to the Tribunal to fix rates of minimum wages at rates higher than the rates fixed by the Government under section 3 of the Act", provided the notification was issued when the proceeding was pending before the Tribunal.

So far so good. But the alarm is sounded when in course of the same judgement the Supreme Court also observes that, in such a case, the Tribunal could fix minimum wages at even lower rates.

Unfortunately that may be the effect of section 3 (2A) of the Act. That sub-section contemplates two contingencies in which the minimum wage fixed under section 3 (1) of the Act will not apply to the workmen :

1) Where the notification fixing minimum wage is issued when the proceedings in relation to a dispute relating to the rates of wages

payable to any of the employees employed in a scheduled employment are pending before any Tribunal or any like authority, or

2) Where such notification is issued during the operation of any award made by any Tribunal or any such authority.

The result may very well be that the minimum wage as fixed by the notification may be higher than that given in the award and yet, because the award is in operation, the higher minimum wage though fixed by the State Government will not apply.

Again, in spite of the higher minimum wage, a Tribunal before whom proceedings are pending at the time of the issue of the notification may fix a minimum wage lower than that given in the notification. And this is what the Supreme Court also has clinched by the judgement just now referred to.

This is a sorry example of a rather serious conflict of jurisdiction between the delegate of the Legislature and the Tribunals in which the judicial powers of the State are to an extent vested. And the workman is liable to be the victim. It is true that in the case under consideration the Tribunal fixed the minimum wage higher than that fixed in the notification issued by the Executive under section 3(1) of the Act, but in many cases the situation may be the other way about. That is to say, the Tribunal's minimum wage may be lower than that fixed in the notification.

This anomaly can be resolved only by a legislative amendment and the minister of Labour in the Centre may initiate a proper amending legislation. Section 3(2A) of the act may be suitably amended to provide that a Tribunal may not award a minimum wage lower than that ordered under section 3(1) of

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Closures —A Symptom of Deepening Crisis

In spite of the bold assertions being made by the Government, that the economy is poised for a big advance the crisis deepens due to the bankrupt policies followed by the Government. A ferocious offensive is being mounted by the capitalists in order to shift the burden of the crisis on the working class and other sections of the toiling masses. This is evident from the rising burden of taxation on the common people, rise in prices of all essential commodities, huge unemployment, low wages, retrenchments and the increasing number of closures and lockouts of factories, coal mines, mills and other establishments. The intensity of the problem of closures will be evident from the following official statistics supplied during the meeting of the Consultative Committee of Members of Parliament for the Ministry of Labour and Rehabilitation, Government of India, held on December 21, 1971.

Number of Closed Factories in different States/Union Territories

State/ Union Territory	No. of factories closed during 1.4.1969 to 31.3.1971	(as on 31.3.1971)
Andhra	647	559
Assam	226	215
Gujarat	202	194
Himachal	4	4
Kerala	293	184
M. P.	23	23
Tamilnadu	22	16
Mysore	871	603
Orissa	66	59
Punjab	19	19
Rajasthan	121*	121**
U. P.	76	56
West Bengal	531	336
Delhi	21	15
Chandigarh	2	Nil
J & K	6	5
Goa, Daman & Diu	23	23
Pondicherry	3	Nil
Tripura	3	3
Grand Total	3159	2436

While Taking Over

* In the case of Rajasthan, information in Col. 3 relates to Calendar Years 1969 & 1970.
 ** Position indicated as on December 31, 1970.

The statistics given above is neither complete nor up-to-date. According to the Government's own admissions, information regarding Bihar and Maharashtra could not be collected, nor does it include figures for coal mines—40 of which are reported to be closed with about 10,000 coal mine workers out of employment. Again, many more factories have been closed down since March 31 1971 which are not included here.

The extent and intensity of the problem have made it impossible for the Government to suppress the

A Monstrous Piece of Legislation

It is in the background of these facts that we have to consider the Industries (Development & Regulation) Amendment Act, 1971—an atrocious piece of legislation passed recently by Parliament While the trade union movement has all along been demanding that the Government must take over all closed units in the interest of the people and particularly of thousands of unemployed workers of these units, by enacting this legislation the Government has come out in its true anti-people, anti-working class character In the name of giving relief to unemployed workers, the Act has been loaded with provisions which will hit all the basic interests of the workers of the closed units.

GOVERNMENT

truth any longer. Its apologetic admission, that this may also be due to shortage of raw materials, financial difficulties, mismanagement, etc. demolishes once and for all the pet theme of the industrialists, Government and bureaucrats alike that the so-called 'labour trouble' alone is responsible for the closures. This has been more conclusively proved by the findings of a recent analysis conducted by the Labour Department of the Govt. of West Bengal. The analysis, covering 54 closed industrial units employing 23,816 workers and based on information supplied by the management itself, reveals that less than 30% of the continuing closure cases are due to so-called 'labour indiscipline', whereas more than 70% of these are due to other causes.

Closed Units

"consequent upon the take over, there should not be any reduction in emoluments nor should there be any adverse effect on service conditions and benefits", and that "legislative provisions and Governmental machinery for take over should ensure continuity of employment and production".

Act loaded with Anti-Working Class Provisions

The Act provides for the taking over of the management of closed or mismanaged industrial undertakings under certain circumstances. But it leaves enough loop-holes to enable the Government to discriminate in its application and to evade responsibility at its sweet will. For instance, the Act does not make it obligatory on the

HITS WORKERS

Government to take over each and every closed or mismanaged unit, not does it provide for take-over straight away by the Government. It has been left to the High Courts to investigate and decide whether a particular closed or mismanaged unit should be taken over. Again, the maximum period for which a unit can be taken over has been limited to only 5 years and there is nowhere any bar to the handing back of the unit to its original owner at any time within this period. What an excellent windfall for inefficient and extravagant capitalists.

The Act empowers the Government to suspend the implementation of all labour laws in respect of the workers of the units taken over and expressly provides that the operation of the Industrial Disputes Act, Minimum Wages Act and the

Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act will be inapplicable in respect of these workers. Moreover, all agreements, settlements, awards, standing orders, etc. in force immediately before the take over shall remain suspended and all proceedings relating thereto pending before any court, tribunal, officer or other authority shall remain stayed during the period of take over, if the Government issues orders to that effect. This will virtually create a new class of 'State-managed factories, where the workers are reduced to the status of sweated labour.

The story of selling out the workers does not end here. In another section the Act provides that in case of industrial undertakings owned by companies under

liquidation and taken over by the Government, the 'authorized person' taking over the management of the undertaking may employ such of the former employees whose services become discharged by reason of the winding up and such persons employed by the authorised person shall be deemed to have entered into a fresh contract of service with the company. Thus the Act gives omnibus powers to the Government to 'screen' workers and discriminate in the matter of re-employment, to resort to retrenchment in the name of rationalisation, to break their continuity of service so that they may be forced to accept employment at reduced wages and adverse terms and conditions of service.

Again, while providing for the suspension of payment of the liabilities of the undertakings taken

over, the Act makes no distinction between the liabilities to outsiders and the liabilities to the workers in respect of arrear wages, Provident Fund, bonus, etc. Is it not a grave injustice to make the workers suffer for the corruption and inefficiency of the employers? Whatever assurances are given by the Government in this respect, we know from experience how this provision will be implemented in practice. The R. S. N. Co., a British concern, was taken over by the Government five years back. What has happened? All the liabilities of the company to outsiders have already been paid off, but the legitimate dues of the workers under the Industrial Disputes Act have not been paid yet and payment is being put off under one pretext or other.

The Act also empowers the Government to sell, under certain circumstances, undertakings taken over by it. Even here, all attempts have been made to safeguard the interests of the owners while ignoring the just and legitimate rights of the workers. It provides for the discharge of the liabilities of the undertaking sold, out of the sale proceeds, but gives no priority to the payment of the workmen's legitimate dues. Again, the purchaser of such an undertaking will take it over free from all encumbrances which means that he will also not be bound to employ the previous workers.

Fight Back this Attack on Living Conditions and Trade Union Rights of Workers

All the trade unions must take serious note of the patently anti-working class attitude of the Government reflected in this Act and the danger it portends for the entire working class. It must be realised that in the name of giving relief to the unemployed workers, the Government is actually seeking to

launch an unprecedented attack on the living conditions and trade union rights of workers. It has neither the intention nor the capacity to solve the growing industrial crisis reflected in these large number of closures. All it is trying to do is to shift the burden of the crisis on to the workers to tide over the crisis.

All the provisions of the Act, reflect this attitude. It is the duty of the trade union movement to rouse the entire working class to the danger inherent in this atrocious Act. It must resolutely oppose the anti-worker provisions and demand immediate modifications of the Act, to make it obligatory on the Government to take over each and every closed or mismanaged unit without reference to the High Courts, to ensure the continuity of service of all the workers on the same terms and service conditions prior to the closure and to retain, protect and safeguard all the rights and privileges of the workers of these units including all trade union rights.

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AITUC & INTUC Unions Favoured By The Management Of Alloy Steels, Durgapur

Persistent anti-labour policies pursued by the management have vitiated the industrial climate in the Steel Plants of the Public Sector. The Durgapur Plant, in particular, has been dogged by many ills ; a top-heavy administration, official bungling, rampant corruption. It now seems that the Alloy Steels Plant is also going the same way.

The Hindusthan Steel Employees Union (CITU) of Durgapur which has made tremendous sacrifices in upholding the cause of the workers over the years has once again drawn the attention of the General Manager of the Alloy Steels Plant to the numerous irregularities committed in various departments. But its timely counsels have never been heeded in the past, not to speak of the present when the management is going out of its way to accord undue privileges to unions led either by the INTUC or by the AITUC. Under the circumstances, it is futile to expect that the corrupt practices and other irregularities perpetrated by the officialdom will end unless a strong and united movement of workers can be organised.

The Alloy Steels Sramik Union (AITUC) is held in particular affection by the management. An ASSU member was recently promoted to the post of Chargehand (Grade A) violating all rules of procedure. In the Refractory department, rules were waived in order to promote two "Super-skilled" ASSU activists to the posts of instructors ; the theoretical and oral tests were not taken at all. A Senior Pharmacist, once again an ASSU member, was made Storekeeper cum Sr. Pharmacist, a post he

was not qualified to hold, and granted an additional allowance of Rs. 50 per month.

The INTUC-led Union is, of course, not lagging behind. The union was allotted a bungalow in Sector D, free of rent, and this it continued to occupy even after its recognition was withdrawn. A Joint Secretary of the union had, some time ago, filed a suit against the management submitting a claim for promotion. The management contested and won the case. It is now learnt that the Joint Secretary has indeed been favoured with a promotion and that with retrospective effect from 1969, which makes him entitled to all arrears of pay since then.

The management had arrived at an agreement with the Hindusthan Steel Employees' Union (CITU) recently on the manning of Time Offices. No sooner had the implementations started than a second agreement was made with the INTUC-led union, this time granting further concessions.

What is most amazing is the fact that the H. S. Employees' Union, the largest, is being overlooked all the time. Meetings with its shop level committees have been, for all practical purposes, discontinued. Of the few that are held, records are either destroyed or not taken at all. Outstanding issues are never referred to meetings at higher levels. Decisions arrived at in them are invariably delayed in implementation.

The honest worker's labours are not being rewarded. The indifferent performance of steel plants in the Public Sector is due almost entirely to the anti-working class policies of their management. The workers are being subjected to exploitation as much in the Private Sector as in the Public. The H.S. E.U. is determined to fight corruption and discrimination in its struggle for the cause of the workers.

Memorandum submitted to Sri A. L. Dias, Governor of West Bengal by Centre of Indian Trade Unions, West Bengal Committee in protest against repression in West Bengal and in defence of Trade Union and Democratic rights, in a mass deputation on 8th January, 1972 at Raj Bhavan, Calcutta.

It has been brought to your notice repeatedly with concrete facts and evidences that the people of West Bengal are made to live in an atmosphere of terror unprecedented since independence. While this terror is motivated to crush all democratic forces in the State in the interest of the Ruling Congress at the Centre, the Police, C. R. P and the armed gangsters organised by Congress (R) (with the help of police and administration) are carrying on relentless attacks, killing, murdering and torturing the people especially the workers and leaders of the democratic movement. When nothing could subdue the conscious people of the State, important leaders and cadres of the mass movements are detained without trial in the name of Prevention of Violent Activities Act (PVA) and Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA).

These attacks are perpetrated at a time when unemployment problem in the state is most acute, the number of registered unemployed has exceeded 8,00,000 and more than 500 factories, tea gardens, offices and coal mines are closed affecting about 1,28,000 workers ; when the economic condition of the people is most acute due to heavy taxation and abnormal rise in prices. As the militant class conscious workers of the State refuse to bear the burden of the economic crisis which the ruling class is trying to impose upon them and they are effectively carrying on the struggle in defence of their rights—for employment, wage rise and better living conditions, these attacks are perpetrated by the ruling class to dislodge them from their struggle and to suppress them.

The Members of Parliament, leaders of political parties, trade unions and other democratic organisations through letters, representations and deputations have been carrying on ceaseless efforts to bear upon you and the administration that the life and liberty of the people are at stake and all semblance of democracy is attempted to be destroyed with brute force of repression perpetrated by the Police, C.R.P and the armed gangsters of Congress (R). The Chief Secretary, Home Secretary of West Bengal, the Inspector General of Police and the Police Commissioners of Calcutta, the Superintendents of Police and the District Magistrates at the district level ; the Sub-Divisional Officers down to the Officers-in-Charge of Police Stations-at all levels of the administration persistent representations were and continue to be given demanding to stop this terror and repression, to stop the persecution and suffering of the innocent citizens at the hands of Police, C.R.P and Congress (R) gangsters. But nothings seems to be adequate to move the Government [to see to reason and to restore peace and democracy.

At all times when we approached you, you maintained that the Government would be impartial. But in reality there is no change in the situation and the same Police, C.R.P and the armed gangsters of Congress (R) carry on the attacks in the same manner day in and day out. If the State administration of West Bengal is bent upon to act as an instrument of oppression to subserve the political interests of Congress (R) and the top officials of the Government are directly in-

forward to resist the attacks, Police and CRP provide cover to the gangsters to escape and then attack the people, assaulting mercilessly and arresting indiscriminately. After arrest, they are involved in various fabricated charges. This is the method of attack.

Leading workers of Trade Union movements are first falsely implicated in murder charges. But when the Court release them for want of supporting evidence, they are detained under the P. V. A Act or MISA.

Rupak Roy and Ujjal Das—both front ranking members of Heavy Engineering Corporation Employees' Union, Durgapur were arrested under murder charge (Durgapur P.S. Case No. 53 of 18-2-1971) and forwarded to the Court on the allegation that their "Complicity transpired" during investigation. The Court ordered for holding Test Identification Parade. Immediately thereafter the same police came before the Court and prayed for their discharge for lack of evidence. The Court accordingly ordered their release. But before the release order could be executed, Rupak Roy and Ujjal Das were detained under the P.V.A.Act. There are several such cases.

The Political prisoners in detention are being treated in the worst possible manner. They are given sub-human food. Almost all the detenues have developed worst type of stomach troubles. There is no provision for treatment in the prisons. Blankets used by the criminals having infections of venereal and other dangerous diseases are given to the political prisoners for use. As a result a big section of political prisoners have developed serious type of skin disease. But there is no medicine in jail hospitals for treatment. Political prisoners are kept with dangerous criminals and criminals suffering from dangerous disease like V. D., Scyphilis etc. A good number of the detenues are teen-agers and naturally in such circumstances they are prone to diseases. Sri Bapi Guha a boy of 16 was arrested under ailing condition and died in prison without any treatment.

Not content with such barbarous treatment meted out of the detenues in prisons, Prison Authorities in a planned manner are carrying on murder of political prisoners. So far 47 persons have been murdered in various prisons of West Bengal. Many of them were beaten to death with batons. Such barbaric murder of political prisoners was seen rarely even under the British Rule in India.

And now unable to stand to public protest against the inhuman treatment towards the political prisoners, the Government following the foot-steps of British Imperialism is transferring them outside the State to work out the policy of torturing them more mercilessly and to crack their morale in remote seclusion where they will not be able to see their parents or near ones—a facility admissible even behind the bars. The transfer of prisoners is being done most secretly. It is reported that about 1300 political prisoners have already been transferred to Tamil Nadu where they will face intolerable difficulties due to language and altogether different food habits. And the most surprising thing is this that the parents and near relations of the prisoners are denied any information in this regard.

Police has been given unlimited power. No enquiry is held when Police and CRP murder or kill any person. The power given to police virtually give them complete freedom of action to kill and murder people.

This is the state of affairs in West Bengal under your regime. It is impossible to conceive of such repression in a democratic country. We want to know from the Government what explanation it has to offer, more particularly from you, as head of the administration under President's Rule in West Bengal considering the fact that you repeat every time that the administration will follow a non-partisan attitude.

One of the main prong of the attack is directed against the organised trade unions. The modus operandi of the attacks on trade unions is like this : the Congress (R) gangsters under the leadership of Chhatra Parishad and Youth Congress attack the

volved in this conspiracy against the people or are afraid to take an impartial stand, what course is left before the people to protect their rights and to ensure their safety and security? If all democratic rights are denied and all avenues are closed or prove abortive to secure justice, what is left before the people to protect their very existence? This is a basic question confronting the entire people of West Bengal to-day.

These attacks started since the fall of Second United Front Government in March, 1970. Intensity of the attacks and seriousness of the situation will be understood from the following facts :

During the Second President's Rule in West Bengal i. e. from 17. 3. 1970 to 31. 3. 1971 two hundred-thirty eight persons connected with trade union and democratic movements were murdered and killed by the Police, CRP and Naxalites and anti-social gangsters organised by Congress (R) (with the help of Police and administration) ;

During the tenure of Congress-Muslim League Coalition Government in West Bengal i. e. from 1. 4. 1971 to 29. 6. 1971, the number of such murders and killing is 109 ; and, during the present tenure of President's Rule (from 30.6.1971 to 15.11.1971) One hundred seventeen persons connected with trade union and democratic movement were murdered and killed by the Police, CRP and the armed gangsters organised by Congress (R).

And these murders and killings are continuing with unashamed encouragement from the administration.

On 24th November, 1971 Sri Manick Chakraborty, a worker of Bengal Potteries (Co-operative), Beliaghata, Calcutta and an active trade union worker of C. I. T. U. affiliated union was kidnapped by Congress (R) gangsters. This was done for murdering Sri Manick Chakraborty. The matter was immediately brought to the notice of the officer-in charge of Entally Police Station, Calcutta and also of the Police Commissioner,

Calcutta, the Inspector General of Police and the Home Secretary of West Bengal. All of them were requested to take prompt action in order to save the life of Sri Chakraborty. But nothing was done. And the next day the dead body of Sri Manick Chakraborty was found in a ditch. This is a concrete example of how murders are being committed by Congress (R) gangsters with the help of Police and administration.

In Mia Bagan Bustee at Beliaghata, Calcutta a young girl Sreemati Sipra Saha was killed by Police at point blank range on 6. 11. 1971. No enquiry was held in this regard inspite of persistent demands.

On 31st December, 1971 Sri Sunil Sen, a trade union leader of Dum Dum and a member of the Working Committee, CITU West Bengal Committee was murdered near his house at Baguihati (Dum Dum). The murderers carried away the body of Sri Sunil Sen and it was found on 5th January, 1972 in a marshy land.

On 27th September, 1971 Sri Khokan Chakraborty was arrested by Police in Jadavpur area, Calcutta and was murdered by Police while he was under police custody. Police denied the incident and both the Chief Secretary and the Home Secretary of West Bengal repeated the same explanation given by the Officer-in-Charge, Jadavpur Police Station but they are silent after the demand was made for an open enquiry on this murder.

It will take volumes to describe the murders taking place everyday. The Congress (R) gangsters are carrying on these attacks in a planned manner ; the planning of the attacks are made in Police Stations under the direction of Police Officers. The gangsters move in CRP and police vehicles, often use the rifles of Police and CRP. In many places like Jadavpur and Barrackpore Sub-Division it has been noticed that the armed Congress (R) gangsters put on uniforms of Police and CRP while carrying on the attacks. When the common people come

4. Standard Laboratories Workers' Union.
5. Paints and Laquers Workers' Union.
6. Jay Engineering Workers' Union.
7. Bengal Lamp Employees' Union.

Union Offices functioning forcibly stopped :

1. Tollygunj Rickshaw Workers' Union.
2. Standard Laboratories Workers' Union.
3. Chaliha Rolling Mills Workers' Union.
4. Garia Rickshaw Workers' Union.
5. Gopal Hosiery Workers' Union.
6. Philtronic Workers' Union.
7. Cine Technician and Workers' Union.

The workers of Calcutta State Transport Employees' Union are confronted with a major attack and the following facts will reveal the position :

Workers Murdered :

1. Mahadev Dutta of Howrah Depot.
2. Jogen Roy of Paikpara Depot.
3. Moti Das of Belghoria Depot.
4. Ganesh Gain of Belghoria Depot.
5. Alok Ghosh of Mechanical Workshop.

Workers assaulted and injured :

1. Madhu Bose of Howrah Depot.
2. Bhola Paul of Howrah Depot.
3. Paritosh Das of Howrah Depot.
4. Mangal Guha of Belghoria Depot.
5. Nripen Saha of Workshop.
6. Gosai Seal of Lake Depot.
7. Rabi Aich of Lake Depot.
8. Khokan Guha of Canteen.
9. Bisnu Ghosh of Paikpara Depot.
10. Tarak Chandra Biswas of Paikpara Depot.

11. Paresh Chatterjee of Paikpara Depot.
12. Gour Saha of do
13. Kanai Ganguly of do
14. Monoranjan Ghosh of do
15. Haridas Naha of do

Workers in detention :

1. Subodh Bhadra of Lake Depot.
2. Anil Guha of Belghoria Depot.
3. Mongal Guha of do
4. Nitai Saha of do
5. Pradip Dutta of Taratolla Depot.

No. of workers forcibly evicted from their houses : about 200.

No. of workers against whom police cases instituted : 50.

In 24-Parganas, particularly in Barrackpore Industrial Belt the gangsters with the help of Police and C.R.P. have let loose a terror unprecedented in India since independence. The following facts will speak for themselves :

Trade Union Workers murdered :

1. Ash Mohammed of Khardah.
2. Ananta Dutta, Vice-President, Gramophone Employees' Union.
3. Sunil Sen, Secretary of a number of unions of Dum Dum and member, Working Committee of CITU West Bengal State Committee.

Trade Union Offices looted and captured by Congress (R) gangsters :

1. Bengal Kagajkal Sramik Union, Kankinara. (of Titagarh Paper Mill)
2. Bengal Enamel Mazdoor Union, Palta.

areas around the factories where the workers are most organised. With the help of Police and CRP these gangsters occupy the whole area and then intensify the attacks on the workers of the factories. They force the workers to become members of Congress (R) sponsored Unions and forcibly collect subscription from them. Those who refuse to pay subscription are severely assaulted and then handed over to police. Police arrest them immediately. Trade union leaders and active union cadres are not allowed to report to their duties. The miscreants enter into the factories with rifles, pipe-guns and hand-granades and force the workers to obey their orders under threat of murder. When workers unitedly resist the attacks, Police and CRP come to the help of the gangsters and resort to indiscriminate firing, assault and arrest.

The working class in industrial belt of Sonarpur, Mahestolla and the entire Barrackpore Sub-Division area like Khardah, Titagarh, Dum Dum, Dakshindari etc. (24-Parganas District), Jadavpur-Tollygunj Area, North Calcutta, Beliaghata, Manicktolla in Calcutta, Raniganj Coal-field area, Durgapur and Asansol industrial belt, Burdwan town, various places of Howrah and Hooghly districts are affected by these attacks.

The Congress (R) gangsters attacked the union office of Jessop Mazdoor Union and burnt it. They also attacked the office of Jay Engineering Workers' Union. In Sonarpur P. S. none of the union offices can function due to terror. In South Beliaghata, trade union-activities of all the factories have been forcibly stopped by the gangsters. In Manicktolla, the armed gangsters carried on series of attacks on Bengal Chemical Shramik Union. In Barrackpore Industrial Belt trade union functioning has been forcibly stopped. The gangsters who have created this terror are all anti-social elements and well-known to the officials of local police stations. But instead of taking action against them, Police and CRP are instructed to give them full help and support and they jointly move with Police and CRP.

One of the worst affected area is Jadavpur-Tollygunj area. The following facts will reveal the position :

Trade Union Workers Murdered :

1. Dulal Das of Chopra Motor Workers' Union.
2. Sreenath Pradhan of Chaliha Rolling Mills Workers' Union.
3. Chhater Singh of Jay Engineering Workers' Union.
4. Lakhan Gharami of Fire Brigade.
5. Pradeep Mukherjee of Metal Box Workers' Union.

Trade Union Workers attacked with intent to murder :

1. Prantosh Dey, Vice-President, Chaliha Rolling Mills Workers' Union.
2. Nanigopal Mukherjee of E. E. C. Union.
3. Shibnath Dutta, Secretary, Paints and Lacquers Workers' Union.
4. Madhusudhan Mitra of Chopra Motors Workers' Union.
5. Bipul Paul of Jay Engineering Workers' Union.
6. Pares Paul of Jay Engineering Workers' Union.

Trade Union Workers arrested and still in detention :

1. Tapan Chakraborty of Chopra Motor Workers' Union.
2. Biswanath Das of Paints and Lacquers Workers' Union.
3. Ranjit Bose of Swastic Industries Workers' Union.
4. Dilip Roy of Chaliha Rolling Mills Workers' Union.

Besides, 24 active trade union workers were assaulted and arrested and subsequently released.

Union Offices attacked by the Police, CRP and Congress (R) gangsters :

1. Tollygunj Rickshaw Workers' Union.
2. Chaliha Rolling Mills Workers' Union.
3. Dassani Engineers Workers' Union.

3. Canton Carpentry Works.
4. National Rubber Manufacturers Ltd.
5. Haryana Rubber Works.
6. Metal Reforms (M. R. C.).
7. Ganesh Commercial.
8. Central Rubber Works.

In Howrah the Union Office of NISCO Workers' Union was looted and 12 leading workers including Sri Asoke Joshi, Vice-President of the Union were severely assaulted by the Congress (R) gangsters. Police instead of taking action against the gangsters, arrested Sri Biman Dhar, General Secretary of the Union under MISA. The armed gangsters in presence of Police have set-up camp near the gate of the factory and do not allow the leading trade union workers to report to their duties.

A number of Trade Union workers were murdered in Howrah. Some of the names are given here :

Trade Union Workers murdered in Howrah :

1. Jibananda Pandit of Gogal Bhai Jute Mill.
2. Ram Chandra Rai of Ambica Jute Mill.
3. Ajoy Ghosh of Nischinda Workers' Trade Union.
4. Balai Guha of Bharat Blade.
5. Manick Ganguly of G. K. W.
6. Ramadhar Jadav of Ashok Glass.
7. Asit Dalal of Belur.
8. Madhu Pandit of Shalimar.
9. Sukhdeo Pakarashi of Binani Metals.
10. Partha Pratim Dasgupta of Shankey.
11. Niranjana Dalui, T. U. Organiser.
12. Chanchal Biswas, T. U. Worker.
13. Baidyanath Bag of Hind Motor.
14. Md. Safi, T. U. Worker.
15. Basanta Dutta of Bamungachi.
16. Madan Satra of Kadamtolla.

17. Shankar Mondal of Belur.

In Hind Motor Works Automobile manufacturing factory of the Birlas at Konnagore, Hooghly, Police arrested on 31.12.'71. the following nine leading union Workers under MISA :

1. Nikhilesh Guha, Committee Member.
2. Aloke Chakraborty, Committee Member.
3. Shakti Mukherjee, Active Worker.
4. Kartick Banerjee, Committee Member.
5. Sudhir Das, Dept. Committee Member.
6. Sitanath Dey, Treasurer.
7. Parimal Bhattacharjee, Asst. Secretary.
8. Asoke Chakraborty, Committee Member.
9. Chunilal Banerjee, Committee Member.

In protest against their arrest, the entire 14,000 workers of the factory stopped work on 31.12.1971 and resorted to protest strike on 1st January, 1972.

CITU affiliated Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor Union is the biggest and most organised union in Jute industry. Out of a total strength of 230,000 Jute Workers in 65 Jute Mills of West Bengal, the membership of Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor Union as on 31.12.1970 was 106063. In this background attacks perpetrated against the Jute workers and activists of Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor Union is to be taken cognizance of. Union organisers in Jute industry—Bibek Panja of Budge Budge, Ramchandra Rai of Ambica Jute Mill at Belur, and Ash Mohammed of Khardah Jute Mill were murdered. In Barrackpore Industrial belt where more than one lakh Jute workers live, in 15 Jute mills leading union workers are being constantly harassed and attacked by police and the gangsters. In Soorah Jute Mill in Calcutta two workers were killed and in Union North Jute Mill at Beliaghata, union activists are forcibly stopped from reporting to their duties. In Birlapur, workers of Birla Jute Mills are the target of constant attacks. In

3. Titagarh Branch Office of Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor Union.
4. All Trade Union Offices at Khardah and Dum Dum.
5. Bird & Co. Mazdoor Union, Dakshindari.
6. Eastern Paper Mills Workers' Union, Dakshindari.
7. Hindusthan Sheet & Metal Employees' Union, Dakshindari.
8. Dum Dum Weaving Factory Workers' Union, Dakshindari Branch.

Leading Trade Union Workers of the factories in the following places not allowed to join their duties or to enter into factories :

Dakshindari	—	Number of factories.
Dum Dum	—	In almost all factories.
Baranagore	—	Number of factories.
Khardah	—	Indian Oxygen. Calcutta Silk. Dalmia Iron & Steel.

Alambazar Jute Mill.

Jhirani Glass Factory.

Titagarh Paper Mill at Kankinara and Titagarh.

R. I. C. at Baranagore.

Kalyani Spinning Mill at Habra

(under Barasat Sub-Divn.).

House of leading Trade Union Leaders raided and looted :

1. Ajoy Mukherjee, Leader of State Government Employees' Co-ordination Committee, who was recently dismissed by the Government along with other leaders of the Co-ordination Committee.
2. Sadhan Chakraborty, Ex-MLA of Khardah.
3. Gopal Bhattacharjee, Ex-MLA of Panihati.

In Mahestolla P. S., 24-Parganas functioning of the following unions has been affected and the leading workers are not allowed to report to their duties :

1. Bata Shoe Factory—Batanagar.

2. E. C. E. Mazdoor Union.
3. S. F. Products Factory Workers' Union.
4. Andaman Timbers Workers' Union.
5. Indian Chain Workers' Union.
6. Spring Sales Workers' Union.
7. R. Sen Group of Industries Workers' Union.

In South Beliaghata, Calcutta the position is equally alarming. The following facts will speak for itself. The Trade Union workers murdered :

1. Hari Chatterjee, Asst. Secretary, Bengal Potteries Mazdoor, Union.
2. Manik Chakraborty, Bengal Pottery (Co-operative).
3. Manmohan Biswas of National Rubber.
4. Kesto Das of National Rubber.
5. Sultan Munshi, a worker of National Tannery & Secretary, National Tannery Workers' Union.

Trade Union Workers kept under detention under P.V.A Act :

1. Narayan Ghosh of National Rubber.
2. Ashoke Khatick of Olympia Rubber.
3. Ratan Sarkar of Olympia Rubber.

Trade Union Workers attacked with intent to murder :

1. Rabi Dey of Canton Carpentry Works.
2. Jogen Chowdhury of Bengal Pottery.
3. Tushar Bakshi of Bengal Pottery.

Trade Union Offices attacked and forcibly occupied and workers forcibly restrained from reporting to their duties in the factories :

1. Bengal Potteries Ltd.
2. Sura Jute Mill, Branch Office of Bengal. Chatkal Mazdoor Union.

2. B. N. Prosad of Durgapur Steel Plant.
3. Manindra Banerjee of Durgapur Steel Plant.
4. Sunil Shaktikari of —do—
5. Sunil Achariya of —do—
6. Ramgopal Pal of M.A.M.C., Durgapur.
7. Rathi Bhattacharjee of M.A.M.C, Durgapur.
8. Sukhomoy Dutta of —do—
9. Gopal Sinha Roy of —do—
10. Biswanath Ghosh of Durgapur Project Ltd.]

In Chittaranjan, false cases have been instituted against 223 persons out of which 123 persons are workers of the Chittaranjan Locomotive factory. (Public Sector undertaking).

In Asansol-Burnpur area six leading Trade Union workers were detained under the PVA Act.

The colliery workers of Raniganj coal belt are victims of the fiercest attacks carried on by the colliery owners with the help of Congress (R) gangsters and police. Over 1000 leading trade union workers of the collieries are in detention. One T. N. Sukla, an expelled Member of Socialist Party who has now joined Congress (R) is the main organiser of the attacks now being carried on in this area. The hooligans are forcing the coal-mine workers to become members of Congress (R) union and those who refuse are not allowed to join their work. The Dhawras (i. e. quarter of colliery workers) are being looted and hundreds of workers have been evicted from their houses.

In Farakka Barrage Project the following unions officials were detained under M I S A :

1. Asutosh Neogy, Joint Secretary, Engineers' Association.
2. Sukhomoy Bose, General Secretary, Staff Association.
3. Anup Kumar Mitra, Vice-President, Staff Association.

4. Mihir Chatterjee, General Secretary, Farakka Barrage Project Workers' Union.

Criminal cases were instituted against all of them. When the criminal cases were dismissed they were detained under MISA. The reasons ascribed for detaining them under MISA relates to some alleged incidents reported to have happened one or two years back. Immediately after arrest of these important union functionaries at Farakka their union offices were occupied by the hooligans of Youth Congress who put up their own union name plate. Thereafter, the gangsters have started terrorising the workers to force them to become members of the INTUC Union. This is one of the cases how Police, CRP and administrative power is being used to suppress trade union movement and force upon the workers the government supported union. This is being done when more than a thousand workers are awaiting retrenchment. Hooligans' main object is to frustrate any movement against retrenchment.

The police officers refuse to take diary (FIR) of any incident of attack. When workers or union leaders go to police stations to report incidents, they are either arrested on false charges or assaulted and thrown out. Kanu Dutta, a resident of Durgapur Project Coke Oven Colony at Durgapur was murdered in April 1971. His elder brother Sri Ajoy Dutta went to the police station to report the murder of Kanu Dutta. Police immediately arrested Sri Ajoy Dutta.

One worker of Ichapore Rifle Factory while travelling in a public bus was forcibly brought down by armed gangsters and murdered. In protest against this murder when the workers along with the Works Manager of the Rifle Factory (a class I Govt. Servant) came to the Police Station, the Police Officials not only refused to record the protest but also resorted to lathi charge forcing them to leave the police station.

Dakshindari worker bustees were set on fire by the gangsters on 13th October, 1971 when one old woman and a three years child were burnt to death. Fire Brigade came to put out the fire. But armed gangsters did not allow Fire Brigade men to put out the fire. Police standing near the place did not intervene. The intensity of the attack is increasing now when Jute workers are getting organised for a sustained and united strike struggle to realise their longstanding demand for wage rise. It is clear that the purpose of these attacks is to frustrate the impending struggle of the Jute workers.

In Durgapur, Shri Jiban Roy and Shri Basudev Chatterjee both Joint Secretaries of Hindusthan Steel Employees' Union and Shri Amar Bhattacharjee, Asst. Secretary of A. V. B. Employees' Union are detained under MISA. At present 55 leading Trade Union workers of various factories in Durgapur are detained under PVA Act and MISA. During the historic strike struggle of Durgapur workers in August, 1970 in protest against arrest of union leaders and deployment of CISF forces inside Durgapur Steel Project, when 25,000 Police and CRP were employed to suppress the struggle of 60,000 workers, 1110 false cases were instituted against leading trade union workers and the harassment of the workers due to these cases still continue. And now the number of such cases will be 2,000. In Graphite (India) Ltd. 90 Police Cases were instituted against 27 workers and all of them were victimised. In ACC-Vickers-Babcock Ltd. more than 50 leading Trade Union workers were involved in false cases and all of them were victimised by the management. CRP forces are deployed in the township of AVB workers in Durgapur. The workers are treated in a manner as if they are living in a concentration camp. Shri Atin Mukherjee, Asst. Sub-Inspector of Police posted in workers' township along with two hundred CRP forces is torturing the workers, even women are not spared. Workers and their families are denied freedom to move within the township. CRP forces are

posted even inside the factories. This repression on AVB workers is being carried on since August 1970. Shri S. S. Dhavan, the then Governor of West Bengal informed the General Secretary of CITU, West Bengal Committee in his letter dated 8th February, 1971 that the incidents of repression in AVB Township and the complicity of the District Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police of Burdwan were referred to the Home Secretary of West Bengal for enquiry. But upto now the fate of this enquiry is not known. A number of letters were written to Home Secretary and to Sri Sidhartha Sankar Ray, Minister without portfolio, Government of India, but they are also silent on this enquiry. This has also been brought to your notice by Shri Md. Ismail, M.P., President, CITU, West Bengal Committee.

In Mining & Allied Machinery Corporation, Durgapur (a Public Sector undertaking), Sri Shamadas Banerjee and Sri Chandra Sekhar Chatterjee—both front ranking workers of CITU affiliated union, were suspended on 25th December, 1971 for participation in a demonstration organised by the union in support of Bangladesh. Sri Manick Chandra Dutta, a trade union worker of CITU affiliated union and a worker of Ophthalmic Glass Plant, Durgapur (a Public Sector undertaking) detained under PVA Act since March 1971, was served with termination notice (dated 27.12.1971) without assigning any reason.

In Sen-Raleigh Cycle Factory at Asansol where 3500 workers are heroically carrying on their struggle against closure of the factory since last nine months, the Government instead of forcing the employer to reopen the factory are arresting the leaders of the fighting workers under PVA Act and MISA. 22 workers of Sen-Raleigh, Asansol have been arrested since August, 1971.

The names of some of the trade union workers murdered in the industrial areas of Burdwan are given here :

1. Paritosh Seal of Hindusthan Cables Shramik Union, Rupnarayanpur.

Workers' Union. He narrowly escaped the bomb thrown at him. The gangsters also attacked Sri Ramen Sen, Councillor of Calcutta Corporation from Jadavpur Area. In protest against this attack the Mayor of Calcutta said :

“It has come to my knowledge that the residence of Sri Ramen Sen, a Councillor, Corporation of Calcutta, has been damaged by some miscreants who came with the intention of physical assault which might be resulted in an extreme end. I condemn this sort of action launched against a people's representative. I also condemn the action of those miscreants who even dared to assault the wife of Sri Ramen Sen in his absence.”

Sd/- S. S. GUPTA,
22.12.'71.

On 17th, 18th and 19th December, 1971 the Congress (R) gangsters carried on house to house attacks in Jadavpur-Tollygunj-Bijoygarh-Netaji Nagar Colony area and also in Mia Bagan Bustee almost like witch hunting. The women were attacked in large scale.

These apart, the Congress (R) gangsters carried series of attacks in the night taking advantage of blackout during the war with Pakistan in Tollygunj, Jadavpur, Noapara, Khardah, Dum Dum, Cossipur, Dakshindari, Beliaghata, Batanagar, Durgapur and Raniganj Coal Field area. And the attacks still continue.

In Haldia Port (Midnapore District) S. E. Railway retrenched 527 workers of Haldia Link Railway on 28. 12. 1971 taking advantage of the National Emergency and it is learnt that West Bengal Government gave green signal to execute this retrenchment scheme.

The attack is not confined on the workers only. It is equally directed against the members of workers families.

On December 25, 1971 at about 5 P.M. more than dozen police personnel in plain clothes entered into K.S. Roy T.B. Hos-

pital compound where some young boys were playing games. One Bablu was also there along with his friends. Suddenly police personnel rushed to Bablu without any incident or provocation and fired at him. Bablu out of fear and to save his life started running and when he came near the pond within the hospital compound, a bullet fired by the police hit him and he fell into the pond. Police made no attempt to remove Bablu's body. What is strange is that when Shri Prasanta Sur, Ex-Mayor of Calcutta reported the incident to the Superintendent of Police, 24-Parganas on 25 December, 1971, the S.P. said that no such incident was reported to him. The next day when Bablu's body was removed by police and the matter was again reported to the S.P., he remained silent.

Sreemati Madhabi Mazumder, aged about 45, mother of a few children, residing at 233 A, Netaji Subhas Ch. Bose Road, Calcutta-40, was going for shopping on 17th December, 1971. On the way she was caught by Shri R.K. Mohanty, C. I. and Officer-in-Charge of Jadavpur Police Station, Calcutta by the neck. Shri Mohanty abused her most filthily and kicked her in the buttock with his boots.

On 18th December, 1971 the Police Officer, Shri R. K. Mohanty while on a chase assaulted another woman Smt. Jashomati Bhattacharjee of 60-K, Subhas Colony, Calcutta-40 with the butt of the revolver. There are hundreds of such cases in various places.

Smt. Asima Poddar, a young girl of Beliaghata was arrested by police. In the police lock-up of Beliaghata Police Station she was stripped-off her clothes, molested and brutally tortured.

In the whole process of this repression thousands of workers have been uprooted from their dwelling places and hundreds of them have been forcibly prevented from reporting to their duties. A good number of union offices have been burnt and occupied by Congress (R) gangsters. The whole purpose of the attack is to suppress trade union and democratic

Since July, 1971 only 100 yards from Raj Bhavan Calcutta where you live, the anti-social elements with the help of police have virtually occupied Great Eastern Hotel and have forcibly driven out 35 leading workers including Executive Committee members of CITU affiliated Great Eastern Hotel Employees' and Workers Union. They are still not allowed to enter into the hotel and to report to their duties. About 40 representations were given by the union to Deputy Commissioner of Police (Central), Calcutta, Home Secretary and the Chief Secretary of West Bengal in this regard. But no action was taken. Md. Ismail, M. P., President of CITU, West Bengal Committee met you personally and narrated the position. But even now the workers are not being allowed to report to their duties and the anti-social elements are still in the hotel. The whole purpose of these attacks is to force the workers to join Congress (R) sponsored union. The workers who refuse to join Congress (R) union are assaulted. So far 12 workers have been severely beaten by the hooligans.

Even under the National Emergency following the war declared by Pakistan against India, the attacks were continued by the Police, CRP and Congress (R) gangsters with unabated fury. We cite here some of the incidents :

On 3rd December, 1971 : The Congress (R) gangsters with the help of police attacked the workers of Shri Amritnagar Colliery, Raniganj and forcibly evicted about 1000 workers from their houses (i.e. dhawras). Police instead of protecting the workers arrested 95 innocent workers on 8th December, 1971. Shri Rabin Chatterjee, General Secretary of Colliery Mazdoor Sabha, Raniganj along with Sri Bamapada Mukherjee, Ex-MLA from Burnpur met the District Magistrate and Superintendent of Police of Burdwan, but without any result.

On 10th December, 1971 : The Congress (R) gangsters attacked the Santhal Workers of Babudanga Village, Jote

Janki Colliery and Topsis Colliery of Raniganj Coal Field area with the help of police.

On 11th December, 1971 : Police arrested 5 Trade Union leaders of Sen-Raleigh workers who are continuing their struggle against closure of the factory since last 9 months.

On 12th December, 1971 : Congress (R) gangsters attacked the Branch Office of Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor Union at Titagarh and destroyed the office records. Police on the same day arrested three workers of the Union instead of taking any action against the miscreants.

On 16th December, 1971 : The armed gangsters along with Police and CRP attacked the workers of Jay Engineering Works in Usha quarters, Poddarnagar and Katjunagar Colony ; they broke open union office and brutally assaulted the wife and daughter of Madan Mohanta, a worker of Jay Engineering Works.

On 19th December, 1971 : Congress (R) gangsters along with CRP and Police attacked the people of Rajendra Prosad Colony in Tollygunj-Jadavpur area of Calcutta.

Congress (R) gangsters attacked the people of the area covered by Gray Street, Bagbazar Street, Jatindramohan Avenue and Chitpore Road of Calcutta. The attacks was prolonged for a number of hours. The Police Vans bearing No. WBS 9132, WBS 2333, WBJ 9196, WBH 490 and WBS 9196 (Jeep) with police contingents were all along present in the area when the marauders carried on the attacks. But Police did not give any protection to the people attacked by the gangsters.

On 20th December, 1971 : The Congress (R) gangsters attacked Sri Haridas Malakar, General Secretary of Jay Engineering

movement by creating a reign of terror. It is a deliberate attempt to gag the voice of the workers and the people and to deny them their basic democratic rights. This can not continue for long and people are no more ready to bear this repression any more.

We, therefore, demand of you as the Chief Executive of the State Administration under President's Rule in West Bengal that :

1. The repression and attacks on trade union and democratic movement should stop immediately.

2. The Government should immediately stop supporting the armed gangsters. Police and CRP should be directed not to interfere in trade union and democratic movement and not to help the gangsters. The gangsters and anti-social elements creating terror should be brought to book.

3. All repressive measures including PVA Act and MISA should be withdrawn. CRP forces should be immediately withdrawn from West Bengal.

4. The Government should be impartial and public enquiry should be held on the conduct of police and Government Officials involved in encouraging and aiding and abetting the gangsters in carrying on the attacks and all guilty officers should be punished.

5. The political prisoners sent out of West Bengal should be immediately brought back and pending their release they should be given the status of Class I prisoners and given human treatment.

6. Unlimited powers given to police under President's Rule in West Bengal should be curbed and public enquiries

should be held on all murders committed by police including murders committed in police lock-ups and in prisons and all guilty officers should be punished.

7. All persons connected with trade union and democratic movement arrested under PVA Act, MISA and in various cases should be immediately released.

8. All closed factories, offices, coal-mines and establishments should be immediately reopened with full compliment. If the employers refuse to reopen the closed units they should be taken over by the Government with full guarantee to workers' rights and entitlements.

9. The derogatory clauses of Industrial (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act 1971 which curtails the basic rights of the workers in so far as it empowers the Government to suspend Industrial Disputes Act, Industrial Employment (Standing order) Act and the Minimum Wages Act in industrial undertakings taken over by the Government, should be repealed and right of the workers should be restored.

10. Either employment or unemployment benefit should be provided to all who are unemployed.

11. Full trade union and democratic rights should be guaranteed.

12. National Emergency should be immediately withdrawn.

Sd/- MD. ISMAIL
President,

Sd/- MONORANJAN ROY
General Secretary.

**CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS,
WEST BENGAL COMMITTEE.**

**.249, Bepin Behari Ganguly Street,
Calcutta-12**

CITU Denounces Barbarous US Bombing on North Vietnam

Foiled for the time being in its blackmailing and gangster tactics against the people of Bangladesh and India, the U. S. Imperialists unleashed a most fierce and barbarous attack against the people of North Vietnam on December 26. In its unprovoked and massive bombing raids, surpassing in ferocity all previous attacks launched against North Vietnam, the US militarists used bombs of near-nuclear devastating capacity.

Denouncing the unprovoked and barbarous attack on the people of North Vietnam, Com. B. T. Ranadive, President, CITU issued the following statement on December 30 :

The CITU denounces the aggressive and barbarous American bombing on the people of North Vietnam. This unprovoked attack exposes the criminal designs of U. S. President Nixon who under the guise of peace talks and Vietnamisation of war has been conspiring to launch fresh attacks against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. The CITU further denounces the use of near-nuclear bombs surpassing in their devastation any weapon used before.

The CITU calls upon India's workers to express their solidarity with the fighting people of Vietnam and protest against this aggression of American imperialism which only a couple of weeks back threatened India with its Seventh Fleet and has been helping Yahya Khan to kill Indian soldiers and butcher the people of Bangladesh.

The CITU calls upon the Government of India to protest vigorously against these attacks on the friendly people of Vietnam, demand with-

drawal of the U. S. forces from the soil of Vietnam and grant recognition to the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam. It also earnestly appeals to the Governments of People's China and the U. S. S. R. to cancel Nixon's

visits to their respective countries. Talks for detente and peace with Nixon lose all meaning in face of this near-nuclear attack against a socialist country. The CITU is firmly convinced that Nixon would not have dared to indulge in these barbarities if the two Socialist States had stood shoulder to shoulder to cry a halt to his aggression.

Ruthless Repression Continue On AVB Workers

Ruthless repression has continued unabated for the last 17 months on the workers of ACC-Vickers-Babcock Ltd. by its British management with the help of the local administration, Police and C. R. P. As already reported in the September, 1971 issue of "The Working Class", repression was mounted on the AVB workers and others after the historic strike-struggle of sixty thousand Durgapur workers in August, 1970. Unable to break their indomitable spirit inspite of large-scale retrenchment and victimisation of workers and leaders of the AVB Employees' Union (CITU), the local administration directly intervened and ruthless attack was let loose on the workers and their families by the Police and CRP. Arrests of workers and Union Leaders on false charges, detention under PVA and other repressive laws, attacks by the Police in the union offices, intimidation of and insults to workers and their family members, assaults on active union workers—these are the daily experiences of the AVB workers.

The local administration including the District Magistrate and Superintendent of Police, Burdwan, are not only patronizing these attacks—these are being actively planned and guided

by them. A Sub-Inspector of Police, Atin Mukherjee, has been posted in the workers' township and is acting as the chief organizer of these attacks. About 200 CRP are posted there to terrorize the workers and their families. Workere are being tortured inside their quarters and even women are not spared.

Md. Ismil, President of the CITU, West Bengal and also of the AVB Employees' Union has sent telegrams on January 4 to the Prime Minister and President of India drawing their attention to the serious situation and demanding immediate intervention to stop the repression. He has also drawn the attention of the Governor, West Bengal and has sought his immediate intervention. Earlier, in February 1971, Monoranjan Roy, M. P., General Secretary, CITU (West Bengal) had drawn the attention of the then Governor to the repression and the complicity of the local administration and the matter had been referred to the Home Secretary, West Bengal for an enquiry. But uptil now the fate of the enquiry is not known and a number of letters written in this matter to the Home Secretary and Shri S. S. Ray, Minister-in-charge of West Bengal Affairs, elicited no response from them.

CITU State Committee Meetings

WEST BENGAL

The Working Committee of the West Bengal State Committee of the CITU met in Calcutta on January 9 to consider the grave situation facing the T.U. and democratic movements in the State due to the unprecedented attacks mounted on it by the ruling party. The meeting was attended by 81 members from the districts and presided over by Md. Ismail, M.P., President of CITU, West Bengal. Monoranjan Roy, General Secretary, West Bengal State Committee of CITU gave a brief report of the working of the State Committee since the last meeting of the Working Committee.

The Working Committee adopted a resolution condemning the arrest on false charges and detention without trial of hundreds of workers and leaders of T.U. and democratic movements under PVA, MISA, etc. It strongly protested against the inhuman treatment meted out to the political prisoners inside jails, against the killing of scores of prisoners within the jails and against the revengeful transfer of about 1300 political prisoners to jails in other States, far away from their homes. The resolution demanded immediate return of these prisoners to West Bengal, their humane treatment inside jails including grant of the status of Class I Political Prisoners and their release without delay.

Against Semi-fascist attacks by Police, CRP and anti-socials

The Working Committee considered the reports of members from different districts and

industries about the the reign of terror created by Congress (R) gangsters with the help of police, CRP and local administration and the semi-fascist attacks organised by them to terrorise the workers. These preplanned attacks are particularly directed against militant trade unions and in those areas where democratic movement has a strong base. Through this terror tactics, a large number of union offices (CITU) have already been forcibly occupied by Congress (R) gangsters. Further, these hoodlums, supported by the police and the employers, are also forcing workers, under threat of murder, to resign from CITU unions and join Congress (R) unions. Armed gangsters are openly entering factories to terrorise workers. Trade Union activities in these areas have become almost impossible.

The Working Committee has, in a resolution, condemned these planned attacks organised by the ruling party to liquidate T.U. and democratic organisations opposed to its anti-people policies, and resolved to organise a broad-based united movement to resist these attacks. It was, accordingly, resolved that—(a) 'ANTI REPRESSION DAY' will be observed by workers and employees in all factories, offices, Coal mines and tea gardens on January 25, when mass deputations will be organised to the respective managements and Memoranda submitted, and (b) a broad-based CONVENTION of T.U. representatives from all industries and districts will be held on January 30 to finalise a programme of joint movement against repression and terror. Other

Central Trade Unions have been requested to jointly organise the Convention.

The Working Committee also demanded of the Government to stop terror and repression, to release all prisoners detained in connection with democratic movements and to lift the National Emergency so that peaceful, normal conditions are restored—which alone can ensure a free and fair election in the State.

The Working Committee also adopted resolutions—(a) condemning the anti-working class provisions of the Industries (Development & Regulation) Amendment Act, 1971 and demanding immediate change in these provisions, (b) supporting the struggle of Simpson workers in Madras, (c) hailing the release of Sheikh Mujibar Rahaman, and (d) condemning the renewed U. S. bombing of North Vietnam and demanding recognition of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam by the Government of India.

A State Council was formed with 488 members representing all industries and districts.

MAHARASHTRA

A meeting of the Maharashtra State Committee of CITU was held in Bombay on December 31. S. Y. Kolhatkar presided over the meeting which was attended by 20 members.

All the members stood in silence for one minute to pay homage to the Martyr Sunil Sen, Member, General Council of CITU, who fell recently to the bullets of gangsters in West Bengal.

Madan Phadnis, Secretary, submitted a report of the activities of the Committee since the last meeting. P. K. Kurane while speaking on the situation in the State after the declaration of emergency pointed out that the Government of

Maharashtra refused to include CITU representative on the Defence Committee because CITU was not prepared to give up the right to strike if the workers were attacked by the employers.

The meeting noted that the letter of the President of Maharashtra State Committee of CITU to the State Labour Minister was silent on the retrograde provisions of the DIR and the attacks of the capitalists on the workers. It was agreed that the stand taken in the letter was not in conformity with the CITU's position on the question.

Kurane presented a budget of Rs. 19,000 for the year 1972 which was approved by the meeting. It was decided that every affiliated union should collect special fund of Re. 1 per member to meet the expenses.

The Committee decided to publish a Marathi journal of the CITU from May next. It decided to observe one week from January 18 to 25 to popularise the slogan of confiscation of U. S. capital in India. A booklet should be published in Marathi and sales organised during the week.

The Committee met once again on January 6. B. T. Ranadive, President, CITU, attended the meeting and guided its deliberations.

The meeting adopted a statement of accounts for 1971. It decided to bring out a booklet in Marathi on the basis of CITU Memorandum on Unemployment.

The Committee condemned the imposition of Sunday work on workers without any remuneration and forcible collection of defence fund by the employers and the Government.

B. T. Ranadive explained the present situation and the tasks of the working class.

RAJASTHAN

A meeting of the Rajasthan State Committee of CITU was held at Jaipur on January 6.

The meeting expressed its condolences at the passing away of Swami Kumaranand, AITUC leader of Rajasthan.

The meeting passed resolutions on rising prices, withdrawal of emergency and restrictions on trade union and democratic rights. It expressed concern at the statements issued by President and Prime Minister of India suggesting moratorium on strikes and called upon the working class to raise its voice against these policies.

The State Committee condemned the misuse of emergency by the management of Ganganagar Mills which unilaterally decided to reappoint large number of workers and clerks as fresh recruits. It decided to call a meeting of representatives of unions in cotton textile industry on January 26 at Kishangarh to chalk out programme of State-wide movement against workload and for higher D. A. and job security for Badli workers.

The meeting decided to collect the affiliation fees and levies from all the CITU unions in the State at an early date.

The meeting nominated Purnanand Vyas as member and Prem Krishna and Dharma Pal as advisers on behalf of CITU to the State Labour Advisory Board.

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Com. Sunil Sen Murdered By Congress (R) Goondas

Comrade Sunil Sen, a member of CITU, General Council and of the working Committee of the CITU-West Bengal State Committee, was brutally murdered by Congress (R) goondas on December 31. The gangsters, numbering 25/30 and armed with rifles, revolvers and bombs, dragged him out of a neighbour's house where he was talking with some local people, fired at him at point blank range killing him instantly and then dragged away his body. All efforts of the local people to save him failed in the face of severe bombing attacks of the murderers. His body was recovered by the police a few days later. The names of the culprits, all notorious hoodlums and supporters of Congress (R), were supplied to the police but none has been arrested so far.

Comrade Sen was a respected trade union leader of Dum Dum and was connected with several CITU unions in that area, including the Jessop Mazdur Union. He was one of the representatives to the Goa Convention where the historic decision to hold the All India Trade Union Conference at Calcutta in May 1970, was taken. He joined the undivided Communist Party of India in 1942 and have all along been in the forefront of democratic and trade union movements. He was arrested several times and spent 6 years in jail in Pakistan and India.

'The Working Class' pays homage to the memory of this martyr who heroically fought for the working class till the last day of his life.

Growing Militancy Among Workers

It has been a season of united, determined struggles in Andhra. The signs of a growing militancy can no longer be mistaken. Half-measures do not seem to satisfy workers any more than do trade unions which settle for them. This is encouraging in view of the struggles that lie ahead.

The trend was set by the 1500 rice mill workers, both men and women, of Bhimavaram. Led by the Factory Labour Union (CITU), they went on, from December 13, a strike that paralysed work at all the 36 mills of the town. Mill-owners eventually agreed to accept the workers' charter of demands—8 per cent bonus, full P.F. benefits, higher wages for women workers, Wednesday as the weekly day off—and work was resumed from December 18.

The strike launched by the Godavary bridge workers was also crowned with success. About 500 of them, skilled and semi-skilled, have been employed by Braithwaite, Bird and Jessop Companies to work on this road-cum-rail bridge. The workers, many of whom had also been with these contractors at the Farakka and Kosi projects, were offered wages lower than those they had received at these two places. The first step towards struggle was taken with the formation of a union affiliated to the CITU. A strike which was launched under its leadership on December 24 turned out to be complete. It took the employers, however, some time to agree to come to a settlement. The workers would now get bonus and overtime rates after 8 hours' work; they would also be

entitled to leave with effect from July 1, 1971. Besides these, employers agreed to consider the revision of wages by the end of February. The Union called off the strike on January 2.

The AITUC in Andhra, like its wings elsewhere in the country, has been consistently betraying the cause of the working class. A number of disillusioned workers have come out of its fold in recent weeks, joining hands with the mass of workers in the struggle for legitimate rights.

On October 22 last year, 4 workers of the co-operative Spinning Mill, Emmijanur (Kurnool), were dismissed by the management on the charge of absenteeism. When

ANDHRA

workers held a big protest demonstration on October 30, the police suddenly went into action and arrested 49 of them. The strangest part of the story was the total absence of the President of the Union, who holds allegiance to the AITUC, during this incident. The Employees' Union at a subsequent meeting relieved him of his post. The Union has since been reconstituted with Gadilungama Gaud as President, and an agitation for the reinstatement of the workers dismissed and the release of those arrested is now gaining momentum.

The AITUC-led Workers' Union also let down 1240 contract labourers of the Andhra Paper Mill, Rajamahendry. Here too disenchanting workers had come out and formed a staff and workers' union affiliated to the CITU. This union

along with the INTUC-led National Workers' Union and Kagaz Mazdur Union convened a meeting which was to have laid down a charter of demands. The AITUC-led union, however, refused to attend. At a subsequent meeting on December 7 which it attended, it was unanimously asked—since it had already begun negotiations with the management—to press for a better deal for contract labourers as well as for retaining them until the Contract Labour Act came into force. In the long run, however, the AITUC could earn them neither the right to bonus nor the security of employment.

At a Rice Mill in Krishna district two workers—one of them a leader of the Firka Rice Mill Workers' Union, were dismissed by the owners. When the matter was taken up with the Labour Officer, he surprisingly chose to uphold the decision of the management. A strike notice has since been issued and the workers are in no mood to accept the dismissals lying down.

An air of uncertainty hangs about the recommendations of the Central Wage Board for motor transport workers. A Sub-Committee consisting of representatives of the transport operators and workers' unions with the State Labour Commissioner as Chairman had decided that these should come into force from June 1, 1971. When, strangely, the operators took advantage of certain loopholes in the agreements and refused to implement them, the East Godavary Motor Transport Workers' Union (CITU) served them with a strike notice.

Another meeting of the Sub-Committee was convened in which the Labour Commissioner clarified his stand. According to him, the recommendations for wages, D. A. and gratuity were to be implemented in toto from July 1, 1971 while other provisions could be negotiated between the parties concerned.

Workers in East Godavary, however, are keeping their fingers crossed. In case the implementations are not effected, they are determined to go on a strike from January 15.

Rising Tide of Protest Against Dismissal & Assaults

The recent Indo-Pakistan War, it appears, came in very handy for a section of employers in Kerala. On December 24, for instance, the management of the Madras Spinners, Palghat, unceremoniously laid off 150 workers on the plea that there was, because of the war, an accumulation of yarn in the factory. As if this was not enough, the management proceeded to cut off power to the machines which rendered about 200 men idle. The workers are not prepared to take this lying down and have now launched a struggle against these blatantly anti-labour practices.

Recently, the workers of Derah Ismail Coir Company held a demonstration in front of the Coir Corporation's office in protest against its anti-labour policies. A Commission had recently recommended the taking over of the Company by the Coir Corporation. At that stage a few members of the Board of Directors, reported to be CPI men, came out with the stand that the take-over could not be effected until some workers were asked to leave.

The estate workers of Kalpatta, Wynad, have been on strike, since early January, under the leadership of the Kerala CITU, in support of their demands including the one for the reinstatement of retrenched workers at the estate.

A lock-out was declared some time back at the factory of the Indo Marine Agencies, Malabar. The workers launched a 'satyagraha' in protest—which is still continuing. Another lock-out has been reported from the rubber estates of Pathanani Pattu, where M. T. Verghese, President of the Rubber Estate Workers' Union, is now on hunger-strike.

On January 11, 6000 employees

of the Plantation Corporation went on a day's strike as a mark of protest against the anti-working class policies of the Government and, in particular, against the persecution of CITU activists.

2000 handloom workers demonstrated in Trivandrum before the Secretariat under the leadership of the CITU-led Handloom Workers Council demanding immediate measures to solve the crisis in the handloom industry. Workers from Trivandrum and Neyyathinkara taluk participated in the demonstration.

Murderous Assaults on Workers

Workers are being subjected to methodical, murderous assaults all over the state. On December 28,

KERALA

50,000 agricultural workers of Kottayam observed a day's strike and held a massive demonstration in protest against one of the most barbarous attacks on workers in this part of the country—an incident in which 3 members of the Agricultural Labour Union were murdered and 7 women workers stabbed. Demonstrations were also held by agricultural workers of Kuttanad and Coir factory employees of Alleppey who struck work for the day and condemned this dastardly act.

Two deaths, both as a result of Police firing, were reported from the Thumba Rocket Station near Trivandrum on January 2. The trouble arose over the buliding of a tripod in the sea to which the local fishermen had objected. The authorities, ignoring their objection, chose to go on with the project with the help of the police. Fishermen resisted and were first

lathi-charged and then fired upon. Of the two victims, one was a 14-year old student and the other an old man of 72.

On December 25, five workers at Kanjirappejha Dam were attacked by men belonging to the INTUC and the Youth Congress and later transferred to hospital with injuries. All workers at the dam site observed a day's strike in protest against this attack.

When, on December 30, E.K. Menon and Kannan, CITU leaders of Trichur, accompanied by M.A. Krishnan, Secretary of the CPI(M) Town Committee, went to the local police station to lodge a complaint against attacks on innocent workers, they were promptly put under arrest. At the news of these arrests, private bus workers, bus porters and workers of the vegetable market, oil and saw mills of Trichur spontaneously observed a day's strike on the following day. Later, 7000 men held a demonstration in Trichur town.

At the call of Kerala State CITU, workers throughout the State conducted meetings and demonstrations on January 20 in protest against the attack jointly organised by the police and goondas against the toiling classes. Meetings and demonstrations were held in Trivandrum, Quilon, Alleppey, Trichur and Ernakulam districts in response to the call.

Struggles for a better standard of living are also continuing. On December 21, two indefinite strikes were launched; one at Kottayam, by CTS bus workers on a demand for bonus payments, the other in North Wynad, by all sections of toddy tappers on a demand for the full implementation of agreements on wages, bonus and D.A.

A 'satyagraha' is being staged by

the tree-climbing workers of Punnakulan Service Co-operative Society in support of a demand for higher wages. Report of a one-

day strike on december 27, also on a demand for higher wages, has come in from the Rock Quarry at Kakknad.

Delhi Workers' Struggle For Demands, Against Police Zoolum

On January 12, a demonstration was held outside the American-financed IBM office in New Delhi by the Delhi unit of CITU. Led by the IBM Workers' Union (CITU) the workers demonstrated to protest against the dismissal of six drivers by the IBM management and to express resentment against the wanton delay of the Delhi Administration to refer the case of the victimised drivers to adjudication.

Employees of the Indian Council of Applied Economic Research Institute (ICAER), an organisation financed by the Ford Foundation, observed a 'Protest Week' from January 15 to January 21, to protest against the retrenchment of 16 Interviewers by the pro-American management and its refusal to negotiate with the Union.

Employees of the Delhi office of the Macneil Barry Group of Companies observed 'Demand Week' from January 13 to January 20. By holding demonstrations and wearing badges, the employees protested against the anti-worker attitude of the management which has been sitting silent over the Union's Charter of Demands for the past one year. The employees are planning to go on strike if the management fails to concede their demands.

On January 2, some Delhi policemen raided the house of Com. Shri Ram, Joint Secretary of Delhi CITU and General Secretary of Kapra Mazdoor Lal Zanda Union (CITU). They forcibly entered his

house, despite protests from his wife, on the pretext of searching it. Earlier, on December 19, he had been forcibly taken to the Police Station and unnecessarily harrassed, abused and insulted: This deliberate provocation and intimidation by the Police has caused great resentment among workers.

The management of National Herald, a Congress daily founded by Jawaharlal Nehru, have for sometime past sacked scores of working journalists. The latest victim is S. D. Sharma, a Sub-editor, who was sacked recently. Earlier, the

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management had declared a lock-out for more than 15 days to force the workers to accept 4% bonus, against the demand of the workers for 10% bonus. The matter is now before a tribunal.

The Delhi unit of CITU, supported by S. F. I. (Delhi), recently organised a massive demonstration to denounce and oppose the blackmailing acts of US imperialism in this sub-continent, and also to demonstrate its solidarity with the freedom fighters and people of Bangladesh. Over a thousand strong, the demonstrators marched to the USIS office in New Delhi and raised slogans condemning US imperialist role in Asia, Africa and Latin America, demanding moratorium on debt-payments to the USA and nationa-

lisation of all US capital in India beginning with the Oil companies and demanding of the Government to take a strong stand against pressures from the imperialists. Afterwards, the demonstrators marched to the Bangladesh Mission in Delhi to offer congratulations for the liberation of Bangladesh.

'Anti Repression Day'

★ From Last Page
ssion and terror in West Bengal, he has pointed out that this is no ordinary repression, nor is it a passing phase. This is lawless terror unleashed by a ruling class which knows that the people and the working class have seen through its game of exploitation and repression. The working class in West Bengal has inflicted repeated defeats on the ruling Congress Party in successive elections, have fought the ruling class on every economic and political issues. The Congress (R) knows whatever claim for democracy and freedom it makes, the working class and people of West Bengal will reject it, given fair election. That is why it seeks to rule through terror.

The Congress (R) in West Bengal is using semifascist methods to gain supremacy. All norms of democracy are being suppressed. This is the beginning of the attack on democracy and will be extended to other States as the trade union and democratic movements reach an advanced stage. The battle in West Bengal is the battle of Indian working class against the rising totalitarian trend. He has, therefore, called upon all unions to protest against this terror and raise their voice in defence of the working class and people of West Bengal, to express their solidarity with their class brethren heroically fighting this terror.

REPORTS FROM UNIONS

2500 Casual Workers of Haldia Link on the Path of Struggle

Nearly 2500 casual workers employed in the Haldia Link Project (S. E. Rly.) are on the path of struggle to stop mass retrenchment, for job security and for higher wages. The casual workers working in the Haldia Link are not only paid paltry wages of Rs. 3.50 per day on the plea that they are not railway employees, they are also facing mass retrenchment as the Project is nearing completion. On December 28, a total of 527 casual labour of the Haldia Link working at Panskura, Tamruk, Mahishadal and Gobindapur (Sutahata) were retrenched by the Railway authorities and the workers apprehend that a still bigger number is on the list for retrenchment.

The casual labour of Haldia Link have all along been agitating against retrenchment and for their absorption in regular Railway Services, Class IV. Through united struggle, supported by the Head Quarters Action Committee of S. E. Rly., S.E. Rly. (Construction & Project) Labour Union (CITU) and other sections of democratic people, they successfully resisted a similar plot to retrench 1500 casual labour in August. Now they are again on the path of struggle against these anti-labour policies of the Government. They are holding demonstrations and carrying on agitation demanding cancellation of this retrenchment order, for job security and for absorption of casual labour in regular railway services. The Government has deployed CRP to intimidate the workers and crush their struggle.

Kanpur Workers Resist Employers' Attacks

As the Union Government is in no hurry to lift the emergency,

employers in Kanpur—as elsewhere in the country—are reaping full benefits of the situation. The U. P. Government, for example, recently came out with a notification banning strikes for a period of 6 months in the State. Employers in the private sector have taken this opportunity to retrench a large number of workers and have increased the work-load of others.

Curiously, the retrenchments are being made in the name of “rationalisation” and with the full approval of the State Government. In the J. K. Jute Mills, a notice of closure of the broadloom department has been issued and as many as 400 workers are facing retrenchment. In J. K. Manufacturers, the State Labour Commissioner has already given his consent to the retrenchment of 99 workers. The services of another 18 workers, some of whom have been promised alternative jobs, will be dispensed with by the J. K. Cotton Mills when the programme of rationalisation is implemented there.

Working hours have been increased without, as usual, a commensurate enhancement of wages. In the J. K. Cotton Mills a 4-side working has been introduced in the Spinning Department, but workers are to receive only Rs. 25 per month for this additional work-load. In a department of the J. K. Rayons even the lunch break has been discontinued. Leaders of the factory's union were summarily dismissed after the last 76-day strike, and in their absence the owners have gone through what they call an agreement directly with the “workers” without referring the issue to the union.

The Government has clearly chosen to side with the employers. Even the State Labour Department, which otherwise acts as an extended arm of the Employers, Association, is not moving formally in these matters. On the bonus issue, the Government insisted that the unions should accept the Khadilkar formula which they refused to do. The Labour Minister is now reported to have asked the Cotton Textile Industry of Kanpur to add a minimum of 1% to what they are required to give under the law, while the claims of the workers for a minimum of 8.33% would be referred to a High Court Judge.

The CITU unions in Kanpur mobilised the workers for struggle against retrenchment, increase in the work-load and other injustices of the employers. In recent weeks, it has organised meetings of the workers of J. K. Rayon, J. K. Jute and I. E. L. (Fertilizer Division) factories and has called upon them to stand united and carry forward their struggle with more determination.]

Mysore Tile Workers Victimised

Six workers including the Assistant Secretary of the North Kanara Tile Workers' Union (CITU) were chargesheeted and five others laid off by the Ramanath Tile and Clay Industries, Gullapur (Mysore), when the factory recently reopened after having been locked out for some time. The management also refused to attend more than one meeting arranged by the Conciliation Officer, Hubli.

The union has demanded immediate withdrawal of the chargesheets and settlement of the dispute.

Workers Threatened for Refusing to Listen to Speeches of Anti-Socials

It seems West Bengal is now the testing ground where the ruling class is trying out different semi-fascist methods of terrorizing the workers in a bid to crush the radical trade union movement. Some such methods, from kidnapping and murder of T. U. leaders and workers to forcible occupation of union offices by Congress (R) (-) supported hoodlums, have already been reported in this and earlier issues. A slightly different method was adopted by them at the Associated Indian Enterprises factory in Behala (24-Parganas), near Calcutta. On January 3, some 10/12 notorious anti-socials led by one Tapas Das, reported to be a supporter of Congress (R), entered the factory premises and ordered the Factory-in-Charge to release the staff and workers so that he could address them. When the Factory-in-Charge, in spite of threats, refused to comply with his order and the workers also refused to listen to his speeches, the hoodlums left the factory after threatening the workers with serious consequences. This act of deliberate provocation and terrorisation has naturally created great resentment among the workers. The Associated Indian Enterprises Workers' Union (CITU) has drawn the attention of the Governor, West Bengal, State Labour Commissioner and the management and has demanded immediate steps to stop repetition of such provocations.

Textile Workers Deprived Of Statutory Benefit

Workers of the Bengal National Textile Mills, Birati (West Bengal), have been, for the last few years, subjected to naked exploitation by

the owners of the factory. In December, 1967, the owners retrenched 106 permanent workers of the night shift, and employed temporary men in their place. In the Dyeing and Packing departments employment has always been seasonal, workers being re-appointed in March/April every year. Through these unjust and anti-labour practices, the owners have been depriving a large number of workers of the statutory benefits to which they would otherwise have been entitled.

The workers, led by the Bengal National Textile Mills Workers' Union (CITU), recently submitted a mass petition to the Governor of West Bengal, drawing his attention to these irregularities and asking for his immediate intervention.

Workers Build Home For Union

Workers of the Bagalkot Cement Company in Bijapur (Mysore) have built a home for Bagalkot Cement Workers' Union (CITU) at a cost of Rs. 40,000. The building, Kamgar Sadan, was inaugurated on December 11 by N. M. Balsing, a veteran T. U. Leader, at a function presided over by S. Suryanarayan Rao, President of Karnataka State CITU. Speakers, including N. K. Upadhyay President of the Union, urged the workers and middle class employees to fight against repression and to carry on united struggle under the banner of CITU for achieving their objectives. B. T. Ranadive, President, CITU, sent a message on the occasion.

Union Office Forcibly Occupied By Hired Congress Hoodlums

Not content with letting loose an orgy of terror and violence and murderous attacks on T. U. leaders and workers, the ruling party has

now started using hired goondas and armed gangs to occupy offices of Trade Unions in a bid to crush militant T. U. movements in West Bengal. Some days back the office of the Burdwan District Motor Transport Workers' Union (CITU) was attacked and forcibly occupied by hired Congress handlums and the Union records destroyed. This was done taking advantage of the absence of the leading workers of the Union who, for some time past, were unable to come to the Union Office openly due to open threats and terrorisation by these hoodlums. Since then workers are being openly threatened against supporting the Union. It may be recalled that Comrade Mahadev Bannerjee, a popular leader of Kalna (Burdwan Dist., West Bengal) and the President of this Union was brutally murdered by hired Congress goondas only a few months back.

The Union has already drawn the attention of Prime Minister of India in a telegram sent through K. C. Haldar, M. P., President of the Union, and has also appealed to the Transport Workers and the democratic people of Burdwan to condemn this attack on the democratic rights of workers and to put up a strong united resistance against these semi-fascist attacks.

In the past 2/3 years, the Burdwan District Motor Transport Workers Union led the workers in various militant struggles and were successful in compelling the authorities to accept many basic demands of the workers like security of service, stoppage of retrenchment, compensation, bonus, gratuity etc. The present semi-fascist attack on the Union is undoubtedly aimed at crushing the growing success of the united struggle of the Motor Transport workers.

Union Members Arrested on False Charges

It seems that any employer can now trample on workers' legitimate rights with impunity and get away with it. A case in hand has been reported from the Yamuna Hydel Works, U. P.

The Patel Engineering Workers' Union, Dehra Dun, which is a registered organisation and recognized by the management, held its elections at Khadri on July 25, 1971, when suddenly things began to happen. Three days later, all the office-bearers were arrested on false charges. Signatures were forcibly collected from a section of workers which subsequently led to the installation of a stooge union, Patel Engineering Welfare Association, registered conveniently at Simla. Back at Khadri, several workers were dismissed and those Executive members of the Workers' Union, who had in the meanwhile been released on bail, were not given any work. The management also refused to negotiate with the recognised union.

The attention of the Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh has been drawn to this blatant violation of trade union rights. V. C. Verghese, General Secretary of the Workers' Union, has in a statement demanded immediate reinstatement of the workers either arrested or dismissed.

Workers of Man Industrial Corpn. Ltd. on the Path of Struggle

The workers of Man Industrial Corpn. Ltd. (Jaipur, Rajasthan) are on strike since December 18 for realising various demands, including withdrawal of lay-off order on 250 workers of one unit of the Factory. The Company, in the share capital of which the Rajasthan Govern-

ment has also invested money, earns huge profits each year not only from their legitimate industrial activities, but also through black-marketing, tax-evasion, etc. But the management persistently refused to concede the reasonable demands of workers. On the other hand, it clandestinely got a sister company, Man Structural Private Ltd., formed with the same directors to deprive the workers of their legitimate wages as per the recommendations of the Engineering Wage Board. On the false plea of shortage of raw-material, it has "laid off" 250 workers of a particular unit. During the strike period, the Labour Department of the State Government recommended the take over of the said unit, but due to pressure from vested interests the Government is sitting silent on it. It is a curious position when the Government is unwilling to take action against a private sector employer and allows it to deliberately sabotage production though the Government itself is financially interested in that Company. The Man Workers' Union (CITU) has issued pamphlets condemning the dubious game of the management and has also demanded, among other things, that the State Government must immediately take over the undertaking, investigate into the malpractices of the management and accept the reasonable demands of the workers.

Rourkela Workers Debarred From Holding Meetings

The Chief Manager, Ore Mines and Quarries, Rourkela Steel Plant, has prohibited—in a circular issued on December 27—the holding of meetings or demonstrations in the entire plant area, unless permission for them was obtained in writing from the authorities. Those who

violate this directive would be liable to legal action, he has warned.

P. Ramamurti, General Secretary of the CITU, has written to Mohan Kumaramangalam, Union Minister for Steel, protesting against this curtailment of workers' fundamental right to assembly.

LEGAL NOTES

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the Act through notification though it may award it at a higher rate. That this can be done is warranted by the Supreme Court in the selfsame decision.

In that appeal the Supreme Court parries the contention that the minimum wage cannot be more than "what enables the worker to cover his bare physical needs and keep himself just above starvation." The Court, though asserting that the minimum wage cannot be equated with fair wage, held that "the contents of this concept must ensure for the employee not only his subsistence and that of his family but must also preserve his efficiency as a worker."

The Court relies for these observations upon its earlier decision given in *U. Unichoyi vs. State of Kerala* (1962 (1) Supreme Court Reports at page 957). From this point of view the award of a Tribunal can vary the notified minimum wage upwards, because that wage can only be the rockbottom minimum for an entire industry, the proceedings before a Tribunal being necessarily confined to a particular establishment.

But never should there be this position that the Executive will notify one rate and the Tribunal may denigrate it further.

CITU Calls Upon Trade Unions To Observe 'Anti-Repression Day' BETWEEN JAN. 31-FEB. 6

An extended meeting of the office-bearers of the CITU was held in Calcutta on 13th January, 1972. Com. B. T. Ranadive, President, CITU, presided over the meeting. The following communique has been issued after the meeting.

"The meeting expresses its deep sense of sorrow at the premature death of Com. Rajen Sinha, leader of North Bengal tea plantation workers and Member of the General Council of the CITU. It conveys its condolence to the bereaved members of the family of Com. Sinha."

"The CITU expresses its grave concern at the growing murderous attacks on its leaders and cadres, organised by the Ruling Congress in West Bengal through anti-social elements with the active connivance and encouragement by the police officials. Several trade union offices have been ransacked and records destroyed. A reign of terror has been let loose to intimidate the workers where the CITU is strong. Despite several complaints the police officials refuse to take any action while recklessly going on arresting CITU activists on fictitious charges."

"The recent pre-planned attack on the residence of Com. K. G. Bose, President, National Federation of P & T Employees, is a part of the conspiracy the ruling party is hatching to smash the trade union and democratic movement with the help of hooligans. The CITU strongly condemns this cowardly act and demands immediate stoppage to such crimes. The CITU expresses

its fear that, if the ruling Congress continues its game with full co-operation of police officials, the forthcoming Assembly elections in West Bengal are not likely to be free and fair.

"The CITU therefore calls upon its affiliated unions and other trade unions all over the country who value democracy to rally behind the working class and the people of West Bengal and observe one day as Anti-Repression Day during the week from January 31 to February 6. Rallies and demonstrations should be organised in this week to condemn these repressive and gangster acts. It further decides that the resolutions passed in the meeting should be sent to the Prime Minister and Governor of West Bengal."

"The meeting decides that a deputation of the CITU including Com. B. T. Ranadive, President and Com. P. Ramamurti, General Secretary, should meet the President of India to demand end to all these atrocities.

"The CITU considers the anti-Indian attitude taken by the U.S. Government during the struggle of the people of Bangladesh as a serious affront to India's sovereignty. It endorses the initiative taken by the CITU Centre in calling upon all the Central Trade Unions to unitedly campaign for nationalisation of all U.S.-owned concerns and moratorium on debt payment to the U.S. Government. The meeting calls upon the working class to launch a united campaign throu-

ghout the country on these questions so that the Government of India is forced to take firm steps against U.S. imperialists.

"The CITU congratulates the 16,000 Simpson Workers in Tamilnadu who fought unitedly against the anti-labour policy of the DMK Government and defeated the attacks on their trade union and democratic rights.

"The meeting decides to defer the meeting of the Working Committee in view of the coming elections. Date and venue of the meeting will be decided by the Office-bearers after the elections."

Com. B. T. Ranadive, President, CITU, has issued a Circular on January 18, drawing the attention of all affiliated unions and CITU State Committees to the resolution passed by the CITU Office-bearers' meeting calling upon them to protest against the repression and terror in West Bengal and observe 'Anti-repression Day' between January 31—February 6.

He has urged upon all trade unions to treat this as a grave and urgent issue facing the trade union movement in India and affecting the the future of democracy in our country. Uptill now the CITU State Committees and constituent unions have failed to understand the widespread terror and repression facing our movement and working class in West Bengal and to rouse the workers in other states, to take appropriate steps for expressing their solidarity with our movement in West Bengal. The bourgeois Press has blacked out all news about this widespread terror and even the bare facts are not known to T. U. leaders and the workers.

Explaining the nature of repre-

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