



THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITU

ON THE GRAVEYARD OF APARTHEID GLORIOUS BANNER OF SOUTH AFRICA UNFURLED

□ M K Pandhe

Massive jubilation all over the country marked the liberation of South Africa on 10th of May 1994 when Nelson Mandela assumed the Presidentship of the first non-racial state in South Africa. It concluded decades of long drawn and heroic struggle of the people of South Africa under the leadership of African National Congress.

Nelson Mandela was expressing the heartfelt feelings of millions of people of South Africa when spoke on the occasion of his assumption of office:

"We shall build the society in which all South African, both black and white will be able to walk tall, without any fear in their hearts, assured of their inalienable right to human dignity, a rainbow nation in peace with itself and the world."

As expected, the ANC got nearly two-thirds of the votes polled during the first multi-racial elections held in the country. Over 22 million electorate consisted of blacks and white while the elections were by and large peaceful. Efforts made by right wing neo-fascist groups as well as by Inkatha terrorists failed to sabotage the electoral process in South Africa.

The struggle for liberation of South Africa under the leadership of ANC was carried with firm determination for more than three quarters of a century. Several martyrs had to shed their blood for the liberation of the mother-land from the white minority rule. The Sharpeville massacre in 1960 killing 69 unarmed people shocked the world and worldwide protests were raised to condemn the white racist regime who resorted to most brutal killings of innocent Africans fighting for democratic rights and liberties.

African population was subjected to be confined to notorious ghettos with most unhygienic conditions while exclusively white areas were carved for better living conditions through out the country. The earnings of black workers were substantially less than the white workers. Raping of black women by whites was not considered as a crime by the racist judiciary. Eighty per cent of the black population was trampled underfoot while only 20 per cent of the

"settlers" were enjoying the fruits of rich natural resources of South Africa. The gold, diamond and copper mines were all controlled by the white "settlers", while most of the industrial undertakings were owned by them.

The pernicious system continued for such a long time due to support given to it by the imperialist powers. Despite UN condemnation of the regime of apartheid and the sanctions imposed against the racist regime, the major imperialist powers continued to trade with South Africa and nursed the regime of racial discrimination. US imperialists supplied sophisticated weapons to suppress the liberation struggles of not only of South Africa but also of Namibia and Angola. But for the support given to the white regime by these imperialist powers the racial discrimination would not have continued in Africa for such a long time.

The remarkable unity achieved by the ANC, South African Communist party (SACP) and Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) to resist the depredations of the racist regime, played an important role in the liberation movement in South Africa. The Communist Party was banned much before the ANC by the racist Government and several Communists were tortured to death in prison. Twenty six years of prison life of Nelson Mandela has been highlighted all over the world. However, there were many freedom fighters who suffered long term imprisonment in South African prisons.

Faced with the fascist terror all over South Africa, the ANC had to form an armed wing Umkhonto We Sizwe (Spear of the Nation) to carry forward the armed struggle against the white minority regime. The relentless resistance movement organised by this wing played a remarkable role in the fight against apartheid which inspired freedom fighters all over South Africa. The intensification of the repressive measures by the racist Government utterly failed to cowdown the armed guerrillas and the struggle spread in all corners of the motherland. Joe Slovo and Chris

**All India Convention by National Platform of Mass Organisations at
Talkatora Stadium, New Delhi on June 21**

Hani were among the topmost leaders of the armed struggle carried out for several years.

Walter Sisulu, former President of ANC played a significant role in building a powerful underground organisation for the resistance struggle. He also went abroad to organise solidarity help for the freedom fighters.

Fraternal assistance was sent to the anti-apartheid movement by the anti-imperialist and freedom loving forces all over the world. From India Coalmine workers contributed Rs one crore while the State Bank Employees contributed the equal amount to the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa. The Socialist countries and democratic movements in Europe and America contributed a great deal to the movement which immensely helped in the struggle. The world wide condemnation of the apartheid regime

Valuable contributions made in propagating the dangerous consequences of the racist regime by the progressive intellectuals among the minority white population needs to be mentioned here. Several universities were centres of anti-apartheid movement who consistently campaigned for a multi-racial regime in South Africa. The campaign was joined by some religious personalities openly advocated that racial discrimination was against the preaching of Christ which played an important role among the white population. Despite imperialist shameless support to the racist regime, the isolation of the South African Government in the world arena made to think the white population in South Africa that racial discrimination would not help them in the long run. After all proposal by De Clerk Government to put an end to the apartheid regime received support from the white population in a national referendum conducted by the racist Government itself. Despite violent clashes engineered by the right wing forces by and large the transition was peaceful because of the support given by the white population for a multi-racial election. The idea of white homeland within South Africa could not win much popular support due to growing realisation about its impracticability among the white population.

The sizable population of Indian origin in South Africa which had settled there for generation was opposed to the racial discrimination. The struggle conducted by Gandhiji in early part of the century against white domination in South Africa created an impact among the people of Indian origin. In spite of propaganda by the vested interests that the majority rule in South Africa would hit the Indian interest, the population of Indian origin remained with ANC. Prominent leaders of Indian origin such as JOC Maharaj, Ahmed Kathroda and Joy Nayadu have been taken in the new Government is a testimony of

the contribution made by the people of Indian origin in South Africa. Joy nayadu by his relentless activities among the workers became so much popular that he was elected as the Secretary General of COSATU a three million strong militant trade union in South Africa.

The people of India always stood firm in support of the liberation struggle in South Africa led by the ANC. All political parties in India opposed the racist regime and ANC mission was given full cooperation by the Indian people. All the trade unions in India formed Indian Trade Union Committee Against Apartheid which campaigned against racial discrimination in South Africa and collected contributions for the liberation movement. The CITU had the honour to host on four delegations from COSATU in the recent past which toured all over India and campaigned against the apartheid regime. The visit of Nelson Mandela to India and the magnificent rally held in Calcutta only expressed the sentiments of the people of India towards the freedom loving people of South Africa. The CITU had the privilege to attend the last session of the African National Congress which decided the programme for final assault against white minority Government and pave the way for a non-racial democratic state in the land of South Africa.

The attempts by the right reactionary forces in South Africa to obstruct the process of transition could not succeed due to popular movements organised by the ANC against the violent activities. The ghastly murder of Chris Hani in 1993 and bomb explosions organised by the white racist elements could not succeed due to the vigilance shown by the democratic masses. The Inkatha was used to sow differences among the black population and attempts to organise riots among the black populations could not succeed. The skillfull handling of negotiations by the ANC leadership created a favourable atmosphere for holding elections in South Africa. The statesmanship shown by Nelson Mandela in this period made him acceptable to the entire population of black and white and as the leader of the entire nation of new South Africa.

The liberation of South Africa has given a big shot in the arm of the anti-imperialist movement all over the world. It is a big set back to imperialism which was trying to prop the hated regime of apartheid doggedly. South Africa emerged as a front rank fighter for peace and social progress in the world.

The imperialists will however not give up their machinations against this newly liberated country. They will utilise every opportunity to obstruct the process of democratic advance in South Africa. They

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BIOGRAPHY OF NELSON MANDELA



FREEDOM & POWER: Mandela The new S African Flag

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was born on 18th July, 1918, at Umtata, in the Transkei region of the Eastern Cape, South Africa. Related to the paramount Chiefs of Tembuland, in his early 20s Mandela renounced the hereditary tribal rights and prepared for a legal career. He obtained a degree in Law from the university of South Africa, became articles in 1942 and ten years later, set up a legal firm in Johannesburg, with Oliver Tambo. Here, during their years in practice, amongst other things, they defended hundreds of Africans charged under the apartheid laws.

With the zeal of struggle for the South African people since boyhood, Nelson Mandela joined the African national Congress (ANC) at the age of 25, where, together with Walter Sisulu, Oliver Tambo, Anton Lembede and others, he was a driving force in the establishment of the ANC Youth League and in

the fast transformation of the ANC into a mass people's movement taking militant actions against apartheid.

By 1952, already showing strong leadership qualities, Mandela was elected president of the Transvaal branch of the ANC and its National Deputy President. Following this he achieved even greater national prominence as 'Volunteer In Chief', during the Defiance of Unjust Laws Campaign, when thousands of people courted arrest by breaking the apartheid laws. This civil disobedience movement was the first stage of mass counter offensive against apartheid.

From 1952 onwards, Mandela was subjected to repeated banning orders which severely restricted his political activities. However, despite this, he continued to be the inspiration and force behind many different initiatives. For example, in a temporary respite from these bans in 1953, along with Walter Sisulu and Father Trevor Huddleston, he addressed a mass rally to protest against the forced removal of the inhabitants of Sophiatown. And ten, in June, 1955, he played a key role in the convening of the Congress of the peoples, where the world famous Freedom Charter was adopted. (The Freedom Charter has been printed thereunder.) As a result of this at dawn on 5th December 1956, the inevitable knock on the door came, when he was arrested and charged with high treason. The reason trial began in August 1958. In June that year, Nelson Mandela married Winne Nomzamo madikizela.

Nelson Mandela was one of the 156 people accused in the marathon treason trial, arising out of the adoption of the Freedom Charter. Eventually, all were acquitted, after a trial which lasted until March 1961. However, during this relatively short period of time, South Africa had been transformed by the Sharpeville massacre on 21st March 1960, when 69 people were shot dead during a peaceful protest against the pass Laws. The State of Emergency that followed, and the banning of the ANC and the breakway PAC, forced Mandela and other ANC leaders to review their strategy of non-violent opposition.

After years of "knowcking vain and modestly at a closed and barred door" - in the words of Chief Luthuli, president of the ANC, during the 1960s- the

decision was taken to form an armed wing- "Umkhonto we Sizwe", the Spear of the Nation.

Under Mandela's leadership, in May 1961, a National Action Council was convened to call a three day Stay at home, to protest at the establishment of the new white Republic of South Africa. The South African authorities went all out to suppress this action and so Mandela declared.

"If the government reaction is to crush by naked force our non-violent struggle, we will have to reconsider our tactics. In my mind we are closing a chapter on this question of a non-violent policy".

This was to happen, and Mandela was given the task of forming umkhonto we Sizwe, of which he was the first Commander in Chief. umkhonto we Sizwe's first acts of resistance were on December 16th, 1961. Now operating underground, Mandela was able to slip out of the country, to visit heads of states in Africa, as well as to make a short stay in Britain. Following his return later that year, on 5th August 1962, he was stopped on a road block and arrested.

First brought to trial and sentenced to 5 years imprisonment, for charges including leaving the country illegally, he was later brought from prison to reappear in Court as Accused Number One in the Rivonia Trial, which opened on 9th October, 1963. On April 20, 1964 he made his famous "I am prepared to die..." speech from the dock. On June 11, together with 7 of his co-accused, he was found guilty of preparing to overthrow the apartheid state and the following day, June 12, 1964, he was sentenced to life imprisonment.

His Co-accused who served life sentences with him were Walter Sisulu, Ahmed Kathrada, Andrew Mlangeni, Elias Motsoledi, Raymond Mhlaba, Rusty Bernstein, Denis Golberg, Govan Mbeki etc.

In 1985 President P.W. Botha offered to release Mandela on condition than he renounces violence, which Mandela declined. The dialogue to release him unconditionally began with P.W. Botha and F.W. De Klerk in June, 1989. Ultimately on February 11, 1990 Mandela had to be released unconditionally after 27 years of continuous imprisonment. He addressed a massive open rally of our 50,000 the same day organised by the ANC.

He became the Deputy President of ANC on March 2, 1990. As negotiations were started for dismantling of apartheid and conversion of South

Africa to a democratic non-racial state, ANC suspended armed struggle on August 6, 1990.

On July 9, 1991 Mandela became the President of ANC. He received Nobel prize for peace alongwith De Klerk on October 15, 1993. On January 2, 1994, April 27 was declared as the election date. ANC swept the elections held from April 27-29, 1994.

On May 9, 1994 Nelson Mandela was elected as the first black President and on May 10 he took oath as the President of South Africa.

CITU Greet ANC on its Grand Victory

The Secretariat of the CITU issued the following statement on May 6:

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions warmly greets the African National Congress and the people of South Africa for their sweeping victory in the first ever democratic multiracial elections held in the country. It is an outstanding event in the world making the end of a 350-year old abominable apartheid rule in the country, where the majority black people were subjected to unimaginable fascist repression and torture by the white minority, and had to make scores of sacrifices.

The CITU further greets the Congress of South African Trade Unions and Communist Party of South Africa, who were in the forefront of the grim struggle of the people under the ANC.

The victory has given a fitting rebuff to the imperialists who had all through this long period supported the apartheid regime.

The victory paves the way for realisation of a free, non-racial and democratic South Africa as per the Freedom Charter of the ANC.

The CITU assures the ANC and the COSATU that the Indian working class shall always be with them and strive to further strengthen the bonds of fraternity between the two countries.

The CITU calls upon all its state committees and the unions and appeals to all other trade unions to observe 10th May, when the legendary leader Nelson Mandela becomes the first black President of South Africa, as a victory day of the struggle of the oppressed people of the world.

THE FREEDOM CHARTER

(Adopted at the Congress of the people, Kliptown, South Africa, on 26th June 1955)

We, the people of South Africa, declare for all our country and the world to know:

That South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of all the people.

That our people have been robbed of their birth-right to land, liberty and peace by a form of government founded on injustice and inequality;

That our country will never be prosperous or free until all our people live in brotherhood, enjoying equal rights and opportunities;

That only a democratic state, based on the will of all the people, can secure to all their birthright without distinction of colour, race, sex or belief;

And therefore, we, the people of South Africa, black and white together - equals, countrymen and brothers- adopt this Freedom Charter. And we pledge ourselves to strive together, sparing neither strength nor courage, until the democratic changes here set out have been won.

The People Shall Govern

Every man and woman shall have the right to vote for and to stand as a candidate for all bodies which make laws;

All people shall be entitled to take part in the administration of the country.

The rights of the people shall be the same, regardless of race, colour or sex;

All bodies of minority rule, advisory boards, councils and authorities shall be replaced by democratic organs of self- governments.

All National Groups Shall Have Equal Rights

There shall be equal status in the bodies of state, in the courts and in the schools for all national groups and races;

All people shall have equal right to use their own languages, and to develop their own folk culture and customs;

All national groups shall be protected by law against insults to their race and national pride;

The preaching and practice of national, race or colour discrimination and contempt shall be a punishable crime;

All apartheid laws and practices shall be set aside.

The people Shall Share in the Country's Wealth

The national wealth of our country, the heritage of all South Africans, shall be restored to the people;

The mineral wealth beneath the soil, the Banks and monopoly industry shall be transferred to the

ownership of the people as a whole;

All other industry and trade shall be controlled to assist the well-being of the people;

All people shall have equal rights to trade where they choose, to manufacture and to enter all trades, crafts and professions.

The Land Shall be Shared Among Those Who Work it

Restrictions of land ownership on a racial basis shall be ended, and all the land redivided amongst those who work it, to banish famine and land hunger;

The state shall help the peasants with implements, seed, tractors and dams to save the soil and assist the tillers;

Freedom of movement shall be guaranteed to all who work on the land;

All shall have the right to occupy land wherever they choose;

People shall not be robbed of their cattle, and force labour and farm prisons shall be abolished.

All Shall be Equal Before the law

No one shall be imprisoned, deported or restricted without a fair trial;

No one shall be condemned by the order of any Government official;

The courts shall be representative of all the people;

Imprisonment shall be only for serious crimes against the people, and shall aim at re-education, not vengeance;

The police force and army shall be open to all on an equal basis and shall be the helpers and protectors of the people.

All laws which discriminate on grounds of race, colour or belief shall be repealed.

All Shall Enjoy Equal Human Right

The law shall guarantee to all their rights to speak, to organise, to meet together, to publish, to preach, to worship and to educate their children;

The privacy of the house from police raids shall be protected by law;

All shall be free to travel without restriction from country-side to town, from province to province, and from South Africa abroad;

Pass Laws, permits and all other laws restricting these freedoms shall be abolished.

There Shall be Work and Security

All who work shall be free to form trade unions, to elect their officers and to make wage agreements with their employers;

The state shall recognise the right and duty of all to work, and to draw full unemployment benefits;

Men and women of all races shall receive equal pay for work;

There shall be a forty-hour working week, a national minimum wage, paid annual leave, and sick leave for all workers, and maternity leave on full pay for all working mothers;

Miners, domestic workers, farm workers and civil servants shall have the same rights as all others who work;

Child labour, compound labour, the tot system and contract labour shall be abolished.

The Doors of Learning and of Culture Shall be Opened

The Government shall discover, develop and encourage national talent for the enhancement of our cultural life;

All the cultural treasures of making shall be open to all, by free exchange of books, ideas and contact with other lands;

The aim of education shall be to teach the youth to love their people and their culture, to honour human brotherhood, liberty and peace;

Education shall be free, compulsory, universal and equal for all children;

Higher education and technical training shall be opened to all by means of state allowances and scholarship awarded on the basis of merit;

Adult illiteracy shall be ended by a mass state education plan;

Teachers shall have all the rights of other citizens;

The colour bar in cultural life, in sport and in education shall be abolished.

There Shall be houses, Security and Comfort

All people shall have the right to live where they choose, to be decently housed and to bring up their families in comfort and security;

Unused housing space to be made available to the people;

Rent and prices shall be lowered, food plentiful and no one shall go hungry;

A preventive health scheme shall be run by the state;

Free medical care and hospitalisation shall be provided for all, with special care for mothers and young children;

Slums shall be demolished, and new suburbs built where all have transport, roads, lighting, playing,

fields, creches and social centres;

The aged, the orphans, the disabled and the sick shall be cared for by the state;

Rest, leisure and recreation shall be the right of all;

Fenced locations and ghettos shall be abolished, and laws which break up families shall be repealed.

There Shall be Peace and Friendship

South Africa shall be a fully independent state, which respects the rights and sovereignty of all nations;

South Africa shall strive to maintain world peace and the settlement of all international disputes by negotiation - not war;

Peace and friendship amongst all our people shall be secured by upholding the equal rights, opportunities and status of all;

The people of the protectorates - Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland shall be free to decide for themselves their own future;

The right of all the peoples of Africa to independence and self-government shall be recognised, and shall be the basis of close co-operation.

Let all who love their people and their country now say, as we say here :

"These freedoms we will fight for, side by side throughout our lives, until we have won our liberty

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will never accept the important role played by the Communist Party of South Africa. COSATU has advocated establishment of socialism as their objective. The ANC grew only in the valient struggle against imperialist designs in South Africa.

The New South African Government is aware of the implications of the present situation and will thwart all designs of imperialism against the new regime.

The stupendous task of national reconstruction is lying before the people of South Africa. They will no doubt rise to the occasion and meet the challenging situation with full confidence.

The CITU joins the progressive mankind all over the world in welcoming the newly liberated nation. It conveys its warm greetings to the ANC, Communist Party of South Africa and COSATU on this historic occasion and wish them all success in their efforts to build a powerful democratic South Africa in days to come.

THE PEOPLE SHALL GOVERN !

□ P.K GANGULY

"The People Shall Govern", was the pledge taken by the people of South Africa, black and white together, while adopting the Freedom Charter in 1955, and they vowed to fight for freedom side by side till they win liberty. And this historic pledge was fulfilled when Nelson Mandela, the legendary leader was sworn in as the first black President of South Africa on May 10, 1994, after the ANC swept the elections held from April 27-29, 1994. The victory was a brilliant silver lining in a period when imperialism headed by the USA, which supported and sustained the fascist apartheid regime, has been riding rough shods over the democratic aspirations of the people of the world.

But this path--from life prisoner to President was not by any means traversed by so-called non-violent methods. The nearly 350 years of brutal colonial oppression and over four decades of savage apartheid rule could be brought to an end only by armed struggle. When all peaceful and non-violent methods of dismantling apartheid proved fruitless, rather prompted the apartheid regime to mount up armed offensives on the unarmed people, the ANC was compelled to switch over to armed struggle to make South Africa a non-racial, free and democratic state and enable the people to govern.

Beginning of Armed Struggle

Following the most brutal killings--the Sharpeville massacre of March 21, 1960, where 69 unarmed blacks were shot dead, the People's Army--the Umkhonto-We-Sizwe termed as Spear of the Nation was formed in 1961 with Nelson Mandela as its first Commander-in-Chief. And this Spear of the Nation became the mass force driving the hounds of apartheid into the marsh.

President Oliver Tambo of the ANC pronounced, "Let this year of People's Army see us engulf the apartheid system in the fires and thunder of a people's war! Let the year of MK (Spear of the Nation) see us mount a military offensive that will push the enemy into a strategic retreat! Let us see the opportunities that this year give us to replace each combatant with a hundred more, and building on our own achievements, to create a formidable fighting force of the people, superior to the enemy forces because of the justice of our cause, the discipline of our combatants and the bravery and boldness of our warriors."

South Africa saw an intensification of armed struggle thereafter. It took many forms, such as political mobilisation, further unification and

consolidation on the trade union front, upheavals of the youth and students, women's struggles and mobilisation on the Church front.

Mounting Brutal Repression

The apartheid regime marched blindly on the people, certainly to its own downfall, but leaving streams of blood in its trail. June 16, 1976 witnessed another ghastly massacre of hundreds of school children at Sweto. It had already banned ANC in 1960. It also banned the United Democratic Front (UDF) which was formed by the ANC uniting all the anti-apartheid groups. The South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), which was spearheading the movement of black trade unions, was banned. The South African Communist Party (SACP), the leading force under ANC was banned.

The trade unions and the working class played their historic role. After the SACTU was banned, it formed the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) on December 1, 1985, which was a significant achievement in bringing the white and black workers to fight unitedly against racism, colonialism and imperialism. It added enormously to the democratic movement as a whole.

The brutal repression was mounted up. It surpassed even the Nazi tortures. Two emergencies were clamped on July 20, 1985 and then again on June 12, 1986. Townships, factories, mines, offices, churches and homes were surrounded by gun-totting apartheid army to prevent observance of June 16 as the tenth anniversary of the Sweto uprising as the National Day. Over 3000 leaders of the people were arrested and many killed and deported. Murders became the order of the day. The young revolutionary poet Benjamin Moloise and other intellectuals were executed.

Intensification of Struggle

But with every massacre, the struggle was intensified, spearheaded by the ANC, SACP and the COSATU. Strike struggles called by the COSATU swept the length and breadth of the country. The official ideology of "survival of the nation against Communist threat" became blunt. The racial regime fell to its own trap from which it could not extricate itself. The black miners' strike cost the capitalists millions of dollars. Boycott of white shops resulted in decline in retail sales by about 50 percent in Port Elizabeth alone. Unemployment became a new problem for whites also. Immigration dropped by more than 25 per cent and emigration increased by over 20 per cent. Real Estate prices dropped

drastically. Whites started transferring their money abroad. The value of Rand dropped to less than 40 US cents. White businessmen also started demanding lifting of emergency and changes in the apartheid laws.

USA, UK Isolated

The allies of the racist regime, the USA, the band leader and its follower, the UK further trapped themselves in their desperate bid to veto the worldwide opinion for sanctions, and stood isolated. The Thatcher Government was forced to agree to the decision of the Commonwealth Heads of Govts at Nassau to give six months time to South Africa to shed its apartheid policy(1985). Reagan was defeated in his anti-sanction policy both in the Congress and the Senate, and Thatcher's face was further smeared by the Group of Eminent Persons who concluded that there was no alternative to sanctions against the apartheid regime. The boycott of Commonwealth Games by 32 countries further isolated UK.

The Foreign Ministers of Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Iceland in a joint declaration said that they would prohibit new Nordic investments in South Africa and also ban loans to the country and stop state purchases from it. France called back its Ambassador from South Africa and decided to stop further investments in the country. The EEC countries also decided to call back their Ambassadors.

International Working Class Support

The trade unions in these countries started boycott of markets of South African goods. Transport workers and other unions started indefinite blockade of all South African trades. Norway and Denmark workers began total refusal to handle any import from South Africa. Finland postal unions boycotted mails to and from South Africa. The trade unions demanded break of diplomatic relations with South Africa by their countries. Australian Trade Union Council campaigned to disrupt all mails, shipping, trade, travel, telecommunications between the two countries. The South African airways had to cancel flights to Australia. Massive demonstrations were launched by the workers in USA. In UK massive and long marches were held by the workers denouncing the apartheid regime.

The unstinted support given by the former USSR and the creation of the AFRICA Fund(Action For Resisting Invasion, Colonialism and Apartheid) by the Non-Aligned Movement at Delhi as per the Harare

Declaration marked a significant development in the struggle. In India too, all the Central Trade Unions joined to form the Indian Trade Union Committee against Apartheid, and contributed liberally to the ANC to boost the struggle.

The attempt of the ruling clique to extricate the white minority regime from the grip of the crisis by violence and cosmetic reforms, only further deepened the crisis, heightened the movement and sharpened the differences among the ruling clique and amongst the white community. The cooked up theory of "Bantustan" for separate development could no longer delude anybody.

Dirty Designs by USA and its Cohorts

The USA, UK, FRG, etc in pursuance of their dirty designs to keep South Africa as their raw material appendage refused to impose mandatory sanctions in keeping with their colonialist policy dictated by transnationals like IBM, GM, EXXON, Polaroid, etc for super profits by plundering the wealth of South Africa. This was the essence of the policy formulated by the Reagan Administration in the so called Constructive Engagement Pronouncement to keep the majority black people colonised in their own country and rendering extensive military and economic aid to the racist Government. Helped by the USA, a joint missile system was also developed by South Africa and Zionist Israel to deliver nuclear weapons.

Out of a total amount of about 31,000 million dollars of Western investment in South Africa by 1985, American and UK's investment amounted to about 14,000 dollars each, sharing the lion's share of trade with the country. In fact, with the largest deposit of gold and diamond in the world, South Africa attracted every looter from Europe for commercial hunting of the black skin. In this fundamental sense, South African politics was dominated by the gold question and the regime that was required to provide an organised stream of cheap labour to the transnationals.

So far as the USA is concerned, it was bent upon to support the racist regime in order to protect the interests of the US monopolists. Without its overt support South Africa could not have dared to ignore the resolutions of UN or ILO, nor it could have attacked the Front Line States, nor it could continue to spill the blood of the black people.

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The Dawn That Killed The Night

□ Saroj Chaudhury

At long last it arrived. It arrived not a day too early. It kept coming for many decades, if not centuries, as the journey was long, arduous, tortuous and tormenting. It had to swim through a vast and turbulent river of blood and tear, negotiate tricky turns and bends, wade through dangerously deceptive swampy lands, cross dense forests and scale mountains, pass through meadows littered with corpses and filled with gunpower smoke and encounter death at every moment. It was an unusual journey without parallel in contemporary history.

The uniqueness of this struggle owes its origins, to a large extent, to the manner in which South Africa was subjugated unlike others in Asia and Africa. Three and a half centuries ago, the Whites one day swooped down on the country to colonise it, grabbed all its wealth--the timber forests, arable land and grazing grounds, the vast mineral wealth etc driving the local inhabitants to jungles, waterless, rocky and uncultivable land, deprived them of every kind of right creating them as no more than beasts of burden and totally segregating them.

What followed is, by now, much too well known to the outside world. A primitive and brutal system what come to be known as apartheid, a shame of human civilisation came to be established. The unheard of scale of segregation from womb to the tomb, the pass law, families, the blacks to be the last to be hired and first to be fired all hazardous and dangerous operations in mines and industries to be earmarked for them and blacks to be huddled in ghettos and slums amidst unspeakable filth and squalor. The bottomless depths of poverty, illiteracy, healthlessness and deprivation in its crudest form had not been reached anywhere else in the world. The Whites were befuddled with their supposed superiority of blood and colour of the skin.

The brutality with which even the slightest attempt to protest was sought to be stifled puts into shade numerous other tyrants and despots in other countries down the ages. All these are known, but it is necessary to recall them at this moment of triumph.

Behind the prisoner of Pollsmoor prison in Robben island becoming the President of democratic, non-racial South Africa lies the story of

the blood-drenched death-defying struggle of the South African people led by the African National Congress(ANC), its closest ally, the South African Communist Party(SACP) and others. As the Blacks who had been subjected to such insults, indignities and humiliation as no other people worldwide passed from one stage of struggle to another they grew more determined to try every form both inside the country and outside. The question of armed struggle had been determined by the enemies who made every other form impossible of implementation. All these attracted ever increasing world attention and despite the sinister game played by imperialist powers, support for South African people rose in a crescendo. And finally the process commenced with the release of Nelson Mandela and unbanning of ANC and SACP. The conspiracy to keep Black South Africa shackled in every devious way and driving a wedge amongst people did not stop. All these conspiracies were torn asunder by the enormous organisation that ANC and SACP have built up and the political maturity gained the field of grim battle. Finally the black people of South Africa, the vast majority and the conscience of the world and the support of democracy loving people won and apartheid retreated.

The tasks before the new government headed by Mandela are daunting indeed. Ever since the release of Mandela there is a flight of capital and exports have slumped. What other conspiracies are being hatched is not known. But the greatest guarantee of success will be fulfilling the pledges made to the people. The people are with the government, a government of national reconciliation and would wait when they find the government sincerely trying to fulfil the promises. South Africa has undertaken an altogether new experiment. Each single success of now South Africa will embolden and strengthen the forces of democracy and equality the world over. The struggle for liberty and end of inequality will be enriched by every advance in South Africa. The people of India have a special reason for rejoice. India's support dates back to the early beginnings and must continue in the manner necessary. It has all the goodwill of the world.

Long Live Democratic, Non-racial South Africa!

The Public Sector or Whatever Remain of it in 1992-93

It is no accident that the annual survey of commercial and industrial central public enterprises for the year 1992-93 released by the Deptt. of public Enterprises of the Ministry of Industry did not evoke the interest and response it deserved either in the main-line Dailies or in the periodicals owned by large newspaper establishments.

Coming as it does when the set of now policies 'accepted' in July 1991 completes three years encompassing 4 central budgets with disastrous consequences writ large on every single segment of the economy, the survey eminently deserves a close look. Those who are treating the survey as of no significance have reasons to do so. The survey is unpalatable to them.

The survey records improvements in production, profits, generation of internal resources, larger exports, bigger research and development (R & D) allocations, liquidation of loans, promotion of self-reliance and so on. All these have been achieved in the backdrop of a well-laid conspiracy to strangulate the public sector and all-round condemnation led by the leading lights of the government, starving the public enterprises of orders and their diversion to private companies and multinationals, reckless import liberalisation swamping the country with goods and machineries for which indigenous production capacity exists in public enterprises, foisting of unsuitable technologies, concessions of every kind to multinationals, stoppage of recruitment and, above all, a systematic and deliberate attempt to create an atmosphere of uncertainty and demoralise the workforce. It is a combination of uniformed ministers, corrupt bureaucrats, inefficient managements capped by a servile government willing to sell everything the country has built up for obtaining loans.

One of the areas where public enterprises have come in for frequent criticism is low profitability. When in critics diaganise 'low profitability' they apparently have in mind the private sector in relation to capital invested. It is conveniently forgotten that the responsibilities enjoined on the public enterprises in relation to larger socio-economic obligations, the high rate of capital investments accompanied by

longer gestation period, locational disadvantage, cost of learning and development, bureaucratism and large number of units abandoned as sick by the private sector, invest the concept of profitability with different contents. The private sector carries no responsibility towards reducing regional imbalance. Not only it crowds the overst...areas, but would like to erect their factories within the port complex to reduce transportation charges, if it had its way. These multi-dimensional objectives and obligations transcend the common concept of investment, production and profit.

During the last 10 years there have been an impressive improvement in gross margin which progressively increased from Rs.3771 crore in 1983-84 to Rs. 25,217 crore in 1992-93, an increase of 336.96 per cent. An analysis of company-wise profitability shows that during 1992-93 net profit of Rs. 7,346.22 crore was earned by 131 enterprises, showing an increase of Rs.1268 crore over the previous year. It is also noteworthy that several units which had sustained losses in 1991-92 -mainly because of policy changes, indecision, bureaucratic bungling etc.- very significantly reduced losses.

During 1992-93, 123 units worked with capacity utilization above 75 per cent as against 118 in the previous year. The number of those working with capacity utilization between 50 and 75 per cent rose to 60 from 52. It should be common knowledge that capacity utilization depends on several factors, such as, size of orders to be executed, technology, training etc. What improvements are possible in capacity utilization when governments' policy is to starve these enterprises of orders! The engineering, giant BHEL is working with 60 per cent capacity utilization while BEML's order box is blank. The wagon-building units with proven capacity and expertise are simply gasping. Many more instances can be cited.

In the sphere of generation of internal resources, the performance of public enterprises has been consistently commendable. In the context of the resources crunch, the general withdrawal of budgetary support, increasing needs of financing expansion, modernisation and financing needs of other priority sectors, its importance can not be over-emphasised. While the generation of gross internal resources by 116 units in 1983-84 was

Rs.3278 crore, it rose to Rs. 12,943 crore in 1991-92 involving 143 units and to Rs. 14,723 crore in 1992-93 involving 146 units. During the Seventh Plan, the central public enterprises generated internal resources of the order of Rs. 37,677.71 crore and indications are that, despite the grievous wounds being inflicted, it would scale a new height. This is one sure index of the inherent vitality of the public sector.

If the economic justification of any manufacturing industry is to be measured by the value it has added, the record of public enterprises is no less impressive. While in 1983-84 value added by manufacturing undertakings was Rs. 10,048 crore, in 1992-93 it reached Rs. 38,115 crore. In 1992-93 the rise was 8.24 per cent over the previous year.

Performance of these enterprises in the sphere of exports has been equally encouraging in spite of complaints that concerned ministries and central agencies have not taken initiative to assist public enterprises to explore and augment exports. In such a background the increase in export earnings from Rs 8979.08 crores in 1991-92 to Rs 10,354.07 crore in 1992-93 is surely significant.

Modern industry is increasingly becoming knowledge based calling for intense efforts towards research and development (R&D). Central public enterprises, in spite of constraints, are bestowing ever greater attention and allocating more funds. In 1992-93, these enterprises spent Rs 891.52 crore on R&D as against Rs 393.04 crore in 1991-92. In the context of the technological explosion, R&D efforts have to be further intensified. Incidentally, the record of Indian private sector in this behalf is dismal.

The contribution of public enterprise to the national exchequer by way of dividends and taxes and duties generally do not come in for mention. During the Seventh Plan, these enterprises paid a total of Rs 70,893 crore to the government under these heads. In 1992-93, the government received Rs 792 crore as dividend, Rs 2129 crore as corporate tax, Rs 8200 crore as excise duty, Rs 8008 crore as customs duty and Rs 2958 crore by way of other duties. Thus, apart from generating internal resources, these enterprises are making substantial contributions to augment government's resources.

While the private sector is not burdened with any social commitment--its whole and sole purpose is to maximise profits, very often by fleecing the

consumer and defrauding the exchequer--it is the public sector that is discharging these responsibilities to the extent feasible. In 1992-93 alone, the manufacturing undertakings invested Rs 4276 crore on township development. A total of 8.47 lakh houses have been constructed and 0.29 lakh are under construction. The contribution of such infrastructural developments to improvements in health is well recognised. Expenses of such other items as education, health care etc. need not be mentioned.

The service industries in the public sector are a class apart and need a separate treatment. If the country is hopeful of garnering a greater slice of tourism, the role of public sector is unmistakable. Though nationalised banking is being undermined and one measure after another is being mounted to dismantle it, the role played by it in the country's industrialisation, agricultural development and rural upliftment, expansion of credit facilities and improvements in cottage and small industries are well recognized. The nationalised banks are being forced to go into the red. The beginning was made by the formation of the Narasimham Committee. Now, the attention is concentrating on nationalised insurance. The blueprint of its eventual privatisation has been laid by the Malhotra committee. The facts that the rate of growth of nationalised general insurance is the highest in the world, about 70 per cent of clients of LIC feel that if its servicing is "excellent", it has invested more than Rs.16,000 crore in drinking water, sewerage, electricity, public transport etc. and helping municipalities and Zilla parishads to implement development schemes and assisting state governments to finance projects--not to mention the biggest purchase the central government securities--do not weigh with the government. The multinationals must have full and free entry to our industries and gradually gobble them up; the international financing institutions like IMF and World Bank must control the crucial financial sector!

The survey of public enterprises could not have cited more instances of many undertakings that are being pushed to sure death. Hindustan Photo Films of Ootacummund, Scoters India Ltd., Optical Glass, to name only a few, are awaiting sure death by deliberate withdrawal of support--either technological upgradation or working capital or a rescheduling of payments etc. Just a little help can

save these public undertakings. In the meantime, corrupt government officials ensure highly lucrative jobs in the companies of private competitors after retirement and some public sector executives guarantee proper placements for their progenies. Even the proceeds of disinvestments are not going towards rehabilitation of public undertakings but to reducing budgetary deficit.

Though the Indian private sector which is very little private being fed by public sector finance, raw materials, communications, infrastructure and all else, is more loud mouthed today in its attack on public sector, the fact is that it is the public undertakings, built at enormous cost and labour and toil of workers, that have together laid the base of industrialisation, achieved a large of technical sophistication, developed various skills, promoted new methods and products and have put the country on the world's industrial map. The private sector cupboards are cluttered with too many skeletons. Large parts of its profits are bank waivers and unrepaid bank loans.

Even a recent study by the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) reveals that the operational efficiency of the public sector is higher than that of the private sector in several spheres. Interestingly in 1992-93 the complement of workforce declined as was the case of workers' share to total expenses in public enterprises.

Working in an atmosphere where the government leads the attack on public sector and the shady and shadowy crooks of private sector masquerade as the epitome of probity and efficiency and when the nationalised sector is being grossly discriminated against and everything is permitted to be done to cripple and crush it, the performance of public undertakings is commendable, areas of inefficiency, wastage, weaknesses and shortcomings notwithstanding. Had the government not burdened it with bunglings, indecisions, political interferences, corrupt executives, and over centralisation and had the government carried out democratic reforms---distinctly different from IMF variety---the public sector could have achieved much, much more.

The annual public enterprises survey for 1992-93 is a reiteration of this faith and confidence.

Contd from page 8

The barbaric apartheid regime survived too long in the present day civilised world only with the tacit and shameless support of the so called civilised industrialised Western power led by the USA, which sheds so much crocodile tears for human rights. It is again because of US support that the IMF continued to give monetary support to the regime despite UN decisions for sanctions. Only due to intensification of mass actions and sweeping strike actions by the working class internally and the mounting pressure of international solidarity that the IMF was compelled to break off loans to the apartheid regime.

Pampering Ethnic Strifes

The saga of unprecedented heroic struggles ultimately compelled the regime to lift the ban on ANC and then release Nelson Mandela unconditionally on February 11, 1990 after 27 years of imprisonment. But the regime started a new game. It pampered inter-black confrontation and made the Zulu dominated Inkatha Party a pawn to engineer assault on other black population. During the four year regime to F W De Klerk over 10,000 people were killed in the state-engineered ethnic strife. Even after the agreement for democratic elections, the legendary leader and General Secretary of the South African Communist Party, Cris Hanu was brutally murdered by the hordes of the neo-fascist organisation Afrikaner Weerstandbeweging (AWB) on April 10, 1994. This was another heinous attempt to sabotage the democratic elections and divide the country. But massive strike actions by the working class only forced the De Klerk Government to declare April 14 as a day of national mourning.

Power to the People

The struggle thus continued till the elections. May 10, 1994, when Mandela became the President of South Africa has been recorded as a red letter day for the struggle of not only the indomitable South African people but for the struggling downtrodden in the entire world for freedom and democracy, against racism, colonialism and imperialism. Now with power to the people, the struggle will have to be continued to lift South Africa from a scratch to a real, non-racial, democratic nation of all its people. The pledge, "The People Shall Govern" is bound to be implemented by its people.

Govt concedes to consider IISCO modernisation by SAIL

It has been a landmark achievement for the united trade union movement with the decision taken at the Special Tripartite Committee meeting to the effect that trade unions will work out a detailed Techno-Economic modernisation scheme for IISCO. The scheme so prepared by the employees shall be submitted to the SAIL. Thereafter a joint meeting of the trade unions and SAIL management shall be conducted wherein the feasibility of the scheme will be considered and strategy for execution of the same by SAIL with active participation of the employees of IISCO shall be worked out. These exercise will have to be completed within 30th June 1994. Thereafter the meeting of the Special Tripartite Committee shall be convened to finally consider the proposal for modernisation of IISCO by SAIL.

The above decision has been taken at a meeting of the Special Tripartite Committee (STC) held on 9th May 1994 at the Union Labour Ministry. The meeting was particularly convened to consider the IISCO modernisation issue. It was chaired by Shri P A Sangma, Labour Minister and attended by the Secretaries of the Government of India, Departments of Labour and Steel, top executives of SAIL and IISCO and the representatives of the Central Trade Unions and employers' organisations.

The Labour Minister informed the STC that the meeting in question has been convened at the instance of the Prime Minister. The root of such directive has to be found in the concrete recommendations of the Standing Committee of the Parliament for Industry. The committee inter alia recommended "For this the management, workers and the Government should sit together and devise through a tripartite discussion some positive solutions to modernise the company." It further went on and noted "SAIL has full capabilities in this regard and this needs to be explored in greater depth. The workers have also come forth with tremendous enthusiasm offering as high as 50% participation by them." It is therefore, crystal clear that behind the present positive development on the question of IISCO modernisation, the Standing Committee in general and the Members, who played skillful and painstaking role in the committee, in particular, have their contributions.

To effectively pursue the above noted decisions, the trade unions have already decided various steps. In order to have the benefit of the opinion of experts in the field in the matter of preparing the modernisation scheme by the employees, the trade unions have fixed up a 'National Consultation meeting' on 16th and 17th June 1994 at the auditorium of SCOPE convention Centre, New Delhi.

In addition to the national leaders of the Central Trade Unions and federations of the industry, others who are expected to attend this meeting include Ministers, reputed Experts in steel making including Chairman and Directors, Consultants etc. The positive outcome of the consultation would be seriously considered for preparing the modernisation scheme by the employees.

As has been witnessed by the working people of the country the unique militant unity achieved by the major central trade unions to defeat the move to privatise IISCO, so was the united role of the trade unions in the STC meeting. Gopeshwar, General Secretary, INTUC was forthright in his submission. He said that the Govt's move is not mere privatisation but it is actually 'MUKUNDAISATION'.

Com.Pandhe unleashed a scathing attack on the Govt for its move to hand over a national property to a scrap dealer almost free of cost for its ruination and not for modernisation. He had no hesitation in speaking on the face of the Secretary to the Department of Steel that a strong lobby is working for Mukund within the Steel Ministry. In the face of his solid argument, the Steel Secretary had to agree that so far technical expertise is concerned for modernisation of IISCO, SAIL is the best. Com.Pandhe charged the Govt as to why the opinion of the only technical expert in the 'Committee of Experts' Mr Khanna was not taken into consideration before taking the privatisation decision. He also referred the 1989 tripartite agreement on the modernisation of IISCO and severely criticised the Govt for blatant violation of the same. To the orchestrated publicity that SAIL does not have required fund Pandhe sarcastically told that such dearth of fund has come into being only after Ministry's decision to privatise IISCO. He further pointed out if the Govt can permit Mukund to raise fund from the indigenous and international market then why not to SAIL! He wanted to know from the Govt as to whose market credibility is better--SAIL or Mukund? When the trade unions questioned the closed mind of the ministry on the ground of so called Cabinet decision, the Labour Minister had to say that Govt decision can be changed or modified.

With the positive outcome of the STC meeting it has become all the more imperative for the trade union movement to further strengthen the unity and not only to continue the fight against the privatisation but add further momentum to it and push it up to high and higher degree which alone can guarantee the attainment of the goal of modernisation of IISCO under public sector.

Confederation and Organisational Unification of T.U. Movement

□ M.K. PANDHE

K.L. Mahendra, Secretary, AITUC in an article in Trade Union Record, Journal of AITUC in its issue dated 5th May 1994 has raised certain points regarding unification of trade union movement. Since he has mentioned CITU'S name in the article and made some remarks about CITU policies it is necessary to clarify our stand.

Mahendra has criticised the concept of trade unions as wings of the political parties. The CITU does not believe that a trade union should be an adjunct of a political party. It should be an independent mass organisation of the working class and its policies are to be determined democratically by the members of the union. Historical facts show that we believe in this philosophy and function accordingly.

When there was a split in the Communist movement in India the forces belonging to the present CPI(M) did not form any independent organisation and decided the work in the AITUC. For six years we worked in the AITUC, despite the danger leadership using AITUC as the T.U. wing of the CPI. During this period norms of democratic functioning were trampled underfoot and it became impossible to work unitedly in the organisation. Hence we had no other alternative but to form another central trade union. The CITU thus came into existence after a bitter struggle against the use of trade union as an adjunct of a political party.

It is not our intention to make up the past but to draw appropriate lessons from the practical experience.

Mahendra says in his article, "The CITU has proposed a confederation of trade union centres. But the question remains unanswered whether they agree for ultimate merger." For his information we would like to point out that in the "Report on organisation" the CITU has already noted "the concept of confederation as an instrument to consolidate the organisational unity of the working class on a national scale." (Page 38) The CITU further noted, "Essential condition for formation of a single trade union centre is yet to mature. But the urge among the workers for unification of unions or federations in plant or industry level in many places points to the gradual acceleration of the process which would ultimately create ground for formation of confederation at national level. Again confederation of trade unions at national level would

also pave the way for one union in one industry in a wider scale in the long run."

The CITU has clearly spelt out our ideas about organisational unification of trade union movement. We would not have advocated this concept if we had the objective of making trade unions as adjuncts of political parties. The CITU is not advocating confederation in order to keep the identity of individual trade unions indefinitely. It considers that by working together in the confederation identity of views can be established which would bring trade unions closer and ultimately one central trade union can be established at the national level.

The CITU believes in formation of one union in one industry. It therefore underlines, "However, it is necessary, to emphasise that such a union must function democratically, hold annual election on the basis of secret ballot and stand for firm defence of working class interests. The unions which do not function democratically cannot unite the entire class nor defend their legitimate interests". (Report on organisation page 37)

The proposal for immediate merger of Central Trade Unions without creating pre-requisites for organizational unity will be a hotch potch unity which may not last for a longer time. The CITU is striving to achieve the unity which would be stable and long lasting.

Take the example of the proposed merger of AITUC and HMS. The discussions are going on for 2-3 years. Yet Mahendra has to admit, "Even the merger of AITUC and HMS though agreed will face concrete difficulties because of the habits and practices in vogue at local level, the personality clash etc." The Confederation according to CITU'S perception will overcome this drawback by working together on a common forum.

It is not only CITU which has advocated confederation. About a decade ago, A.B. Bardhan, General Secretary, AITUC wrote a paper on the occasion of Birth Anniversary Celebration of N.M. Joshi and welcomed the proposal of formation of confederation given by B.T. Ranadive in his Presidential address to the CITU conference.

The policies of the confederation will be determined by the common agreement of all the participants which may not be fully identical to the stand of any political party. This clearly explains the independent character of the confederation. It is this

common understanding that would strengthen the T.U. unity at all levels.

However, independent character of a trade union does not mean that the TUs should be depoliticalised. To-day serious attempts are being made to keep T.U. movement away from political struggle. Those who keep this objective before them will cease to build trade unions as instruments of social change.

The growing attacks on the working and living conditions, job security and on T.U. rights will definitely bring the working class together despite different affiliations. The confederation is a logical step in the direction of consolidation of this unity. Once the Confederation is formed the organisational unity of the T.U. movement automatically comes on the agenda.

If CITU and AITUC can jointly work for the establishment of a confederation of trade unions, it would be of immense help in strengthening the united trade union movement of the working class. The positive stand taken by A.B. Bardhan the newly elected General Secretary of AITUC creates hopes in our mind for further discussion on the subject so that the differences on this question can be thrashed out. It is also possible to have a detailed discussion with other central T.U.'s on this question so that common understanding can be evolved.

The present events in the country, due to pressure of the World bank and the IMF, are threatening our national sovereignty and integrity. The multinational companies spreading their tentacles in all directions. Consolidation of T.U. unity cannot be delayed for a long time. We must act before the events threaten to overtake us!

PANDHE ELECTED VICE PRESIDENT JCSSI

The Joint Committee on Safety, Health and Environment in Steel Industry (JCSSI) is a Bipartite Committee which meets periodically to go into the question of Health Safety and Environment in Steel industry and suggests measures to improve the conditions in the industry.

M.K. Pandhe, General Secretary CITU has been elected as a Vice president of JCSSI representing the workers side in its recent meeting held in New Delhi.

BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATION OF R.S. RUIKAR

On the occasion of Birth Centenary Celebration of well known T.U. leader R.S. Ruikar a National Seminar on "T.U. Movement Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow" was held in Nagpur on 14th May. Representatives of INTUC, CITU, AITUC and Rashtriya Mazdoor Congress participated in the seminar.

Dr. M.A. Chansarkar, former Vice-Chancellor, Nagpur University as a convener of the Seminar made introductory remarks about the history of the T.U. movement in India and narrated how trade unions grew traversing a difficult path. He noted that the future of the T.U. movement will be determined by the developments to-day.

S.W. Dhabe leader of Rashtriya Shramik Congress emphasised the need for organising the unorganised to strengthen the T.U. movement.

Advocate Thakur who spoke on behalf of INTUC expressed concern at the present development of market economy which may lead to a dark future for the T.U. movement if not checked by it.

Com. M.K. Pandhe, General Secretary CITU traced series of struggles which led to achievement of T.U. rights and improvement of working conditions. Criticising the present economic policies of the Government of India he noted that unless T.U. movement gives a united fight the economic independence of the country would be threatened by the multi-national companies. He pointed out how T.U. rights are under serious attack while self reliance of the country is at stake. Emphasising need for T.U. unity, he stressed the concept of confederation of Trade Unions which alone will pave the way for a organisational unity of the working class.

A.B. Bardhan, General Secretary, AITUC who presided over the meeting expressed concern at the growing attacks on the working class. He gave examples how economic independence was under serious threat. Bardhan welcomed the concept of the confederation provided that it would lead to merger of all the trade unions in the country. Referring to the proposal of HMS- AITUC merger he said it was only a concept and he would prefer unity of all the trade unions.

Malati Ruikar, General Secretary and B.P. Kashyap, Secretary of the centenary celebration on committee also spoke on the occasion.

Forward to Bigger, Stronger Decisive Battles

□ E. BALANANDAN

The Government policy of surrendering to the dictates of World Bank and IMF in the field of economy and Industry has been opposed by the trade unions from its inception together with the other mass organisations. FAR from deviating from this perilous

path the Government went on with further steps to sign the GATT agreement which actually goes against the interest of our nation. The foreign multinationals are to be treated with equal status with that of Indian Capital. The multinationals with their mighty economic and technological power and their access to the World market will finally invade various sectors of our economy. Together with this the Patent Laws and the Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights etc. are also having its edge against the weaker nations, that is, against the Third World countries. International monopoly capital which is facing internal recession in their parent countries are not only frantically trying to enter Third World by resorting to different devices, but also trying to push each other out by all unfair and foul means. One of this is the GATT treaty, next to the instrument of World Bank and International Monetary Fund. This signing of the agreement has been strongly criticised and opposed inside the Parliament and outside, pointing out its disastrous consequences in industry, economy, agriculture, etc., which ultimately end in leaving the decision making on every vital questions of policy to the big industrial powers and that will lead to the compromising of our economic and political freedom.

This diasterous course is once more reflected in the latest Government attitude towards the pressure exerted by the American imperialists on our independent defence strategy. We all know that the Indian space research organisation was developing Rocket technology to deploy communication satellites in to the orbit which in turn will help our total development in a big way and it will also have a commercial advantage too since India will be the 5th in the world in the matter of space satellite communication system. The U.S. came in the way and stopped Russia from supplying the Cryogenic Engine as per agreement entered in to with them by ISRO. In spite of the same our scientists are moving confidently to use our own technology and skill for completing the task. The United States are now demanding that India should sign the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and stop our nuclear programmes together with the development and deployment of missiles. It seems that the Rao Government is slowly drifting and trying in a way to accommodate US views. This came to focus in the

Parliament. The secret parleys with US officials with Govt representatives that went on in London was exposed by the vigilant press which has been taken up in both the houses of Parliament and put the govt on the defensive. The govt. said that it is only a routine discussion and the govt. will not succumb to the US Pressure which could convince nobody. The Prime Minister's Office issued directions to defer the Prithvi missile launching, which also came in a big way in both houses of the Parliament. The govt's attempt to cover up did not work.

The govt. first took the stand that no such communication was sent. With the help of authentic reports the opposition pressurised the Prime Minister to come to the house and clarify the position. He had to admit that Prithvi launching had been deferred for a few days since he is leaving for United States. He has assured both the houses of Parliament that our missile programmes both 'Agni' and 'Prithvi' will go on and complete on schedule and the Government will not sign the N.P.T. It was proved in the discussions that the Govt. was not taking a forthright stand on developing our independent development of defence capability too in most vital areas.

Now Narasimha Rao went to United States and discussed many things with Clinton and others. However as paper report goes that he is frantically trying to woo the US capital to invest in India in a big way. One cannot definitely say that he will keep up the promise given to the Parliament and the people that there will be no going back from our nuclear, missile and space related programmes.

Manmohan Singh and Rao were crawling before the USA capital. Nobody knows the price that they demanded and how bold these gentlemen were for not to 'bite the forbidden fruit'.

Therefore the people's vigilance and resistance need to be strengthened manifold. The TU movement and mass organisations should take into consideration the new developing danger to our independent defence development too, and therefore without loss of time have to mobilise in full strength in order to save the same.

We have also to note the fact that the Prime Minister had taken steps to see that the banking laws amendment bill was passed before he proceeded to US in order to placate foreign multi nationals. The financial sector, Banking and Insurance is now opened up to foreign multinationals and for their ultimate domination. At the fag end of the Parliament session on 13th of May before adjourning the house

Sukhran, the Minister came with the declaration of a new Telecom policy, which was also intended for pleasing the multinational giants ensuring their entry in this basic sector of Telephone systems.

Since the Govt is bent upon kneeling before the increasing imperialist pressure over our country resorting to flimsy and unsustainable arguments and

through abnormal procedures, the fight against this should be all embracing and strong enough to force the government to reverse this process of surrender. The trade union movement should not hesitate to synchronise their movements with the movement of the left parties and others who are engaged in the fight for protecting democracy and freedom.

MEETING ON V.D.A. FOR CENTRAL PSU WORKERS

In the face of intense pressure mounted by the trade union movement in general and the CPSTU in particular, the Government have finally agreed to grant cent percent neutralisation in the rise in AICPI with multi-slabs system of variable dearness allowance (VDA) to the central public sector workers.

The above decision of the Government was announced by the Union Labour Minister in the meeting with the Central trade union leaders held in the Labour Ministry on 9.5.94. Com. M.K. Pandhe and Com. S Dev Roye attended the meeting on behalf of CITU.

The joint proposal on the slab system of VDA submitted to the Government by the trade unions on 22nd November'93 came up for discussion in the meeting. Some clarifications with regard to the AICPI points from which the new VDA should be effective and the basis of working out the pay ranges for the purpose paying VDA were sought by the Minister.

Com.Pandhe was requested to explain the position. He said that the new VDA should be paid from AICPI points 800 onwards. He also informed that the pay range has been worked out by taking together the basic pay, FDA and VDA as on 1.1.92. This has been done in order to attain maximum possible uniform base for the new slab system of VDA.

The final position that has emerged from the meeting is that public sector workers upto the pay range of 3500.00 per month shall be granted 100% neutralisation. On the basis of this guideline the Department of Public Enterprises shall work-out VDA slabs. In doing so, the trade unions shall be consulted. It has also been decided that the final proposal shall be submitted to the cabinet within two months for their approval. The trade union representatives have asked for another meeting to consider the final proposal before going to the Cabinet.

Successful Beedi Workers Conference in Tamilnadu



A K Padmanabhan

The fifth Conference of Tamilnadu Beedi workers Federation concluded at Vellore on 29th April, giving a clarion call for the Beedi workers to go for an united strike action to settle their demands and to get the Beedi and Cigar Workers Act amended properly.

The Conference began with the flag hoisting by T R Purushothaman, Dt Secretary, CITU in front of the venue, named after Com.BTR.

K A Sundaravelu, treasurer of the Reception Committee welcomed the delegates who had come from all the Beedi Worker Centres in the State. From among the 241 delegates 35 were women who had come from Madras and Thirunelveli districts.

K R Sundaram, vice president of the Federation, presided over the conference.

After the Conference paying homage to the departed leaders and martyrs, P K Ganguly, Secretary CITU and Secretary All India Beedi Workers committee inaugurated the conference. In his inaugural address he explained the steps taken by CITU to organise the workers from unorganised industries including Beedi Industry.

He also explained the anti-workers policies of the Government of India and stressed the importance of

building up a united resistance against these policies.

Report: V Kannan, general Secretary of the federation, submitted the work report on which there was a serious discussion. 34 delegates including 4 women participated in the discussion. Almost all of them explained the most exploitive situation prevailing in the industry and called for more serious organisational steps to mobilise the men, women and children working in the industry. They also wanted the federation to concentrate on issues like housing, education and medical facilities.

The report was adopted after the General Secretary's summing up.

Greetings: The conference was greeted by representatives of Kisan Sabha, DYFI, DWA, AIIEA, NFPTE and TNGEA.

Resolutions: Many resolutions including those calling for amendment to the Beedi Cigar Workers Act, abolition of contract system, enhancement of DA, implementation of Supreme Court's directives regarding implementation of the Act and other Welfare Measures, ensuring 6 day work, lay off compensation were passed by the conference.

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Textile Workers For Countrywide Industrial Action

□ P.K. GANGULY

The National Convention of Textile Mill Workers held at Sapru House, New Delhi on May 5 called for countrywide industrial action to fight the growing closures and jobloss in the industry.

The Convention was organised by the Joint Action Committee of Textile Workers comprising of the INTUC, CITU, AITUC, HMS, BMS, and NLO. The convention was called in pursuance of the decisions taken at the Indore convention of February 7 and 8. The Indore convention was held after the formation of the Joint Action Committee on an All India level to resist the move of the Government to close down 18 mills of the Public Sector National Textile Corporation through merger and to throw over 40,000 workers out of job, and also to fight the growing closures of the Textile mills in the private sector.

In the meantime, the trade unions in the Joint Action Committee compelled the Government to arrive at an unanimous agreement in the special Tripartite Committee on April 9 to start modernisation of 79 mills of the NTC in consultation with the trade unions on a no-retrenchment and no-privatisation basis. They also compelled the Government to agree to nationalisation of 15 Taken Over Mills (13 in Bombay and 2 in Kanpur) before modernisation.

However, the modernisation process is in stake because the Government have stopped extending budgetary support to the mills and there is no guarantee that the Financial Institutions would provide the assistance as envisaged in the recommendation of the Textile Research Associations. The sale of surplus lands is also bound to meet with many obstacles due to several legal hurdles.

The Joint Action Committee therefore instead of remaining complacent over the agreement, had drawn out action plans to mobilise the textile workers irrespective of affiliations to compel the Government to implement all the eight points of the agreement in letter and spirit, and continue providing budgetary support till the agreement was implemented and the modernisation process was complete. Apart from the Indore Convention, two big conventions were held at Calcutta and Bangalore on April 11 and 30 respectively, besides some local conventions and rallies.

Apart from the NTC, the convention laid emphasis on the situation in the private sector mills where 132 mills have been closed rendering about two lakh workers jobless.

The Convention was attended by about 800 delegates from all the textile centres of the country

representing all the constituents of the Joint Action Committee, several independent trade unions and also from some officers and technicians associations. They came both from the NTC and private sector mills from 12 states viz, Maharashtra, Gujarat, W.Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Punjab, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tamilnadu, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka.

The Convention was presided over by a presidium consisting of Shyam Sunder Yadav (INTUC), Gopal Bhattacharya (CITU), Pritam Choksi (AITUC), Ramkishore Tripathi (HMS) and Bhagwandas Gondane (BMS).

The resolution of the convention was moved by Haribhau Naik (INTUC) and seconded by P.K. Ganguly (CITU). The other Central Trade Union leaders who spoke were Gopeshwar, General Secretary of INTUC, B.D. Joshi, D.L. Sachdev and Arvindraj Swaroop (AITUC), V. Tiyagi and Dilip Mishra (HMS), Amarnath Dogra and Mangilal Rastogi (BMS), and Subhashini Ali and Tarit Topdar, MP (CITU). About 30 delegates from all the unions and the states representing NTC and the private sector mills participated in the discussions.

The main anger of the delegates centred round the alarmingly growing closures and the rampant winding up of the weaving sections of the mills. They pointed to the official policy of the Government to give a free hand to the mill magnets like Reliance, Bombay Dyeing, Sriram, S.Kumar, Mafatlal, etc. to close down the weaving sections in particular and switch over to powerlooms to garner huge profits with a little working capital. The powerloom workers were fleeced by them offering paltry minimum wage and without any labour laws or social security measures. The new economic and industrial policy had given unhindered bonanza to these private cartels, as even the licensing of the powerlooms was also withdrawn. Thus while nearly two lakh jobs were lost due to closure of the organised mills and the powerloom workers were producing nearly 80 percent of the cloth produced in the country under jungle rules, the handloom weavers were pauperised due to lack of supply of hank yarn from the organised mills and high cost of cotton. There was an unequivocal demand for a new integrated Textile Policy to develop all the three sectors equally.

The delegates sharply came out against the Voluntary Retirement Scheme in NTC. They narrated their experience about how VRS had come as a new

offensive in place of retrenchment, and how it was being forced upon the workers under threat and blackmail that if they do not take VRS and go, then the company would be sent to BIFR and liquidated and they will be deprived of any benefit. Further, the managements were deliberately withholding wages to create an atmosphere that the mill was going to be closed because of sickness, so that the workers take the VRS and go. The delegates denounced the VRS and showed their determination to resist and fight out any move of the Government to reduce the workforce in any manner. They expressed their preparedness for any united action including Rasta Roko, Rail Roko etc. bringing the family members under the vortex of movement. Delegate after delegate expressed their opinion that each and every sick mill in the country were fully viable provides it was modernised and that too with the same complement of workforce. They blamed the Government for deliberately making the mills sick by refusing to modernise and withholding giving working capital and raw materials. They further expressed their determination to compel the managements to involve the workers and the unions at each stage of modernisation.

The urge for unity was unprecedented. It was an unique demonstration that the workers of INTUC., CITU, AITUC, HMS, BMS all spoke in one voice with the same determination and for the same objective

of safeguarding the jobs of the workers and the pioneer Textile Industry of the country from the ravages of the private barons. There were so many speakers and the urge for expression was so much that the convention had to be extended by one hour to include as many speakers as possible. Still many speakers could not be given the chance to speak. Another feature of the convention was that the number of delegates from INTUC was as many as that from the CITU or other constituents, if not more.

The resolution with the 9 point demands and 4 point action programme was adopted unanimously amidst slogans -"Mazdoor Ekta Zindabad." The action programme included formation of Joint Action Committee at State levels and joint rallies, dharnas, conventions at all the Textile Centres in preparation for a countrywide industrial action in September.

A crowded press conference was held after the Convention. Earlier, a delegation of the Joint Action Committee met the Textile and the Labour Ministers. They agreed to convene the meeting of the Tripartite Textile Committee on May 31 to take up the question of sickness in the private sector mills. The Ministers also agreed to fix up an appointment of the Joint Action Committee with the Prime Minister on the question of providing budgetary support to the mills till the modernisation was complete.

JOINT ACTION COMMITTEE OF TEXTILE WORKERS

National Convention of Textile Mill Workers

New Delhi, 5th May, 1994

RESOLUTION

This National Convention of Textile Workers, organised by the Joint Action Committee of Textile Workers at Sapru House, New Delhi on May 5, 1994 expresses serious concern over the deep crisis plaguing the mill sector in the Textile industry in the country, in the public sector National Textile Corporation, in the private sector, and in the Cooperative Sector.

The textile industry is the pioneer industry in the country. 20 percent of the industrial productions of India are from the textile industry. About 35 percent of the total exports are from this industry. The industry provides about 15 million employment in the three sectors

The Convention takes serious note of the growing sickness and closures in the private sector mills. More than 132 mills in the private sector are already closed rendering about two lakh workers jobless. Many more mills in the private sector are reported sick and are on the verge of being closed.

The crisis is the direct result of the mismanagement and corruption of the mills owners and because of the policy of the Government to boost to private sector and allow them to switch over the weaving sections to powerlooms. The workers affected by closures and liquidation have not been even paid their legal dues. Despite assurances in the Tripartite Textile Committee, the Government has not yet convened any meeting to discuss the sickness in the private sector.

Although on 9th April the Special Tripartite Committee has arrived at an unanimous agreement on NTC, yet the process of implementation is at stake.

The convention further calls upon the workers to unitedly resist any move by the Government/management to reduce the workforce at any level during the process of modernisation. The convention supports the demands of the trade unions in the special committee on NTC to stop VRS and utilise the fund earmarked for it for modernisation.

Demands

The Convention therefore demands:

1) The Government must formulate an integrated Textile Policy in consultation with the trade unions, so as to develop all the three sectors viz handloom, powerloom and mill sector properly so that each sector can complement and supplement each other.

2) The Government should take steps to encourage to make investments in the textile sector.

3) The Government must strictly adhere to all the eight points of the unanimous agreement in letter and spirit. Further, the Government must provide budgetary support so that the mills can disburse the wages of the workers in time and provide working capital till the agreement is fully implemented.

4) The amount earmarked for VRS should be utilised for modernisation purpose.

5) As assured in the Special Tripartite Committee, the Government must immediately convene a meeting of the Tripartite Textile Committee to discuss the growing sickness in the private sector mills to evolve immediate measures to revive the mills. As assured, the meeting must review the case of Mohini Mills of Bengal, which has been denotified, and also discuss the BIC mills of Kanpur.

6) Viable units as recommended by the Nodal Agency must be restarted by providing necessary funds. Till the units are restarted, the workers and employees of the units must be paid adequate unemployment allowance. All workers and employees of the non-viable mills must be paid their legal dues immediately. The amount should be recovered from the assets of the mill owners.

7) Immediate steps must be taken for proper rehabilitation of the affected workers as per the recommendations of the Abid Hussain Committee.

8) The Government must also enhance the PF contribution in the Textile industry to 10 percent to bring it at par with other industries.

9) The Powerloom Sector must be brought under strict discipline.

The Convention congratulates the workers for implementations of the joint action plans and holding conventions at Calcutta and Bangalore as planned at the Indore Convention of February 7 and 8.

In view of the serious situation in the Textile industry as above, this convention calls for further consolidating the unity of the trade unions and closing the ranks of all textile workers irrespective of affiliations, both in the NTC and the private sector

mills and step up the united struggles by implementing the following action programme in pursuance of the above demands:

Action Programme:

1) Joint Dharnas and demonstrations before the textile mills, both NTC and private sector all over the country and formation of Joint Action Committees at State levels.

2) Joint rallies and morchas in each textile centre in each state.

3) Joint conventions of mill workers at State level and in all important textile centres. The Conventions should be completed by July.

4) Preparation for a countrywide industrial action by the mill workers in the month of September, 1994.

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The conference also called upon the Beedi workers to build up a movement on the basis of demands formulated by the All India Beedi Workers conference held at Kannur.

New Office bearers: The conference decided to shift the head quarters of the federation to Madras. The conference elected 11 new office bearers and 15 Executive Committees including 2 women, V Kannan was elected president, M Rajangam as General Secretary and M V Krishnan as treasurer.

T K Rangarajan and A K Padmanabhan greeted the conference on behalf of the state committee of CITU.

R Umanath, president of State CITU in his concluding speech called upon the beedi workers federation and its newly elected leadership to take steps to write the Beedi workers to get their just demands settled. Rally: A massive procession of beedi workers was organised on 29th evening. Led by the CITU leaders and newly elected office bearers, processionists marched through the main thorough fares of Vellore and through some of the beedi workers areas. The rally in the Fort maidan was addressed by P K Ganguly, R Umanath and other CITU and Federation leaders V Kannan presided.

The 2 day conference has given a new impetus to the movement of Beedi workers in the State. CITU and other fraternal organisation in Vellore also did their best to make this conference a great success.

Promotion of Women on the Union's Committee

1. National Railway Mazdoor Union(Central Railway) amended its Constitution for induction of Women employees in the Union's Managing Committees:

The NRMU by amending its Constitution directed all its 120 Branches spread over the Central Railway to include atleast five women employees (Members of the Union) in the Managing Committees in the capacity of office-bearers or Managing Committee Members. From the reports which are being received by the Head-Office, Branches have started doing it. Now the Branches are in the process of holding their annual elections and they will be completed by 30th April '94. We expect atleast 80% of the Branches to comply with this directive. In certain Branches, there are no women Railway employees, for instance Running Staff, Traffic Staff etc. and therefore, they will not be able to include women in the committees.

2. Union observed International Women's Day on 8.3.1994:

a) Bombay: In the Railway Auditorium at VT Union organised a women workers' meet to celebrate the International Women's Day on 8.3.94.

Com. D.D. Phadnis, vice President of the Union was in the Chair, Com. M.R. Parbhane, Divl. Secretary of the Union welcomed the guest and the participants.

It was addressed by the Chief Guest Dr. (Smt.) Prabha Sawant - the President of Janawadi Mahila Sanghatan, Bombay and Com. P.R. Menon, General Secretary of the Union. They recalled the importance of the International Women's Day and relentless struggle launched by the Women's Organisation all over the World on various vital issues concerning women.

They also pointed that the discrimination between men and women continued to be perpetrated and several problems of women are yet to be solved. The price-rise, unemployment, communal hatred, poverty etc. are directly affecting women more than men. In the day to day life the women are placed in very miserable condition. Both the speakers exhorted the women employees to be more conscious and take part in the Union's and social activities so as to get rid of their problems.

b) Nagpur: Nagpur Divisional Council of the Union observed the International Women's Day on 8.3.94 under the banner of the Union in the Railway Hospital Auditorium at Nagpur. Sr. DAO NGP - Smt. Alka

Mehra presided over the function. Smt. Usha Mishra a prominent social worker, Advocate (Smt.) Kumkum Sirpurkar and Smt. Alka Mehra spoke on the occasion. Smt. Ramteke and Smt. Naidu welcomed the guests. A good number of women workers participated in the function. This was also reported in the local press.

c) Solapur: Solapur (MS) Branch of the Union observed the international Women's Day at Solapur on 8.3.94 under the banner of the Union in the DRM's Conference Hall. Com. S.K. Bose, Asstt. General Secretary of the Union presided over the function. Smt. Asha Chandra, wife of DRM SUR and the President WSSC was the Chief Guest. Com. S.K. Bose and Smt. Asha Chandra spoke on the occasion recalling the importance of the International Women's Day. Com. (Smt.) Sarita Mokashi welcomed the Guest and the participants. About 100 women workers participated in the function.

3. Women Employees Meet at Nagpur on 23/2/1994:

Nagpur Divl. Council of the Union organised a Working Women's Meet at Nagpur on 23.2.94 under the banner of the Union.

Com. K.N. Marar, Divl. Secretary of the Union presided over the meet. Com. (Smt.) Sarita Mokashi, Secretary- SUR(MS) Branch of the Union was the Chief Guest. A good number of women employees participated in the Meet.

Com. (Smt.) Sarita Mokashi spoke about difficulties experienced by women employees and on the ways and means by which women employees can seek redressal of their problems by taking more and more interest in the Union's work. She further said that it was very likely that Union would observe the international Women's Day which is on 8.3.1994 when women employees should not only participate in large numbers but also take active part.

Com. (Smt.) C.U. Naidu, Vice Chairman, AQ Branch of the Union alongwith Coms. Bharati Shukla, (Smt.) S.N. Naidu, Chitralakha Ramteka, Smruti Dayani, Pratibha Nikam, Sharayu Talang and Smt. V.K. Mudaliyar took active part in organising the meet successfully.

Out Union has yet to do a lot in all the divisions to activate women employees and get them involved in the Union's day-to-day activities on par with men. The Divl. secretaries should take a note of this.

CHITTARANJAN LOCOMOTIVE WORKERS

Authorities forced to withdraw suspension order on TU workers.

For last few months the Rly. authority at Chittaranjan Locomotive Works (CLW) is conspiring seriously to jeopardise the locomotive production. Workers of CLW under the leaderships of CLW Labour Union have been fighting against such move. CLW Authority took it otherwise, launched various punitive measures threatened the union for carrying on Trade union activities. All protest Demonstrations have been ordered to be stopped. But the Union strongly opposed this action. A massive Dharna was organised against importing of Locos from ABB at much higher costs on 14.1.94. About 80 workers including leaders of Labour Union were issued with show cause. The entire workforce resented and protest actions further intensified. Some officers started offloading, privatisations etc. and created a reign of terror. They have been still varying on humiliation of workers. Workers further demonstrated enmasse on 4.5.94. Even then the conspiracies went on. on 9.5.94 five workers in stores deptt. were suspended without any valid reasons. The workers approached for withdrawal of suspension orders. But when the Admn. threatened further the workers demonstrated in thousands on 10.5.94 that continued upto 2 AM. on 11.5.94. The authorities ultimately had to withdraw the

suspension orders and beg apology and only then the demonstration was withdrawn. It is also surprising that CLW authorities are abusing left front Govt. saying the law and order does not exist in W.Bengal. Against this type of attitude the workers demanded arrest of those officers who were unnecessarily abusing state gov't. There was demand for withdrawal of such abusive languages and ultimately officers concerned had to withdraw that also. At one time there was a move by the Admn to use forces and fire arms by the RPF but ultimately fear of consequences restrained them.

There was a largely attended gate meeting by the labour union on 11.5.94 afternoon to explain the various conspiracies of the CLW authorities before thousands of workers.

It is apprehended that Rly authority is still continuing with their conspiracy to suppress trade union activity as they have already decided to cut down activity of loco building of various types, which is bound to provokers resistance of workers.

Workers are very much cautious about further conspiracies of the Admn.

CLW workers are very much enthused of their big victory against victimisation by the Authority.

ILO move to reduce deaths in mining

The expression, mining, connotes hazard while with the advancement of science and technology, safety awareness, government actions and, above all, workers struggles have compelled better standards to be enforced, new dangers have raised their heads and untractable hazards are lurking.

An estimated 15,000 mine workers world wide lose their lives each year which, in simple terms of daily toll means that every day approximately 42 mineworkers perish. There are solid grounds to believe that this is an underestimate as unreporting is believed to be widespread and manipulations with casualty figures are common. Incidentally, those were disputes over conflicting casualty figures in respect of several mine disasters. Situation in less developed countries can be easily imagined. Mineworkers are exposed to dangerous levels of noise, vibration, heat and cold harmful chemicals, radio active materials, lethal gasees and debalitating dust. Little wonder, occupational diseases like silicosis, asbestosis, pneumoconiosis and lung cancer are serious health effects and widespread.

Technological innovations which have transformed mining in many countries, have also created new problems in their trail.

In such a context, the ILo will begin a 2-year process of creating new standards to improve safety and health for all the 25 million workers directly employed in the worlds mines.

Setting out standards are welcome, but it must be remembered that these alone do not go far enough. The record of many countries in ratifying the ILO conventions is not happy. Worse still, despite formal ratification, implementation is still a far cry in the underdeveloped economies.

In the present day context when there is a worldwide drive towards privatisation in the wake of IMF sponsored structural reform, the enforcement of ILO conventions and standards come in for serious doubt. In the world of private ownership of private capital cutting cost at the cost of labour and emanating profits reigns supreme. Nothing is to be allowed to interfere with maximisation of profit, not even safety and far less workers health.

Round Table meeting on Tripartism at ILO office

The ILO office, New Delhi organised a round table meeting on 29.4.94 on Tripartism on the eve of the conclusion of the first phase of the Asian Pacific Project on Tripartism (APPOT), a regional project sponsored by the Government of Norway.

The meeting was attended by Mr Soren D C Swensen and Ms Emmy Janssen, Chief and Associate Expert respectively of APPOT, Ms Leyla Tegmo-Reddy, Deputy Director, ILO. While CITU was represented by Com M K Pandhe and Com.S Dev Roye, representatives of AITUC, HMS, BMS and INTUC also attended the meeting.

The main finding of APPOT is that although tripartism is accepted as a concept and a principle, the application is often affected by insufficient institutional and procedural arrangements. Some of the constraints are : lack of tripartite machinery including an independent secretariat, insufficient operating procedure, manpower, budget etc.

APPOT's findings in relations to India is that although tripartism has a long history in India, with the passage of time its credibility has been continuously eroding mainly due to apathetic attitude of the Government in the matter of "operations of the Indian Labour Conference." It has suggested the following steps for the improvement of the operation: "i) the size of the conference should be reasonable, ii) the agenda should be established on a tripartite basis (iii) an autonomous secretariat should be established (iv) sufficient background information should be established and (v) unanimous recommendations should be implemented."

Taking part in the discussion, the trade union representatives generally observed that although tripartism has got a long history in India, its credibility is eroding fast in phases. Tripartite fora have become mere formality of consultation only. The Indian Labour Conference (ILC) has been relegated to debating society and even its sessions are not convened at regular intervals. Assurance given by the Government are not fulfilled, rather rampant violation of decisions of the tripartite fora by the Govt has become the order of the day.

The trade union representatives also noted that the NGOs are receiving undue patronage from the Government and ILO. They are pushed up to such a position as if these NGOs are gradually to replace the

trade unions. It was pointed out that many ILO sponsored projects have been handed over to the NGOs. In fact it is the fund provided by ILO and other organisations by which the NGOs are carrying out their activities. It is necessary to ascertain as to how the fund is spent!

Com Pandhe while speaking on behalf of CITU pointed out that ILO pays more attention to the developed countries and the developing countries are rather given raw deal. He welcomed the APPOT and said that steps should be taken to pull the experience of the countries under APPOT and the ILO should take initiative to develop proper mechanism to improve the operation of tripartism.

Com. Pandhe was highly critical of the very pathetic state of affairs in the functioning of tripartite fora in India solely due to the lackadaisial attitude of the Government. He said the real spirit of Tripartism is no longer there. He pointed out that such is the seriousness of the Labour Ministry towards tripartism that most of the meetings are convened at too short notice. Voluminous agenda papers are circulated in the meeting only and trade unions are expected to give their views at once.

He suggested that monitoring of the implementation of the decisions taken at various tripartite fora shall have to be ensured through tripartite mechanism. ILC should be convened on yearly basis. The duration of the conference should be more than two days. It should not be a lecturing platform for the Ministers. The conference should be conducted on the basis of plenary and syndicate sessions. The agenda must be prepared at tripartite level. A Secretariat should be established for tripartism.

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8th Conference Resolutions:

(As authorised by the 8th Conference, the CITU Secretariat
it has approved and finalised the following resolutions---Ed)

RESOLUTION ON US OFFENSIVES AGAINST CUBA

The 8th Conference of the CITU held at Patna from March 3-7, 1994 condemns the USA for continuing its three decade economic blockade against Cuba despite the two resolutions adopted by the UN General Assembly consecutively for two years.

The Conference further condemns the USA for launching a slander campaign against Cuba by manufacturing lies about violation of human rights.

The conference sends warm greetings to the people and the working class of Cuba, who under the leadership of Fidel Castro are engaged in a heroic struggle to develop its economy along socialist lines despite the US imposed economic and trade embargo against it, which have been intensified after the collapse of the Soviet Union and other Socialist countries in the Eastern Europe, which were its main trading partners.

The conference congratulates Cuba for defending its socialist economy in a determined manner and successfully reorienting it through diverse forms of economic participation with its trading partners all over the world, notwithstanding the nefarious designs of the US imperialists to subjugate it by imposing such embargo and even going to the extent of espionage and threat of direct attack to destroy its socialism.

It has not only maintained, but rather made remarkable progress in various economic, social educational, health, cultural and sports spheres. The Conference welcomes the recent economic accord reached between Cuba and Socialist China, which is bound to help it further advance its socialist constructions.

The Conference also notes with satisfaction that the USA is getting growingly isolated from not only other countries, but also in its own country because of its unjustified embargo against Cuba. Defying the embargo several countries in Latin America and even Western Countries like France, Germany and Canada and organisations in USA itself have started trade relations with Cuba.

Reports also confirm as per the documents of CIA in intercepted by Cuba, that the charges of human rights violation by the USA against Cuba are fictitious and malicious. It is clear that the USA which could not destroy Cuba's Socialism all these long years by economic embargo, is now frantically engaged in manufacturing slanders to discredit it.

The Conference demands immediate lifting of the embargo by the USA. It congratulates the working

class and the people of india for coming forward with generous contributions to help Cuba and calls for continuing all support to it to help it fight the USA and develop its Socialist economy.

Against Unilateral Change in Recognition Rule of Unions of Central Govt. Employees

The 8th Conference of CITU being held during 3rd-8th March 1994, at BT Ranadive Nagar, Patna, records its strong protest against the unilateral action of the Govt of India in arbitrarily changing the rules pertaining to recognition of Employees' Union in Central Govt officers and establishments.

The Conference observes that the Govt.'s unilateral move to change the recognition rules is aimed at curtailment of fundamental right to Association and to have greater Govt. control over the trade unions in Central Govt. departments. The new recognition rule is also a naked attack on the right of the workers to elect office bearers of their choice restricting even the retired employees to get elected in the Executive Committee of the employees Union. It is also so design as to indulge in fragmentation of the employees union into cadre based unions. The new rules also imposes check-off system on the unions and would empower the authorities to indulge in unwarranted interference in Union affairs.

The Conference notes that the Govt of India's such move in making inroad to Employees trade union rights has already evoked organised protest amongst the mass of the Central Govt Employees and organisation.

The Conference maintains that such impugned move of the Govt of India is inseparably linked with its design in curtailing the trade union rights of the working class in general at the dictates of World Bank and IMF and called upon the Central Govt Employees to close their ranks and build up strong resistance against such disastrous move.

Against Repealing Air Corporation Act

The 8th Conference of CITU being held on 3rd-8th March 1994 at B T Ranadive Nagar, Patna expressed grave concern over the Government of India's determined bid to open the Air transport sector for minting profit by the private sector and multinationals at the cost of Indian Airlines and Air India, by way of repealing the Air Corporation Act.

The conference congratulates the workers of Air transport sector for their magnificent strike action on 17th December 1993 in protest of the Government of

India's move to repeal the Air Corporation Act.

The Conference observed with alarm that the Govt of India's move in opening the Indian sky to private sector and foreign airlines, would not only adversely affect the economy of the public sector airlines, but also, owing to the govt's and the bureaucrats crazy inclination to private sector and foreign companies would ultimately act in handing over this vital strategic air transport sector to the control of foreign airliners, putting self reliance to utter jeopardy.

The Conference condemns the Govt of India's anti-national action of repealing the Air Corporation Act paving the way for privatising Air Transport Industry and calls upon the working class and democratic people to build up united resistance against Govt of India's bid to sell out self-reliance by similar kind of actions.

ON THE ACCIDENT IN NEW KENDA COLLIERY
The Eighth Conference of the CITU held at Patna from 3rd to 7th March 1994 expresses deep sorrow at the tragic death of 55 coal miners in New Kenda Colliery under Eastern Coalfields Ltd. on 25th January 1994.

The ECL management colloustry violated the safety regulations and failed to take necessary precautions despite knowing that the mine was gassy and fire was in existence in the underground mine.

The inordinate delay in commencing rescue operations has been responsible for the loss of life of a large number of Coal miners. Through the Govt. of India appointed judicial enquiry, it may take years to find out the cause of accident. Meanwhile the management has not taken any steps to find out the responsibility of the officers and take departmental action against the guilty. The officials of the DGMS have also not played their role properly in ensuring safety in the mining operation.

The growing accidents in the coal mines in the recent past only highlights the neglect of safety by the CIL. The statutory pit safety committees are not functioning properly while complaints given by the workers are not properly attended to by the management.

The CITU congratulates the leaders and activists of colliery mazdoor sabha of India for the exemplary rescue work they have done in New Kenda Colliery. The CITU demands stringent act in against the guilty officials, liberal compensation to the families of the miners killed in the accident and proper implementation of safety rules by the CIL management.

TUs Protest against stripping of Air Hostesses

(The INTUC, CITU, AITUC, HMS and BMS issued the following joint letter to the Finance Minister on the alleged stripping of airhostesses at Calicut airport by Customs officials.)

Date: 13-5-1994

Dr. Manmohan Singh,
Minister for Finance,
Government of India,
North Block,
New Delhi

Dear sir,

The shocking incident at Calicut Airport on 6th May 1994 when 5 Air hostesses were forcibly taken to men's toilet and stripped for a body search, needs to be condemned by all those who respect womanhood in our country. The Assistant Collector Customs Shri A.C. Srinivasan and Abdul Rashid, Inspector Customs made most offensive and derogatory remarks against these Air hostesses. Nothing was found with them after body search but the custom officials humiliated them by passing sexually offensive remarks against them in presence of large number of passengers.

We strongly condemn the objectionable behaviour of these custom officials and demand a high level probe into the episode so that such actions are not repeated again. We also demand stringent action against the officials involved in this criminal behaviour.

While we appreciate the need for vigilance against smuggling at the Airport, this behaviour of the official is totally unwarranted. Please note that no male member of the cabin crew was searched by the custom officials.

We understand that attempts are being made to hush up the matter by the bureaucracy. The custom department with rampant corruption is likely to take a casual view of the matter. Hence, we request you to take this incident seriously and take strong action which alone will restore confidence of the people.

We shall be grateful if you would let us know the steps taken by you in the matter.

With personal regards,

Yours Sincerely,

Gopeshwar General Secretary INTUC	M K Pandhe General Secretary CITU	A B Bardhan General Secretary AITUC
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R K Bhakt
General Secretary
BMS

Umraomal Purohit
General Secretary
HMS

SAARC Countries Transport Workers' Unions/ Federations Conference: A Promising beginning.

The need of coordinating the efforts and struggles of transport workers in the SAARC region so as to bring about better conditions of life and work of the workers, evolution of well- thought and integrated policies, smoothen cross border movement of men and merchandise and give a fillip to respective national economies was being felt for a long time. It is in such a backdrop that the Seamen's Union, affiliated to CITU, convened a meeting at Calcutta of transport workers' unions of SAARC countries in February 1992 where representative of transport workers from Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka besides those from India were present.

The meeting had unanimously decided to hold a broad-based seminar at Dhaka where all the central trade unions/federations of all modes of transport--civil aviation, waterways, railways and roadways--would be invited. The Bangladesh transport workers unions were requested to form a preparatory committee headed by M A Hasnat Khan. Because of some internal problems which eventually led to a split of the federation, it was delayed by 2 years. What however, was called at Dhaka on April 5-6 1994 was not the seminar, as had been agreed, but a convention of representatives of road transport workers to the exclusion of representatives of other wings of the transport workers. There were, therefore, legitimate questions about participating in the convention. The CITU, having taken the larger question of unity and united action into consideration decided to participate. Comrades Narayan Saha and Diwakaran and Shyamal Chakraborty, who was treated as a special guest, attended.

The reason for the Dhaka convention held on April 5-6, 1994 turning to be one of road transport workers only was the reflection of behind the scene manipulations of the representative of TUI and some other elements who are keen to keep out the trade unions of workers in other modes of transport. Incidentally, these elements organised meetings of road transport workers in Punjab and Kathmandu (Nepal) where CITU was not even invited, which certainly is not conducive to development of the united movement. Apart from this, attempt was made to keep the convention confined to road transport alone and, with a view to achieving that, two documents were presented. One on Road Transport Policy for SAARC countries and the other on An Integral Road Transport Policy for SAARC Countries. Following objections raised by the CITU representatives it was changed and renamed as

Development of Road Transport In the Framework of An Integrated Transport Policy.

All these hampered achieving greater cohesion and understanding.

The Dhaka convention was attended by 40 top leaders of road transport workers of 5 countries of Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Vietnam and representatives of ILO and TUI of Transport workers.

Inaugurated by the Minister of Labour and Manpower of Bangladesh and presided over by Manzurul Ahsan Khan, the inaugural session of the convention was attended by 800 people on April 5. The Minister expressed the hope that the convention would promote friendly relations and brotherhood among the working people of SAARC countries. The Director of the Dhaka office of ILO, Warner Blink, narrated the main features of the ILO convention No.153 concerning the road transport workers and assured full cooperation with the workers' organisations. Shyamal Chakraborty, Secretary of the CITU and Minister of Transport of West Bengal, underscored the crucial role played by transport industry in the growth of economy of a country. Transport system to the functioning of life-cycle of a country is what the circulatory system is to a human body, he remarked. Leaders of the participating organisations greeted the inaugural session.

The plenary session on April 5 was presided over by a presidium consisting of one representative each from Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Vietnam. The leaders of the participating unions submitted written or oral reports. Next day April 6, the assembled participants divided themselves into two commissions to consider the draft documents and to adopt recommendations on the theme of the convention.

After exchange of views and discussion on various aspects, the draft documents were adopted with amendments for submission to the plenary session.

The plenary session adopted the two documents with some amendments. The session adopted unanimously a plan of work for 1994 which includes observance of International Demands Day by road transport workers of South Asia on November 22, 1994, promotion of bilateral exchange of visits, trade union education programme and publication of newsletter.

The convention formed an 11-member South Asia Regional Transport Workers' Preparatory Committee with one representative each from the participating organisations with the right to coopt on the basis of consensus. Shyamal Chakraborty (India) and Abdul Rouf Mian (Bangladesh) were elected

chairman and convenor respectively. K K Diwakaran was elected as a representative of All India Road Transport Workers Federation.

With a view to adopting a comprehensive, democratic and integrated transport policy and to giving an appropriate organisational shape so as to advance the struggle of the transport workers of the region, it was decided to organise a convention of trade union organisations of SAARC countries within 6 months.

The two documents adopted at the Dhaka convention, as referred to above, emphasise not only the urgently needed improvements in service conditions, safety, rest and leave facilities, fixation of wages by collective bargaining, expeditious settlement of insurance claims etc but also the necessity of developing and implementing coordinated national and regional policy for catering to the growing needs of the peoples, workers, developing proper infrastructure. The document entitled "Development of the road transport in the frame work of an integrated transport policy" as was adopted is reproduced below in full:

"Road transport workers organisations representing Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Vietnam and Trade Unions International of Transport Workers which met in Dhaka, Bangladesh on 5-6 April 1994, resolved that the countries of the South Asian Sub-region should adopt and implement comprehensive democratic and integrated road transport development and planning both at the national and sub regional level."

"A coordinated and integrated national and regional policy should be formulated catering to the needs of the peoples, workers, developing economies and regional operation. The road transport sector should be developed as a part of the whole policy and appropriate national intermodal ratio should be determined taking into consideration the following:

1. to build and expand national road network at a higher rate in order to make available road facility within easy reach of rural people;

2. to give more focus on the maintenance and repair of the road network;

3. the responsibility of the governments to build, repair and maintain the road network should be discharged, inter alia, by full utilisation of the taxes collected from transport industry;

4. to give importance to the work of coordination and cooperation at the subregional level in order to strengthen the South Asian Road Transport system.

5. to address adequately the problems of vital transport routes of land-locked countries of Afghanistan, Bhutan and Nepal by the concerned neighboring countries of the sub-region, border crossing facilitation should be liberalised and

efficiently maintained:

6. to strengthen the intra sub-regional road linkage for further development of trade and tourism;

7. in view of inadequate fossil fuel in the sub-region, the role and functions of road transport should be determined as part of an integrated transport system and exploration for fossil-fuel may be taken up energetically by the countries concerned;

8. to ensure an effective state sector in road transport;

9. to give emphasis to the manufacture, modernisation and introduction of technological innovation in the motorised road transport;

10. to give due importance to the growth and expansion of environment-friendly non-motorised vehicles in the urban transport system. For the big cities pollution free mass transit system like underground rail, electrically operated bus etc may be encouraged and traffic management system should be improved accordingly;

11. Multinational penetration in the operation of road transport services should not be allowed;

12. to introduce and ensure strictly 48 hours working week for the road transport workers; to ratify and implement ILO's convention No 153. Hours of work and rest period (Road Transport), 1979;

13. to adopt and implement comprehensive Labour Policy governing the employment and fixing of wages through collective bargaining, providing social security-benefits, pension and medical facilities to all road transport workers, ensuring safety, to establish by law an efficient labour inspection in respect of observance of conditions of work and wages;

14. to vacate all forms of victimisation of road transport workers for participation in normal trade union activities including participation in the strike;

15. to ensure effective participation of organised labour in the management of road transport enterprise;

16. to adopt new approach to improve road safety. Accident prevention should be stressed more than at present as a life saving activity."

After prolong deliberations and multilateral exchanges, the following decisions were taken:

1. a convention of all the trade unions of all modes of transport will be held in India within 6 months;

2. A preparatory Committee with Shyamal Chakraborty as chairman and Abdul Rauf of Bangladesh as convenor was formed;

3. this will coordinate and pursue the following decisions of the Dhaka Convention;

- a) to observe a Demands Day;

- b) to organise meetings with trade unions of workers of all modes of transport;

- c) to organise the convention in India;

- d) to prepare the drafts to be placed at the convention

Preliminary Observations of the Citu on the Proposed Trade Unions (amendment) Bill, 1994 Alongwith Relevant Recommendations of the Ramanujam Committee

1. The Labour Minister made a comitment to the Central Trade Unions that the draft bill would be discussed with the trade unions before finalisation for introduction in the Parliament. The commitment stands squarely violated.

2. It was stated time and again by the Labour Minister that the Trade Union (Amendment) Bill would be formulated on the basis of the consensus part of the report of the Bipartite Committee on Industrial Relations Law (Ramanujam Committee) constituted with the representatives of the trade unions and the employers. But the Subject Bill not only differs wildly on many basic aspects of the report but also goes much beyond the scope of the recommendations.

The discrepancies between the Ramanujam Committee report and the provisions of the proposed Bill are detailed hereunder.

1.*For registration of Trade Unions, the Ramanujam Commi-tee recommended that the membership strength of the applicant Trade Union could be 10% of the employees or 100 employees, whichever is less and any seven workers can apply for registration (Clause 5.3)

The bill stipulates the membership strength as 10% of workmen engaged or employed in the establishment or industry on the date of making of application for registration. (Clause 2)

This provision would be made effective retrospectively, as provided in the bill that the certificate of registration of a registered Trade Union of workmen issued before the commencement of the Trade Unions (Amendment) Act,1994 shall be deemed to have been cancelled after six months of such commencement unless an application for its continuance along with a list of its members is made by the Trade

Union before the expiry of six months after such commencement. (Clause 2)

The bill totally ignores this aspects although it has vested with wide power to cancel the registration of any union (Clause 5,6,of the bill)

The bill has ignored this basic recommendation altogether.

II.Ramanujam Committee recommended fixation of a time limit of 45 days within which registration of the union should be made (Clause 5.13)

III.Ramanujam Committee recommended ban on registration of unions formed on the basis of caste, creed, community, religion,craft etc. (Clausue 5.11)

IV. Ramanujam Committee recommended minimum subscription of unions to be:

The bill stipulates Re 1/- per month to be the minimum subscription for all category of workers(Claue 4)

- * Re 1/- per annum for rural workers
- * Rs 3/- per annum for workers governed by minimum wages Act and other unorganised sector.
- * Rs 12/- per annum for other (Clause 5.7)

V.* Ramanujam Committee recommended that not more than 1/3rd of the office bearers and executive members put together of a union can be outsider (Clause 5.16)

The bill stipulates: one third of the office bearers or two which ever is less can become outsider. (Clause 7)

* Ramanujam Committee clearly defined as to who would be deemed to be outsider in this respect (5.17)

The bill remains totally silent over the matter.

* Ramanujam Committee recommended ineligibility of Ministers at the centre or in the states to become office bearer of a trade union. (Clause 5.24)

The bill went further beyond to include persons holding an office of profit in the centre or states as ineligibles to become office bearer or Executive member of Trade Unions.(Clause 7)

EXCERPTS FROM THE RAMANUJAM COMMITTEE REPORT ON TRADE UNIONS ACT- (CHAPTER 5)

5.3 The suggestion that 10% or 100, whichever is less, should be the minimum membership is quite different from insisting that 10% or 100 members should sign an application form. If 100 members have to sign an application form, it will be a difficult process to verify all the 100 signatures and the process will be time-consuming and frustrating if even one or two out of the 100 drop out after signing the application for any reason. The committee recommends that the minimum strength for registration of a trade union should be 10 per cent of the employees or 100 employees, whichever is less, subject to a minimum of seven members. In case of application for registration, it will be enough if any seven persons out of the membership pass the test in the process of verification. This will help the small scale sector and the unorganised sector also.

5.4 Trade Union rights should be available to all employees regardless of their status, salary, wage or the character of their employers. These rights should also continue to be available to all the employers. This will ensure Freedom of Association guaranteed by our Constitution as also the obligations under the Freedom of Association Convention of the I.L.O.

5.6 National Federations and National Trade Union Centres to be exempted:-

The provision for compulsory registration of trade union will not apply to National Federations and National Centres.

5.7 Membership fee:- The Committee recommends that the following shall be the minimum rates for subscription of membership:-

Re. 1 per annum for rural workers.

Rs.3 per annum for workers under the Minimum Wages Act and in other unorganised sectors; and
Rs.12 per annum in the case of others.

It shall, however, be competent for any union to charge a higher rate of membership fee. The existing provisions in the Trade Unions Act regarding the establishment of a political fund shall continue.

5.11 Ban on Registration of certain unions:

No trade union shall be registered if its membership is restricted to a particular craft, occupation, caste, creed, community, race, religion or persons originating from a particular region.

5.13 Time limit for Registration:

Registration of a trade union should be made within 45 days from the date of receipt of the application by the Registering Authority beyond which it will have to record its reasons in writing for any delay or denial. In either case, an appeal will lie to the Labour Court at the Centre or in the States, as the case may be.

5.16 Outsiders: There has been considerable discussion about the outsiders in trade unions. It is the right of the workers to choose their leaders that should remain unfettered. If the employees want to choose an outsider, the law should not come in the way. At the same time, the outsider has no right to impose himself on any union. By attempting to reduce the percentage of outsiders, no substantial benefit will accrue. Even if we reduce the outsiders to 25 per cent it will not matter very much; for, in many unions, there will be only one or two outsiders, and they will be occupying key positions of either the president or the General Secretary. In terms of percentage, it will be quite negligible. even if we totally eliminate the outsiders by law, we can't be sure that the inside leadership is not subject to remote control by the outsiders. Even so we recommend that not more than 1/3 rd can be outsiders as office-bearers and members of the Executive Committee put together.

5.17 Employees whose cases are pending or are under dispute should not/deemed to be outsiders. The labour side wanted that employees who have honourably retired or have been retrenched should not be deemed to be outsiders, for the purpose of holding the office in trade unions. The employers holding any office in the trade unions if the workers so desired, they should be out of the one-third quota for the outsiders.

5.24 Ministers at the Centre or in the States shall be ineligible to become the office bearer of a trade union.

Vishakhapatnam District CITU calls For massive Struggles In Unorganised Sector

The District Conference of C.I.T.U., Visakhapatnam calls for the Workers of unorganised Sector for a massive struggle in the coming two months for achieving their demands. The Conference also called for militant struggle of the workers of unorganised struggle by holding Divisional Convenience, Union General bodies to motivate their issues. Signature Campaign, Dharnas at the Factories, Dharna at the Collectorate and culminating in a One-day Strike is part of the Struggle. The third dist. conference of CITU, Vizag was held from 24-26 April, 94 at Com. Manorangan Roy Nagar.

The Conference was started with flag hoisting by Com. P.V. Subba Rao. The delegates session attended by 492 delegates of which 27 are Women representing 95 Unions and 24,077 affiliated and 9275 unaffiliated membership was inaugurated by Com. Shanti Ghatak. In his speech he elaborately dealt with the problems of the working class and other toiling masses of this Country due to the Governments New Economic and Industrial policies and selling away of the Nations independence by the Govt. by signing the GATT treaty and called upon the working class to unitedly fight back the offensive and protect the National Sovereignty and Independence. The inaugural session was also addressed by Com Parsa and AITUC, HMKP leaders greeted the conference.

Com. Ch. Narsinga Rao, General Secretary placed the report before the conference. The (highlight) amin emphasis of the report was the self critical analysis of the organisational position in the light of the patna all india Conference of CITU. The report was prepared after a thorough examination of functioning of all the Unions and different committees. It emphasised the need of democratic functioning and developing internal leadership.

The report also noted that due to the principled stand taken by CITU, it advanced in major industries like Steel plant, hindustan Zinc, Jute etc., in Steel Plant its membership increased from 1250 in 1990 to 5200 in 1993 an increase by 316%. The total membership in the District has also increased considerably. From a membership of 15,764 of 68 Unions in 1990, it has grown to a membership of 24,077 of 95 Unions in 1993. Besides, its influence has increased from 5260 in 1990 to 9275 in '93. This is because of the consistant stand taken by CITU in favour of Working Class, its sincerity to working class and the correct tactices adopted in different struggles. The report also pointed out that we have few setbacks also, where we could not adopt correct tactices.

The Conference then devided into seven commissions of Public Sector, Central Sector, State Sector, Agro-based Industries, unorganised Sector, Working Women and Financial institutions. 232 comrades participated in the discussions in the commissions and the comrades found it very useful. There was threadbare discussion in the commissions.

All the 32 comrades participated in the discussion on General Secretary's Report concentrated mainly on Organisation. Com. B.V. Raghavulu in his electrifying speech explained the need to unite all workers into our fold and to organise more the workers of unorganised sector and promote democratic functioning in its true spirit. He called for the need of membership drive and approach to each and every worker as the other mass organisations.

In his summingup of the discussions the General Secretary on behalf of the Conference gave a clarian call to strengthen the organisation. The conference called upon the workers of unorganised sector to wage a bitter struggle in the coming two months to achieve the demands of minimum wages, VDA, appointment letters etc., The Conference passed many resolutions like industrialisation of the District etc.,

The Conference has elected a 73 members District Committee which inturn elected 20 Office-bearers with MVS. Sarma, Ch. Narsinga Rao and V.S.P. Raju as President, General Secretary and Treasurer respectively.

The conference has put the following tasks for the coming three years besides struggle in unorganised Sector.

1. To launch extensive campaign on the impace of Govt New Economic and Industrial Policies on the Industeis in Visakhapatnam Dist.,

- To Fight to protect the facilities like Canteens, Medical, Transport and Education etc., and against Off-loading and to fight for the survival of the Industries.

2. To concentrate on Railway, Transport, Port etc.,
3. To expand into Jute, Sugar etc.,

4. To fight for the industrialisation of the District like Allumina Plant, 100mw Thermal Power Plant, Gangavaram Sattelite port for Steel plant. To fight against closures, lockouts etc., and for reopening of closed industries.

5. To put special emphasis on Organisation and democratic functioning at all levels and for developing internal leadership to achieve the tasks putforth by the conference.

May Day message by the DPRK TUs to the Workers all over the World

Today, the entire Korean people including the working class meaning fully greet May Day, the international holiday of workers of the world, with a great dignity and pride in smashing every step of the imperialists and their puppets' continuous machinations to stifle our Republic and with further glorifying our style man-centred popular socialism.

Marking this day, we express our warm congratulations to and militant solidarity with you celebrating international holiday of the working class.

The Korean working class and working people send this message to you, workers of the world fighting for the building of a new, Independent, prosperous and the peaceful world free from domination, subordination, exploitation and oppression.

Dear Colleagues,

Today it is being said that the East-West cold war structure had already been collapsed in the World but the old dominant forces still remain and try to keep their unchanged ambition to extend sphere of dominant power in the World-Wide scale.

They continue to pursue to follow their policy of strength and openly intervene and dominate in the internal affairs of other countries.

The imperialists and reactionaries, talking about the so-called "nuclear suspicion" over the north, are escalating the situation on the Korean peninsula to push it into the brink of war.

Taking the so-called nuclear issue of our Republic is the plot machination to justify the occupation to the South Korea by U.S. troops.

The imperialists' plots of division and splitting up are intensifying conflicts among the regions, nations and tribes and enact a tragedy in blood, which bring sufferings and miseries to the peoples in several regions.

Their neo-colonialist policy of plunder hampers the building of a new, independent society of other countries with the result that the rich getting ever richer and the poor ever poorer on the world-wide scale and the developing countries being pushed to the outskirts of the World economy in view of the conception of the international economy relations.

The most genuine champions of justice, peace, democracy are the workers of the world.

Let us fight with redoubled courage against the imperialists' policies of domination and subordination, and for democracy in the world community in order to build a new and equitable international economic order.

Let us launch an anti-war movement to defend the peace all over the world.

These historic tasks we have assumed on behalf of the times that demand the unity of the workers all over the world.

Unity means victory and division leads to echoc and avortment.

The Working class around the world, the main force for the accomplishment of the cause of independence will defeat any formidable enemies if they unite closely disregarding the differences in social systems, views, ideas, religions, nations and boundaries of the countries.

We have common idea and common demand that is, idea of independence and demand of becoming masters of all.

The unity based on this independent idea and on this evident demand will be indestructible, more power advancing the human history along the orbit of independence.

Let us further intensify solidarity with the international working classes and the trade unions in the struggle for the accomplishment of the cause of independence by forming the anti-imperialist common front on the principle of independence equality and mutual respect.

The workers all over the world who respect independence should unite!

It can be the slogan of the present-day which is the most progressive, most general and most universal with which the workers of the world should hold up all together. It is important for us to form the more wide anti-imperialist common front to promote the cause of independence.

In the future as in the past, the working class of Korea, under the ideal of independence, peace and friendship, will unite with the peace-loving and progressive peoples of the whole world and fight with firm faith and indomitable will in certain victory in order to build a new, independent, prosperous world free from domination and oppression.

We would like to express, once again, our firm conviction that the workers around the world will fulfill their historic mission in the great and sacred struggle to achieve the historic cause of independence of the Working class.

*Long live May Day, international holiday
of the working classes of the world!
(30th April 1994 Pyongyang)*

ON KANORIA MILLS PROBLEM

The Secretariat of the CITU has issued the following statement to the Press:

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions expresses its grave concern at the threat of violent agitation given by the representatives of Sangram Shramik Union in Kanoria Jute Mills, West Bengal that they would resort to violent agitation including removal of fishplates of railway tracks, etc. Instead of solving the problem of Kanoria jute mill workers it would only further lead to confrontation with the Left Front Govt in West Bengal.

The problems of Kanoria and 13 other jute mills in West Bengal has been created due to the New Economic Policies of the Govt of India. The Ministry of Textile under the Central Government has refused to intervene and take steps to revive these units. The BIFR prepared a package two years ago to revive the Kanoria Jute Mills which was also not implemented by the owner of the mill and the financial institutions under the Central Government.

It is highly unfortunate that despite this facts the Sangrami Shramik Union leaders are launching agitation against the West Bengal Government and creating law and order problem with an ulterior motive of discrediting the Left Front Government. Instead of asking Central Govt to take over the mill they are demanding that West Bengal Govt should take it over to cover up the real culprit. This political motive by the leadership of this union has become a stumbling block in revival of the mill itself.

If the leaders of Sangrami Shramik union give up the ulterior political motive of directing the struggle against the West Bengal Government, it is possible to build up a united movement for revival of all the 24 closed Jute mills in West Bengal involving all the Central Trade Unions. If the problem of revival of NTC mills could be sorted out in West Bengal by joint efforts of central trade unions there is no reason why united efforts cannot be made to revive all the sick jute mills in West Bengal.

The CITU therefore would appeal to the leadership of Sangrami Shramik Union give up the misguided path and come forward to find a solution to revive the Kanoria mills on the basis of package prepared by the BIFR.

It is unfortunate that some newspapers are publishing news item stating about the difference of opinion between the CITU Centre and the West Bengal State Committee of CITU. We would like to strongly repudiate such allegation and make it clear that it is the figment of imagination of some press persons who are trying to utilise the issue to attack the CITU and the left front Government in West Bengal.

The CITU appeals to the workers of all the sick jute mills in West Bengal not to be misled by the activities of the diversionary forces and be prepare for a joint movement for reopening of all the mills including Kanoria Jute Mills through Joint struggle against the Central Government.

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