

CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS

SECOND CONFERENCE

General Report

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ERNAKULAM

18-22 APRIL 1973

GENERAL REPORT

By

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Comrades,

The three years that are about to elapse since our last conference at Calcutta in May 1970 have been eventful in the international and national spheres, with the forces of Socialism and democracy registering significant advance.

China's Entry Into UNO—Defeat Of U. S. Policy Of Cordoning Off China.

The United States policy of isolating and cordoning off China has ended in a fiasco. The Peoples' Republic of China has taken its rightful place in the UNO and the fraud that the Chiang Kai-Shek clique represents China has ended.

What is more, Nixon had to rush to Peking and later establishment of *de facto* diplomatic recognition between the two countries has been agreed to.

Victory Of Vietnamese People

The most outstanding development of the period is the end of the war of U. S. aggression in Vietnam. Even the near-nuclear bombing by USA Air Force could not cow down the valiant people of Vietnam. And Nixon, isolated from world public opinion and in the face of mounting opinion in USA itself, had to halt the war.

The Vietnamese people had certainly received tremendous help in arms and other materials from the Socialist countries, above all from the Soviet Union and China. However, if the two giant socialist countries had united and taken a bold stand

against the U. S. imperialists when country of the Socialist fraternity was subject to aggression, much of the indescribable sufferings and sacrifices could have been avoided.

The terms of the Agreement terminating the war provides for the withdrawal of the American and foreign troops from South Vietnam, demolition of all military establishments. The Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam is recognised and will continue to hold sway in the areas under its control. The line between the North and South Vietnam has been re-affirmed to be a temporary line and unification of the country will take place according to the wishes of the people. A National Council of Reconciliation, composed of the P. R. G., the Saigon Govt. and neutrals, whose decisions will be taken on the basis of unanimity, will prepare for democratic elections in South Vietnam. Troops, weapons and war materials from abroad are not to be introduced into South Vietnam. Civilian prisoners and prisoners of war are to be released. There is to be an international supervisory force.

This is certainly a tremendous victory for the people of Vietnam, who have written the most glorious chapter in the history of the fight for freedom, If honestly carried out, these terms will ensure a democratic Government in South Vietnam paving the way for a united, Socialist Vietnam.

U. S. Imperialist Still Conspires

However, the U. S. imperialists, have once before torn the Geneva Agreement of 1954 to pieces and unleashed the most brutal war against Vietnam, cannot be expected to honour the terms. Already, they through their puppet, Thieu, have started truce violations.

This perfidious game of U. S. imperialists must be foiled in time by the vigilance of the Socialist countries and by world democratic opinion.

The CITU pays its tribute to the valiant people of Vietnam on this glorious victory over the most ferocious imperialism.

It calls upon the Indian working class to exercise vigilance and raise its voice of protest against all attempts of the U. S. imperialists to wriggle out of its commitments and to embroil South Vietnam in a prolonged civil war. It calls upon the two Socialist countries, the USSR and China, to overcome their differences and act unitedly against these American conspiracies.

Emergence Of Bangla Desh

Another important development is the emergence of Bangla Desh as a sovereign independent country from the yoke of Pakistan's military dictatorship. This has led to the downfall of the military regime in Pakistan itself and the emergence of democratic forces in both Pakistan and Bangla Desh.

However, the U.S. imperialists, who supported the Yahya Khan regime in its unheard of atrocities in Bangla Desh and attempt to drown the freedom struggle, have lost no time in mending their fences with Bangla Desh Govt. and have gone in a big way into Bangla Desh under the guise of aid to repair its shattered economy and help in its development. Knowing as we do what the American 'aid' means, the democratic forces will have to be extremely vigilant in foiling the U.S. conspiracies.

The democratic forces in Bangla Desh and Pakistan are working under extremely difficult conditions and are constantly facing attacks from the reactionary forces. The Indian working class cannot remain passive spectators to these attacks on these forces and must stand by them.

Release The Prisoners Of War

One of the issues that is utilised by reaction to fight the democratic forces in Pakistan is the issue of the 80,000 Pakistani prisoners of war detained in India. The CITU demands of the Govt. of India a quick solution to this problem, so that the POWs, except those who may be required for war crimes trial may be repatriated to their homes and

join their kith and kin. The CITU also demands that the civilian Bangla Desh refugees who are stranded in Pakistan should be repatriated to Bangla Desh.

The question of whether recognition of Bangla Desh by Pakistan should precede or come after a meeting between Bhutto and Mujibur Rahman should not be allowed to delay the solution of these problems.

Dollar Crisis

Comrades, the period that has passed saw the intensification of the world capitalist crisis. The sharpest expression of it is the currency crisis. The Dollar, which emerged at the end of the World War as the world currency, does no more reign supreme. The arrangement that the imperialists came to at Brettenwoods at the end of the last war, has completely broken down. The dollar, despite the unwillingness of the U.S. had to be devalued by 10 per cent in the course of 14 months and yet there is no solution to the currency crisis in sight.

This is not the place to enter into an analysis of this crisis. Suffice it for our purpose to note that this crisis is the result of other imperialist countries like West Germany and Japan emerging as powerful rivals of the USA in the world markets.

The European Common market has today emerged, with the entry of Britain, as the biggest economic Bloc, checkmating the USA. The strength of this bloc can be understood from the fact that in 1971 its imports at 171 billion dollars were more than twice the combined imports of the USA (46 billion) and Japan (20 billion). Its exports at 312 billion dollars were more than four times the combined exports of USA (43 billion) and Japan (24 billion dollars).

Trade-War Between Imperialists

The ECM whose formation was encouraged by the USA as a counter-weight to the growing influence of the Soviet

Union and the Socialist world, has today, with its trade barriers, become the most important obstacle to the growth of USA's trade and investments. Contradictions between the ECM and Japan, between ECM and the USA, between Japan and USA and ECM have intensified. A trade war is on.

The USA demands that its crisis should be solved at the expense of the ECM and Japan. It demands the revaluation of the Yen and threatens that otherwise it will raise tariff barriers against the import of Japanese goods into the USA. It threatens the ECM countries that it would withdraw its military forces from these countries if they do not come to the rescue of the USA. The other countries can accept U.S. demands only at the peril of their own economics.

They are unable to take any joint measures. On the other hand, if one country takes some measures to protect its economy, it upsets the economy of the biggest country, the USA.

Working Class Struggles Grow

The intensification of the crisis is seen in the growth of strike struggles in the advanced capitalist countries as shown below :

No. Of Workers On Strike In Developed Capitalist Countries

1967	—	30 million
1968	—	43 ,,
1969	—	44 ,,
1970	—	45 ,,
1971	—	48 ,,

Every country has seen most bitter and prolonged strike struggles, the most memorable being the strike of the Shipyard workers of Clyde in Britain against attempt to close the ship-building company, which lasted 8 months. In Britain, upto August the number of mandays lost was 15 million as against 13 million for the whole of 1971.

Commenting on the conditions of the workers and their struggles, *COMBAT*, a bourgeois daily wrote: "Unemployment is growing, prices are incessantly rising and class antagonisms are becoming sharper each passing day."

These are just illustrations of the growing struggles in the capitalist countries of the working class which is facing increased exploitation by the monopolists because of the intensification of the capitalist crisis. I do not want to burden the Report with the struggles in every country.

Economic Situation In India

Comrades,

In my report to the last Foundation Conference of the CITU in May 1970, I had pointed out that the capitalist path of development that our rulers had embarked upon without shattering the feudal relations in agriculture and by relying on imperialist aid and collaboration agreement with foreign monopolists "has led the country into the morass of an economic crisis. Instead of a prosperous, industrialised country, our dependence on aid has grown year by year... The foreign exchange deficit has grown year by year and even for maintenance imports, the country has to rely on increasing foreign aid, particularly American aid."

I had further pointed out that "both the budget and the fourth plan show that the working class and the people will be fleeced through inflation, high prices and high taxation on consumer goods."

Developments in the period between then and now have amply proved the correctness of that assessment. Successive budgets have imposed enormous burdens of indirect taxation and heavier and heavier doses of deficit financing.

Price! Rise

As a result, inflation has been growing at a galloping rate. Prices of all consumer goods have risen at a rate never before seen.

The official figure of 12% increase in prices of all commodities and 15% increase in the prices of foodgrains in 1972 is a deliberate attempt to conceal the real extent of the price rise. During the last year alone in the retail market, the price of wheat has risen from 80 paise per kilo to Rs. 1.50 per kilo ; rice from Rs. 2 to Rs. 3 and even Rs. 3.50 per kilo ; oil prices have shot up from Rs. 5 to Rs. 7.50 per kilo ; Sugar from Rs. 2.20 to Rs. 4 per kilo. Kerosene in many parts of the country is unavailable even at Rs. 2.50 per litre while the official price is only 70 paise ! Pulses have also risen steeply. And yet the Government claims there has been only a 12% increase.

Despite all this fleecing of the people in name of development, what has been the actual achievement of the economy ? Neither industry nor agriculture developed. Only poverty and unemployment have developed.

The Finance Minister admitted that the expectations of the rate of growth of the economy in 1970-71 proved illusory. His prophecy that 1971-72 would be better also proved wrong. The rate of growth was hardly 3 to 3.5 per cent.

1972-73—Year Of Worst Crisis

1972-73 has witnessed the worst crisis and we are still going through it.

The results of heavy dependence on American aid were seen when the USA stopped all aid following the short war with Pakistan over Bangla Desh. Many industries had to be shut down for want of spare parts, which could not be imported from the USA for lack of foreign exchange.

The countrywide power shortage which has led to lay-offs hundreds of thousands of workers in the organised sector and in the small-scale industries, to the huge unemployment of millions of handloom workers, which has affected tens of thousands of farmers depending on power irrigation and the agricultural workers, depending on these farms, brings out gravity of this crisis and the bankruptcy of the planning with foreign aid and collaboration with foreign monopolists.

Out of a total target of 22.71 million kilowatts of power generation in the four plans, the actual achievement was only 14.71 million kilowatts, i.e. a shortfall of 35%.

Price Of Aid And Collaboration

The failure to achieve the target is precisely due to dependence on foreign countries for the import of generators, heavy boilers and other equipment. Even after the building of the Bharat Heavy Electricals at Bhopal and Bharat Heavy Boilers at Trichy at enormous costs, the Parliamentary Committee on Public Undertaking reported that in 1968-69, utilisation of capacity was 15%. As much as 85 percent was lying idle. These undertakings have not been expanded ; no research and designing have been undertaken to manufacture bigger generators than 110 megawatts while the new power projects need generators of 130 and 260 MW. How can dependence be overcome with such policies ?

I have already dealt with in my report to the Coimbatore General Council meeting in May 1971 about the rampant corruption in the Public Sector in collusion with the contractors, criminal neglect of maintenance, use of sub-standard coal, etc. all of which have landed the country in this terrible mess.

The power crisis is only one instance of what price the country has to pay for its dependence on foreign aid and foreign monopolists. The country has experienced the disastrous effects of depending on foreign collaboration, delay, sabotage of production, use of out-dated machinery, etc. All these were seen in Durgapur Steel, Durgapur Alloy Steel, Rourkella, Cochin Oil Refineries, Durgapur Fertiliser Plant and a host of other projects. I have already dealt in detail with these in my report to the General Council meeting at Coimbatore.

Moreover, the loot of these foreign companies by way of profits, price of technical know-how, royalties, etc. is colossal. To give one example, the foreign oil companies alone increased

their profits from Rs. 31 crores in 1971 to Rs. 42 crores in 1972. One Rubber Factory with a nominal capital investment has sent out crores of rupees as profits.

Growth Of Monopolists

While industry has been stagnating and people's suffering mounting, the big monopolists' profits have been increasing. *The Economic Times* (June 13, 1972) commenting on a study of savings and investments of 1019 companies covering over 75 per cent of capital investment for the year 1970-71 by the Reserve Bank of India has this to say on this aspect :

“For one thing, the study reveals that shortages of material, equipment, etc. have not made an impact on the financial performance... The estimated gross savings have shot up from Rs. 529 crores in 1969-70 to Rs. 622 crores in 1970-71 ; on a net basis, there has been a phenomenal increase from Rs. 174 crores to Rs. 237 crores...Considering the fact that 1970-71 was not regarded as a highly favourable year for industry and when misgivings and other inhibiting factors were said to have retarded development, it is a pleasant surprise to observe that gross savings in the industrial sector grew by almost 18 per cent and net savings twice as much.”

Is there any wonder that the monopolists fattened during all this period ? Is it fortuitous that with such policies the growth of the economy has been a pitiable 3.5 per cent and the average per capita income has been almost stationary and the percentage of people below the poverty line has tremendously increased ?

Budget Shows Bankruptcy Of Govt. Policies

The budget for the year 1973-74 presented by the Finance Minister in February this year brings out clearly the utter incapacity of the Govt. with its policies, to get the country out of the present deep crisis and provide for increased tempo of industrial activity.

The allocation for Central plan is just Rs. 1,674 crores, as against Rs. 1,787 crores in the previous year's budget, a reduction of Rs. 103 crores or 7 per cent. Taking into account the officially admitted 15 percent increase in prices, that cut in real terms works out to an additional Rs. 160 crores, i.e. a total cut of 15 per cent. Government's proposed investment in the public sector undertakings vital for industrial development, viz. heavy industry, petroleum and chemicals, steel and mines, and industrial development, is Rs. 488 crores only as against Rs. 602 crores for 1972-73, i.e. a cut of nearly 20 per cent.

As a lip service to social justice a sum of Rs. 125 crores is allotted to nutrition programme for children, rural water supply, social security programmes for industrial workers, etc. But this is the same as last year. With the price increase in 1972-73, this is at least 15 per cent less than the allocation last year in real terms.

Then there is an allocation of Rs. 100 crores for "new programmes which will generate employment opportunities for half a million educated unemployed persons in various field and at the same time, help in the creation of durable assets". What these fields are, are not spelled out. Here comes Mr. Chavan with the assertion that he can create half a million jobs with an investment of Rs. 2,000 per job in what industries God alone knows. Planning is thus reduced to mere arithmetic. Such is the bankruptcy of the rulers.

As against a massive provision of Rs. 250 crores for deficit financing in 1972-73, the Finance Minister now says that deficit financing actually amounted to Rs. 550 crores. Actually the real deficit is concealed by jugglery of accounts.

Paradise For Tax Evaders

Industrial production is supposed to have gone up by 7 per cent and prices of manufactured goods are admitted by Govt. to have gone up at least by 6%. This should have helped in more receipts by way of excise duties. Actually they have fallen, evidently, the taxdodgers have had a heyday.

When prices are rising and unemployment is growing, it is obvious that greater income accrues in the hands of the more affluent sections, who are liable to income-tax. And yet, the Finance Minister estimates the receipts from this source to grow by a mere Rs. 49 crores ! Obviously, the Govt. assumes more taxes will be avoided as in the case of excise duties.

The budget thus provides for creation of more black money !

In order to soothe the tempers of the angry people the Finance Minister boasted that this year the deficit financing will be only Rs. 85 crores. But later he had to admit that when the Central Pay Commission's report comes the deficit will increase to above Rs. 250 crores !

Can any one believe this with experience of all the past 22 years planning and particularly, with that of last year, i. e. 1972-73, and with the prices continuing to rise after the budget ? The achievements of physical targets of development will fall far short of targets. This means more attacks on the living standards of the common people and more unemployment.

Indira Gandhi's Profession And Practice

Comrades, what do these developments of the last two years show ? Indira Gandhi within six months after our last conference suddenly dissolved Parliament and went in for elections with the slogan of 'Garibi Hatao' and 'Bekari Hatao'. She thundered against the 'Marwari', 'Gujarati' monopolists as having brought about the ruin of the country and the common man and cited her Bank nationalisation as an earnest of her resolve to fight these monopoly houses. She asserted that she had got rid of Morarji, Atulya Ghosh, S. K. Patil and Nijalingappa, all obstacles for pursuing progressive policies of fighting the monopolists have been removed.

The people believed her alluring slogan and gave her a massive victory at the polls. And yet the result of her rule has been what we saw before. In fact, according to the

figures furnished in the Rajya Sabha, during two years of her regime, the House of Tatas increased their assets from Rs. 505 crores to Rs 638 crores and the House of Birlas from Rs. 459 crores to Rs. 630 crores. The growth of the assets of the other monopoly houses has also been phenomenal, some of them like the Mafatlals doubling their assets.

Both in the report to the Foundation Conference as well as to the General Council meeting at Coimbatore, I have dealt with the Green Revolution in agriculture and how it has only resulted in the accumulation of wealth in the hands of the landlords and the rural rich in the rural areas. The increase in prices of foodgrains during the last two years has further strengthened their position, while the rural poor have been impoverished.

Bank Nationalisation—A Left Manoeuvre

Thus the realities of development show that the policies of the Indira Congress Govt. did not make any departure from those of the united Congress, Bank nationalisation or nationalisation of general insurance, like the nationalisation of the Imperial Bank and Life Insurance 15 years ago did not mean any attack on the monopolists as our friends of the AITUC shout. They continue to serve the same monopolists in the same measure as before.

The practice of Indira Congress Govt. and not the professions is the touchstone of her policies. Even the blind can see now that the measures of bank nationalisation etc. were resorted to by Indira Gandhi only as a left manoeuvre against the rising tide of mass struggles against the Congress Government's policies that were unleashed by the encouragement given to them by the policies of the United Front Govts. of W. Bengal and Kerala during 1967 and 1969. Having succeeded in luring the people, she pursued the same old policies with a vengeance.

Toppling Of U. F. Governments—Why ?

The pursuit of these policies required the toppling of the two U. F. Governments of W. Bengal and Kerala through disruption and the Right C. P. leaders were there to oblige her. But even this was not enough. The most militant detachment of the Indian working class, namely, the working class of W. Bengal, organised under our organisation should be immobilised in order to prevent it giving inspiration and courage to the workers in other parts of the country to fight these attacks on their living standards and democratic and trade union rights.

Semi-fascist Terror In W. Bengal

Hence, under President's rule, hoodlums and goondas were organised. A section of students and youth was organised with promises of attack on the monopolists and giving jobs and opening a bright future. The poison of anti-Communism was injected into them. With the help of these semi-fascist terror was let loose in W. Bengal. Bands of these hoodlums started physical assaults, stabbing and firing on the militant cadres of the CITU and other democratic organisations with the help of the police who would stand by them. Over 600 of the noblest fighters have fallen victims to the murderous assaults of these murderous gangs. From this 2nd Conference of the CITU, let us pay our homage to these valiant fighters, the noblest sons of the toiling people and pledge that the battle will be carried on, no matter what the enormity of the sacrifice we have to make.

Along with these, the Central Reserve Police was let loose in area after area for combing operations, as though a civil war was on. Thousands had to leave their homes. Cases were launched against thousands and detentions without trial became the order of the day.

1971 Elections And After

Despite all these, and despite the treachery of the Right C. P., in the elections of 1971 which took place during the

'Indira wave', the people of W. Bengal reduced the Congress to a minority and the CPI (M) captured the half of seats in the Parliament from the State and won a near majority in the State Assembly. And yet, it was not called upon to form the ministry. The Congress made an opportunist combination of all and formed the ministry. But in the face of the rising tide of the mass struggle this ministry could not last for more than two months and the Assembly was dissolved.

Elections Rigged—Terror Intensified

Again, under the President's rule, the same semi-fascist terror was let loose and in 1972 assembly elections, they rigged the elections. Then followed the intensification of the semi-fascist terror, intensified attacks by the hoodlums aided by the police and CRP on our activists living in entire industrial areas like Barrackpore, Assansol. Thousands of people had to flee their homes. Thousands of our office-bearers in many factories where masses of workers owed their allegiance to the CITU were prevented from entering the factories and the obliging employers under the plea of absence without leave dismissed them. Nearly 300 offices of unions affiliated to the CITU were forcibly occupied by the goonda gangs with the assistance of the State police and the CRP. In most cases our comrades did not surrender to these attacks. Often they beat back the goondas. Only when the police and the CRP came to their aid and our comrades could not stand before the superior armed might of the police they had to surrender.

The State Govt. and police launched thousands of cases—not on those who attacked the offices but on our comrades whose only crime was that they defended themselves. More than a thousand activists of the CITU unions and other democratic organisations are rotting in jail for three years without trial and with no prospect of their cases being taken up for trial in the near future. Nearly a thousand have been detained

without trial under the MISA. The treatment meted out to these comrades in jail is worse than that under the British rule. And when the question is raised in Parliament, the Home Minister expresses sympathy and says that he has recommended better treatment but throws up his hands in despair stating that the matter being a State Subject, the Centre cannot do anything more about it. Can any one believe that the State Congress Government dares not carry out the wishes of Indira Gandhi? Even constitutionally speaking, when the state of emergency continues, the Centre has the power to issue directives to the State Governments even on State subjects. Why does not the Centre issue such directions if they are really concerned? No, comrades these things cannot happen without the connivance of the Central Government and Indira Gandhi and they cannot escape their responsibility. And on top of these nearly a lakh of warrants are pending against militants of the CITU and other democratic organisations in West Bengal.

Such comrades, is the face of the 'progressive' and 'democratic' Indira Congress in a state where the class struggle of the workers, peasants and agricultural workers and middle class employees have reached a high stage and has begun to exercise a profound influence on the toiling people all over the country.

Workers Resist

Comrades, in my report to the Foundation Conference I had stated that these policies of the Government—policies of attack on the living standards of the common people and heaping misery on them—will inevitably meet with resistance and the toiling people will rise in struggles. This is exactly what has happened in the recent past, particularly during the last one year.

Indira Gandhi did not succeed in cowing down the people of West Bengal and in terrorising the toiling people in other States by this semi-fascist terror in West Bengal. The workers

of West Bengal found new ways of functioning under conditions of this terror and they have launched struggles. The Jute workers, workers of Durgapur Steel, Textile workers, Engineering workers, found ways of uniting with the followers of the INTUC and AITUC and have forced their leaders to either join in common struggles or give the call for strikes. The struggle for unity and united struggle goes on.

In other parts of the country, people are awakening from the stupor of the alluring slogans of "Garibi Hatao" and "Bekari Hatao". Life's hard experiences, the tremendous attack on their living standards by soaring prices and growing unemployment have made the people in almost every State to come out in determined strikes.

In these struggles, the working class naturally is in the forefront. Workers of every industry and in every State have fought prolonged strikes struggles. Just a few years ago the bourgeoisie used to say that West Bengal was beset with strike struggles because of the existence of U. F. Government, while Maharashtra was a paradise of industrial harmony. But last year's statistics show that Maharashtra tops the list of mandays lost due to strikes and lockouts. The strike wave has again intensified last year.

The united struggles of the jute, textile, engineering workers of West Bengal, the united struggles of the textile, Simpson, Madras and Dunlop Factories, the sugar factories, the Valaparai plantation workers, of Asoke Leyland of Tamilnadu, the strikes of the textile, jute, J. K. Group workers in Kotah, and the textile workers of Rajasthan, the strikes of the woollen mill workers, of the powerloom workers, the Bombay Corporation Workers of Maharashtra, the struggles of Fertilisers and Chemicals of Travancore (FACT), of the Coir, handloom and plantation workers of Kerala, the struggle of the textile workers of Delhi and Indore are some of the major strikes struggles during the period.

The All India cement workers strikes which paralysed the entire industry throughout the country is of great significance.

These are just a few of the innumerable struggles that the workers throughout the country had waged heroically facing police lathis, imprisonment and firings and even torture in the police lockups during this period. I do not want to burden this report with an exhaustive list of these struggles. I leave it to Comrade M. K. Pandhe, our Secretary to give as many of these struggles in his Work Report of the CITU to this Conference.

All Sections Struggles

It is not only the working class that took up the banner of struggle. Agricultural workers in Kerala, parts of Tamilnadu and Andhra and many other States also carried on struggle for higher wages, against tractorisation and for land. Sharecroppers and tenants in many parts of the country are fighting against eviction and to retain the land in their possession.

Above all, this period witnessed the struggle of the middle class employees on a scale and with a sweep never before seen. State Government employees of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and many other States have conducted prolonged strike struggles. College and other school teachers in almost every State have also conducted prolonged and bitter struggles. Medicos, engineers of Electricity Boards of many States, and students, particularly of engineering and technical institutions have conducted protracted struggles.

The Central Govt. employees started agitation in a big way for the early publication of the Pay Commission Report and are making preparations for a struggle if the recommendations turn out to be below their demand. The demand of minimum bonus of 8.1/3 per cent for all has been raised and agitation has started on the demand.

The State Bank and Reserve Bank employees are on the move.

Handloom weavers in every State have come on the streets in thousands against the high price and scarcity of yarn.

Demonstrations and dharna by housewives against the soaring prices are taking place in many cities.

In drought-affected areas, people including women are gheraoing officers and local offices demanding drought relief and against corruption in whatever is given as relief.

Govt. Mounts Repression

The Govt. has sought to meet these struggles with unprecedented repression and smash the resistance of the fighting people. The treatment meted out to the striking State Govt. employees when four thousand of them were jailed and thousands were beaten near the Assembly in Patna and in the jail, shocked the entire people of Bihar. The same treatment was meted out to the State Govt. employees and medicos by the Rajasthan Govt.

The Uttar Pradesh Govt. brought in the military and tried to intimidate the striking engineers to work. Many of them were beaten in lock-ups.

The Haryana Government dragged the teachers in villages and towns, beat them before students and public and continued beating them up mercilessly in police stations. When unable to bear the torture they went to Delhi to demonstrate before Parliament. 3,000 of them were thrown in jail by the Central Government administration of Delhi. Finding this embarrassing, the Haryana Government began to stop all buses going to Delhi and forcibly made all those who appeared to be teachers to get down, took them to the police stations. Even some lawyers were beaten because they looked like teachers to the police !

The Kerala Government headed by the Right Communist Chief Minister Achutha Menon excelled all the Governments in the orgies of violence and repression. It let loose the police and CRP to beat up the agricultural workers of Kuttanad. Women were raped by the CRP. Not satisfied with the jailing of thousands of State Government employees, and beating them up, the police was let loose on the

entire people when they rose in support of the striking employees.

The Central Government did not hesitate to use the DIR to ban the strike of the Loco workers of Dakshina Railway and arrest the leaders, despite solemn assurances in Parliament that the DIR would not be used against trade union struggles.

The DMK Government of Tamilnadu also followed in the footsteps of the Congress Government in attempting to suppress the struggles with repression.

People's Gains

Despite this terrible repression, these struggles had not gone in vain. The tenacity and the unity of the striking workers and employees forced the Government and employers to concede the demands substantially. Gains in wage increases were there in many cases. The biggest gain was the increase of the minimum bonus to 8.33 percent. A gratuity law had to be enacted despite the fact that it contains a lot of provisions which might deprive the workers and employees their gratuity.

It must be stated, however, that all these gains go to only partially neutralise the deterioration in the conditions due to inflation and the terrific price rise. There has been no improvement in the living standards in real terms.

Approach To Fifth-Plan—Old Wine In New Bottle

Comrades, This is not all. We should understand what the Government is planning for us, for the common people and the country and prepare the working class to meet the new intensified attacks that are in store. It is in this connection that the Document 'Approach to the Fifth Plan' assumes importance. It is necessary to analyse the policies of this document for the 5th Plan is being prepared on the basis of this document.

The Document pompously declares that the aim of the Fifth Plan is to link growth with attack on poverty and to reduce economic inequalities. It also asserts that the aim is ensure "self-reliance."

There is nothing new in these declarations. All the previous plans also declared the same objectives. The Bhubaneswar Congress resolution on the 2nd Plan declared :

“This will itself become a means of reducing the vast disparities in income and wealth which exist now. Other steps will also have to be taken so that the distance between the top and bottom rungs reduced in a striking manner. These steps will be taken in the sphere of both policy and organisation.”

And yet experience shows that the steps in the sphere of policies and organisation that have been taken these years have led to the opposite results which have been described earlier. Disparities have increased. Poverty and unemployment have grown. Growth has been pitifully low. Dependence has grown.

Does the Document show that there is a realisation that the policies so far pursued are basically wrong and these should be changed? No. There is not the slightest departure from these policies.

‘Self-Reliance’—A Hoax

Let us take the question of “self-reliance”. The document says that “that the only satisfactory way to meet the maintenance requirements of the economy is to produce the needed goods...This points to accelerated creation and full utilisation of capacity in the relevant fields—steels, etc” what wonderful discovery! But the Document does not ask why the needed capacity was not created, how far it was due to the collaboration agreements, etc. It does not think it necessary to ask why capacity remains unutilised, the supplies of outdated and faulty designing by foreigners, how far it is part of the economic crisis, inability of the country to use it, how far it is due to the fact that under-utilisation leads to big profits whom the Government does not want to touch, etc. How then could it point the way for self-reliance except prattling about it?

The cry for self-reliance arose during the Indo-Pakistan War when the USA declared India an aggressor, stopped its

aid and blocked India's attempts to get our debt payments rescheduled. While this cry of self-reliance was for public consumption, application and talks with the World Bank and IDA continued and accommodation was secured.

It is known that foreign firms take away as profits a huge amount, some of them ten times their invested capital. Taking over these foreign concerns, cancellation of all collaboration agreements, a moratorium on all foreign debts, no foreign loans or borrowing on onerous terms, closer economic relations with the burgeoning socialist countries including China with its huge market, development of closer economic relations with underdeveloped countries like ours—these are the ways for developing a self-reliant economy.

However, notwithstanding the new agreement with the Soviet Union and other East European socialist countries for increased trade, the Government true to its class affiliations seeks to mend its fences with the USA and fondly hopes for resumption of aid. While all other countries are entering into beneficial pacts with China, the Government of India drags its feet.

No wonder that after chanting so much about 'self-reliance' the Approach Document provides for foreign aid of Rs. 3,000 crores for the fifth plan. But this amount will be hardly sufficient to meet our repayment obligations, which have already touched Rs. 504 crores in 1973-74 and will go on increasing. The Government, therefore, goes on pleading for rescheduling of the payment, instead of straightaway declaring a moratorium.

We have already seen that the capitalist world is in the midst of a crisis and they cannot be expected to give massive aid. They are more interested in exporting their capital and looting our country and all other underdeveloped countries in the name of industrialising them.

Concessions To Foreign Capital

And the Government obliges them by liberalising the terms of foreign investment. More collaboration agreements

are being sanctioned. A licence has been given for putting up a factory with foreign collaboration for making ladies' garments ! Another licence has been given for putting up a giant factory for manufacturing cycle tyres, which would lead to the closures of all existing factories which are all in the small-scale and medium sectors.

The Petroleum Minister announced in January this year an offer to foreign oil companies to explore oil by off-shore drilling and put refineries on the Indonesian model, i.e. by which the foreign concerns can take away 40 per cent of the oil and dispose it as they please !

He had also offered to Toyo of Japan to put up five fertiliser factories on a turnkey basis, bypassing Indian enterprise and technological expertise.

These are but a few examples. The reality is that the Government of India still relies on foreign monopolists and Indian monopolists to develop Industries and for this concessions are given to them. These concessions are seen in the New Industrial Policy Resolution announced by the Government of India in February last.

Its first feature is that it has given more scope to foreign capital. A wider field of industries like commercial vehicles, paper, cement, plate glass, shipping, tractor, chemicals, tyres ceramics, have been thrown open to foreign firms and their subsidiaries on par with Indian entrepreneurs on plea of export promotion. And in most of these there is indigenous technology already existing. Even "*Commerce*", the organ of Big Business commented on it editorially thus :

"Strangely enough, it has chosen to equate larger houses with foreign concerns and subsidiaries and branches of foreign companies in throwing open to the latter the same industries as are open to proved Indian enterprise. Is this a hint to our industry to seek generously foreign participation as in the past ? Or is it an assurance to foreign investors that in return for the dilution of their existing investment in equity, they can expand their field of activity ? In either case, what will

suffer is the objective of self-reliance as it would make irrelevant the talk of national plan for science and technology to take us on the road of self-reliance.' (Commerce, February, 10, 1973).

Concessions To Monopolists

The second feature of this industrial policy resolution is that the big monopolist industrial house have been given wider scope of industries to invest. Hitherto their investments were restricted to what are called 'core industries'. This enlargement of scope for them has been achieved by the simple trick of enlarging the number of industries in the 'core sector.'

In the earlier list of 'core sector', for instance, heavy industrial machinery like paper machinery, chemical machinery and specialised machine tools were open to larger houses. In the new list of core industries, the word 'Heavy Machinery' has been changed to just 'industrial machinery', and further to "specialised machine tools" thus throwing open the entire field of machine tools industry. In the field of chemicals, the door has been opened much wider to include items like man-made fibres, synthetic detergents, pesticides (earlier it was basic chemicals for pesticides), industrial explosives, synthetic explosives, synthetic resins and plastics. In fact, under the terms "Miscellaneous" chemicals and "inorganic and organic heavy chemicals" a wide area of chemical industry has been thrown open to larger industrial houses.

In the field of electronics, the earlier list included only selected specified components, but the new list uses the much broader term "electronic components and equipment". In the field of transport industries, "ship ancillaries" has been included. "Steel castings and forgings" have also been included in the list of "core industries."

Even in regard to the mass consumer goods industries, they are not totally barred. Investments by the big houses will be allowed on the ground of "economies of scale and

technological improvement having "a positive role to play". Moreover the executive has been given power to give licences to these houses in these industries on the basis of "merit of individual cases."

No wonder, the "*Indian Express*" of February 5, 1973, in its editorial wrote with glee :

"What should be most welcome to the larger enterprises is the updating of the industries which will be open to them. The scope and the area of their operations have thus been widened and will enable the skill and capital available to them to make a fuller contribution towards the industrial development of the country. The list of industries in the core sector appendix to the statement provides the guidelines in this connection, but the scope is further enlarged by the relaxations envisaged in respect of export-oriented industries as well as such activities including production of goods of mass consumption where economies of scale and technological improvements have a positive role to play".

Where is the thunder against the monopolists that Indira Gandhi indulged in at the time of the election? These policies will actually lead to closure of a number of units in the small scale and medium sized industries. These are the policies underlying the 5th Plan. Where is the departure from the policies hitherto pursued? If there is any departure, it is to the benefit of the monopolists.

More Taxes And Deficit Financing

Where are the resources for this plan which is paraded as of the order of Rs. 51,000 and odd crores to come from? Over 6,000 crores are to come out of new taxes of which 60 percent i.e. 3,600 crores are to be raised through indirect taxes. They promise to keep deficit financing at a level commensurate with the growth of economy. And yet they have left a large uncovered gap. This together with the fact that the expected surplus from the public sector undertakings, judging from the past performance will never materialise, will only

mean the deficit financing will be colossal, if they are to reach the financial targets of Rs. 51,000 crores.

Holding Price-line ?

The result will be still further fleecing of the people through ever-increasing prices. All talk of holding the price line will be moonshine.

The planners parade the decision to take over the whole-sale trading in foodgrains as the instrument to ensure stable prices. Experience shows how these declarations are implemented. The Government announced in May last that they are determined to procure 4.5 million tonnes of foodgrains from the kharif crops and together with their buffer stock of 9 million tonnes, they would be able to manage without imports. But not even half the targeted amount was procured from the kharif crop and 2 million tonnes of foodgrains are being imported.

As far as the so-called take-over of the wholesale trade in foodgrains is concerned, it is significant that the Govt. does not propose to procure all the marketable surplus but only the marketed surplus of foodgrains. This only means that the Govt. is not going to compulsorily procure the entire surplus of the landlords and rich farmers at fixed price. It does not seek to abolish the wholesalers. But instead of their selling to the retailers, they and the millers will be used as the agency for Govt. procurement. That is to say, they will be asked to sell to the FCI and its subsidiaries. One can imagine with the corruption in the FCI which has become one of the biggest scandals of recent times, what the people can expect from these operations of the FCI with the whole-sale traders and millers.

What Is The Poverty Line ?

What does the document say as regards attacking poverty and unemployment and economic inequalities ?

In the first place, the document arbitrarily decides that a monthly income of Rs. 20 per head at 1960-61 prices is the

poverty line and that those below this line constitute 30 per cent of the population. How these figures were arrived at is anybody's guess.

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Planning Shri Mohan Dharia said in Parliament on 28th February 1973 :

“In the documents ‘Fourth Five Year Plan’ and ‘Approach to the Fifth Plan’, private consumption of Rs.20 per capita per month at 1960-61 prices has been taken as a minimum desirable consumption standard. At the current prices, the corresponding amount would be Rs.40. Everybody with a level of consumption less than this may be considered as below the poverty line. Since, on the average one earner has to support 3 dependents, a family income of Rs.160 per month should put the family above the poverty line,”

Even the fourth grade employees, getting a salary of Rs. 170 per month, according to this reckoning, would be above the poverty line and the Minister of State for Planning, Mohan Dharia, said so in the Lok Sabha. In cities like Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Coimbatore, Kanpur, etc. the rent of a dungeon of a single room is above Rs. 50/- per month. Even if he takes wheat, the requirements of the family viz. 60 kilo per month will cost Rs.90/-. What he will buy with the balance of Rs.20/- in a monthly wage of Rs. 160/- only the planners should tell.

A survey conducted by the Reserve Bank of India in 1968 showed that 18.4 crores of people in villages had an income of less than Rs.18 per month. The survey added “compared to 1960-61, we found that nutritional deficiency in the rural areas widened considerably. As compared to only 52% of the rural population in 1960-61, 70 per cent of the rural population in 1967-68 was found to live below the poverty levels...”

And yet the Approach Document wants us to believe that only 30 per cent of the population live below their own arbitrarily decided poverty line of Rs.20 per head per month ! Do they want the people to believe that because Indira Gandhi waved the magic wand—the slogan of “Garibi Hatao” poverty

of 40 percent of the people has vanished during the last two years? And how? By means of the unprecedented rise in prices, closure of factories and growth of unemployment?

Wage Freeze

The Approach Document Says that attack on the poverty of this lowest 30 per cent of the population assumes prime importance and requires priority. Therefore, all other sections of the toiling people must patiently wait.

From this, they have deduced their wage policy for the 5th plan. They propose a wage freeze for the entire five year plan period. Firstly, they say that any increase in the wages of the workers in the organised sector private or public sector industries will eat up the resources for development and will therefore come in the way of attacking the poverty of the lowest 30 per cent of the population.

Secondly, the Document says that "any increase in wages without increase in productivity will push up the unit cost of production" and hence "must be avoided in the interest of price stability."

What Causes Price Rise ?

The working class must debunk this argument. The National Labour Commission had reported that between 1952 and 1964 productivity per worker had increased by 63 per cent and yet the real wages had at best remained stationary. Then why did the prices rise during all this period?

Again, *the Economic Times*, June 13, 1973, observed :

"Another impression which is not corroborated by the company finance data, relates to rising manufacturing and wage costs in recent years. As may be observed, while manufacturing expenses as percentage of value of production at (current prices) of the large public limited companies have, by and large, remained the same at 55 per cent during the six years 1965-66 to 1970-71, the wage cost including employees' welfare expenses have declined albeit marginally from

14.0 per cent in 1965-66 to 13.2% in 1970-71." This means a reduction of 6% in the wages of workers in six years. And yet the prices went on increasing.

What is the unprecedented increase of last year due to? Is it due to wage increases?

Last December, the then Minister for Foreign Trade L. N. Mishra told a meeting of textile magnates that while price of cotton had declined by 30 per cent the price of cloth has increased by 10% and pleaded with them to reduce the prices. The only result of that pleading—the increase in cloth and yarn prices since then has been abnormal. Is this due to any increase in wages during the last three months of the workers?

As regards the employees, the document says "In recent years, certain sectors have emerged as high-wage level islands where the white collar employees predominate. They have, by using pressure, pushed up wages to levels which are much out of line with the general level of wages. It is necessary to resist this trend in a determined way, or else, there will be heavy inroads in the estimated resources for the Plan and the country will be pushed into inflation and stagnation."

Again, the same bogey of eating up the resources for development and stability of prices.

Attempt To Pit Workers Against Lowest 30%

What else is this but an attempt to pit the workers in the organised industries and employees against the lowest 30 per cent of the population consisting of agricultural labourers, poor peasants, handloom weavers, and workers in the unorganised and sweated industries who receive a pittance of a wage as well as the unemployed people?

Attack On Poverty

But while they thus shed copious tears over the conditions of the lowest 30 per cent what do they actually propose to do to attack their poverty? Do they propose any measure to

redistribute the national income at the expense of the upper classes, particularly the top 10 per cent, to improve the conditions of the masses, with special attention to the lowest 30 per cent? The most effective way of removing inequality and attacking poverty in the rural areas is to take away the entire land of the landlords who do not contribute any manual labour to the main agricultural operations and are just parasites flourishing at the expense of the sweat and toil of those who till the soil and distribute their lands gratis to the landless agricultural labourers and poor peasants. The Approach Document does not propose this, but talks of land reforms. The land reforms measures previously enacted by the Congress Government have only led to colossal eviction, concealed tenancy and increase in the number of agricultural labourers. The proposed land reforms will fare no better, as already seen in West Bengal, Tamilnadu and some other States where they have been enacted during the last three years.

They will not touch the landlords' lands and give land to the agricultural labourers. But will they increase their wages at least, so that some improvement in their conditions can be registered? No.

The Document admits that "a statutory minimum wage should be an important device for raising the consumption levels of the poorer sections to the desired level." And yet it will not use this 'important device'. Why? It says, "In conditions of widespread unemployment, it is difficult to enforce a minimum wage. Such a situation provides ample opportunities to the employers for evasion, particularly in the unorganised sections."

The Document thus confesses that through the official agencies they cannot check evasion of law and punish the evaders, when the evasion is resorted to by the affluent sections.

What then are they going to do for the 30 per cent? The document says, that they would provide them with drinking water, some house-sites and even some hutments and build

roads. This is supposed to increase their living standards as well as make a dent on poverty and unemployment !

Thus the professed solicitude for the lowest 30 per cent turns out to be a huge hoax. No land for them. No improvement in wages. This solicitude is bandied about only to deny any improvement in and even to depress the existing standards of the other working people.

Income Policy—A Fraud

While this is the raw deal meted out to the entire working people, what about the affluent sections ? How can they touch them when their entire plan is based on finding resources for investment by looting the common people ? Hence their so-called income policy is the continuation of the present policy for the affluent sections. It only asks them to exercise "voluntary restraint on excessive income." No restraint is proposed for even the topmost 10 per cent. The so-called income policy is only a justification for no policy in this regard. This is done by saying that "in the case of well-to-do sections, it is not so much the accrual of incomes that has to be controlled, provided the income is earned from legitimate sources, as the disposal of accrued incomes."

When they cannot control the incomes at the accrual point, how are they going to control its disposal ? Nothing is said about this.

Pitiful Growth of Economy

The tall talk of rapid growth of the economy also turns out to be a hoax when the Approach Document fixes the pitiful target of 5 per cent economic growth. One has only to compare what has been achieved in China. According to independent observers of the Chinese economy, as published in newspapers recently, its economic growth in 1970-71 was 18 per cent and in 1971-72 it was 10 per cent. The fall in the rate of growth in 1971-72 was attributed not only to extreme drought conditions of that year but also to the fact that the

Government insisted on quality. China's production of steel was just about a lakh tonnes in 1950, immediately after the revolution. The independent observers' Report says that Steel production went up to 21 million tonnes in 1971-72, which represented an increase of 18 per cent over the previous year's production. In 1971-72 it went up to 23 million tonnes, representing an increase of 9.5 per cent. The fall in the rate of growth is again attributed to measures to improve quality.

Compare this with the position in India. Our planners can think of a growth rate of only 5 per cent, whereas China's growth rate was as much as 18 per cent in a normal year and 10 per cent in a year of drought. Our steel production which was 7 lakh tonnes in 1948 immediately after Independence was only 5.7 million tonnes in 1972-73. The target for the Fourth Plan 8.10 million tonnes and the Document proposes to increase it to 9.4 million tonnes at the end of the next plan, i. e. an increase of 1.3 million tonnes in five years, while China's increase is 2 million tonnes in one year and that too, under conditions of drought !

Unemployment Will Grow

With such a plan of meagre growth how can they solve the unemployment problem. It will actually grow. The Approach Document itself admits this when it states that "the wage employment likely to be generated in the Fifth Plan shows that the total will fall short of the estimated increase in the labour force" thus adding to the backlog of unemployment.

Attack On Education

As for educated unemployment, the document seeks to keep it to "manageable proportions"—not abolishing it—by cutting down the intake in technical institutions. In the case of general education, it seeks to cut down the intake in colleges and schools "much more drastically." They cannot plan for employment. Hence Plan for closing down of colleges and technical institutions. The Plannres can only think of attack-

ing the cultural standards of the rising generation to keep the educated unemployment problem to "manageable proportion"!

Plan Assumptions Unreal

But even these targets are never going to be fulfilled for the assumptions of the document for reaching the targets are absolutely unreal.

Firstly, the assumption of stable prices have been upset by the 15 per cent rise in 1972 even before the ink of the document was dry. The prices have risen still more deeply during the first two months of 1973. There has been further spurt since the budget was presented in the end of February. And then one has only to take into account the price rise in the course of the five years of the Plan, given the policies, and one can see that Rs. 51,000 crores will fall far short in real terms necessary for fulfilment of the physical targets.

Secondly, the assumption regarding the base of economy when the plan starts in 1974 has also proved false. Even in my Report to the Foundation Conference in May 1970, I had stated that the 4th Plan is already in doldrums. Its performance during the subsequent two years has been much worse. In every sector there is going to be a colossal shortfall of the targets—6 million tonnes of steel as against a target of 8.10 million tonnes, 70 million tonnes in coal as against a target of 80 million tonnes, and so on. The countrywide power cut which has brought to a halt industries and agriculture in wide areas has sharply brought to the fore that performance in all sectors is going to be awfully poor.

Export Difficulties

Thirdly, the assumption of a 7 per cent annual growth in exports will also come to grief. The world capitalist crisis and particularly the currency crisis and the inability of the advanced countries to fix the exchange rates of their currencies vis-a-vis the dollar has created an extremely difficult situation for the developing countries. These currencies are allowed to

float, i.e. their exchange rates will vary from day to day, according to the unpredictable whims of the speculative market. In these conditions, no one knows what price our exports will fetch in advance and hence exporters will be very chary of entering into transactions. Added to this, is the entry of Britain into the European Common Market. With this our traditional exports to Britain have received a rude shock. They have a certain quota for the former French colonies of Africa and our exports to the ECM countries including Great Britain have to be accommodated within this quota. The imperialist countries, caught in the grip of economic crisis and engaged in an intense trade war will make short shrift of our export targets. Moreover, the fortuitous increase in export of jute and tea that came by our way in 1971 and 1972 due to the conditions in Bangla Desh will be no longer there.

All this will lead to determined efforts to increase workload, resorting to labour saving devices, increasing use of electronic computers, and even attack on whatever gains have been won by the workers. The excuse will be that our goods must be cheapened in an intensely competitive market in order to promote exports. The problem of unemployment will be further aggravated. It will also mean greater subsidies to the exporters at the cost of the entire people.

Plan For Monopolists And Attack On People

Thus the 5th plan the Govt. is planning will on the one hand only intensify the misery of the masses, increase poverty and unemployment. On the other hand, it will further fatten the monopolists, enormously strengthen the parallel black-money economy, and increase corruption. The gulf between the rich and the poor will further widen. The grip of the monopolists over the economic and political life of the country will tighten. The loot of the country' wealth by the imperialists and foreign monopolists will enormously increase.

Self-reliance will be a mirage. Dependence will increase which may lead to comprising our political Independence.

Wooing USA

Significant pointers of such a development are already there. One has only to recall the thundering against the USA in the days of the Indo-Pak War and immediately after that. Every Congress leader from the Prime Minister downward was shouting about the conspiracies of the CIA.

But immediately after began efforts to woo the USA. The Prime Minister sharply condemned the USA for the near-nuclear bombing of an Asian country, i.e. North Vietnam.

But when the U.S. Govt. reacted sharply and ordered the indefinite postponement of the departure of its Ambassador to India, panic seized Indira Gandhi. The anti-climax came when she said immediately in her Kathmandu speech that she did not refer to the USA. And then the USA relented and sent the Ambassador.

In the 2nd week of March when India came to know of U.S. intention to lift the embargo on supply of arms to Pakistan, the government of India made its distress known to the U.S. But when the next day the U.S. brushed aside India's pleadings, and publicly announced its resumption of supply of arms to Pakistan, the Govt. of India could do nothing but make a statement in Parliament bemoaning U.S. action. However, simultaneously the U.S. Govt. lifted its stoppage of its aid to India and defrozeed the already committed aid of 69 million dollars.

Any self-respecting Govt. would have spurned the offer and refused the aid under these conditions. But not the Govt. of India headed by the 'proud', 'unbending' Indira Gandhi. It gratefully accepted the aid.

Such are the compulsions of the economic crisis in which the Govt. has plunged the country by the pursuit of the path of capitalist development and its persistence in it.

The immediate future before us is thus one of great peril.

Offensive On Workers Already Started

Comrades, the offensive is already on. The Finance Ministry in 1972 had issued to all the General Managers of Public sector undertakings that they should not enter into any agreement with their workers increasing their wages or even fringe benefits, without referring to the Finance Ministry and getting its sanction.

In November last, when the All-India Cement workers strike was on, an interim increase was agreed to, during negotiations. The workers' representatives insisted on an agreement that the minimum wage in the industry after February 1973, when their earlier agreement expired, should be fixed at the same level as that of the steel workers, viz. Rs. 245/-. Further wage structure could be fixed after negotiations, later on. In the bargaining, the management came up to Rs. 230/-. But at this stage, the Prime Minister and the Industries Minister intervened and scuttled the negotiations. They said that the wages question should be discussed after the government announced a national wage policy, which they said would be before the end of the year. The INTUC representative depending on Indira Congress's patronage had to agree and the strike was sabotaged. February 1973 had gone. March has also gone. The earlier three-year agreement has expired. And yet even the negotiations are not started because the national wage policy is not yet announced. We know what the policy is from the Approach Document.

When the Government had to bow down before the united might of the workers and had to amend the Bonus Act and enhance the minimum bonus to 8.33%, they at the same time, amended the Act and restricted any cash payment in excess of last year's bonus above 8.33% even if it was due under the Act, and compelled its deposit in the Provident Fund. With the experience of tens of crores of rupees of the workers' Provident Fund money having been misappropriated by the owners, who have all gone scot free, there is no knowing what the fate of these payments from bonus into the P.F. account will be.

The Prime Minister has already started a campaign for wage freeze. In fact, she started it in May 1971, but today she is doing it with greater vehemence. Addressing a meeting of agricultural labourers at the village Namkhana in Sundarbans (West Bengal), in February last, she has gone to the extent of declaring that those industrial workers and employees who demand increase in wages are traitors to the country. Monopolists who make profits, evade taxes and put up prices are patriots because they pay the Congress Party handsomely out of the black money.

Industrial Relations Bill Aims At Weeding Out Militant Unions

The Government knows that this policy cannot be pushed through in the face of resistance of the workers. Hence, the militant unions should be eliminated from the field of industrial relations. With this end in view, the Labour Ministry has prepared a document embodying the principles for a new Industrial Relations Bill and circulated the document to all the State Governments and Economic Ministries of the Government of India.

It provides for the recognition of a single union as the sole bargaining agent on the basis of verification of membership by the official machinery. Experience shows that under this procedure unions who do not command the confidence of workers but are amenable to the ruling classes will be declared recognised union.

Only the recognised union can raise a dispute and declare a strike.

If any unrecognised union sponsors a strike, the strike is declared illegal. Its office-bearers are liable to be imprisoned for three years and workers participating in the strike are liable to imprisonment upto one year.

It provides for the establishment of Industrial Relations Commissions at the Centre and States.

Any dispute can be referred automatically by the employer,

recognised union or the Government concerned at any time for arbitration to the Commission and once it is referred, strike is illegal. The award is binding on both parties.

A number of industries are listed which are declared as essential services. Strikes in these industries are totally banned and all disputes must be resolved by arbitration only.

An elaborate list of unfair labour practices is given indulging in which will entail the loss of recognition to the union for two years.

The Govt. thus seeks to stifle the growth of the militant trade unions, get their own stooge unions as the bargaining agent, and even if that union raises a dispute, impose compulsory arbitration.

This is the diabolical game of the Govt. For it knows unless it terrorises the working class into submission, it cannot prevent the other sections of our people rising in struggles against the attacks planned in the 5th Plan and smoothly implement their anti-people policies and schemes.

Unity To Meet Challenge

This is a challenge to the entire working class and the people.

This challenge can be met and the diabolical plan defeated only by the firm unity of the working class, which should mobilise the entire working people. Unity of the workers, forging of a United Front of all trade unions to fight this menace, is the most urgent need of the hour.

Class Collaborationists Greatest Obstacle To Unity

But the greatest obstacle to this is the class collaborationist line of the leaders of the AITUC.

Comrades, in my report to the last Foundation Conference, I had detailed their class collaborationist activities. The splitting activities that they indulged in became absolutely necessary for them because of our presence in common unions was proving an obstacle to carrying out their class collabora-

tionist policy in full. At last we were compelled to come out of the AITUC and found the CITU. We were convinced that only by this we could carry forward the class struggle and fight for unity.

Hence when S.A. Dange called a conference of all Central Trade Union organisations and Federations we were eager to grasp the opportunity and gladly participated in the Conference. That conference was held on May 18 and 19, 1971, on the eve of a conference of Trade Union leaders with the Labour Minister called by the Govt. of India on May 20 and 21.

At the Conference of May 18 and 19, we helped in the deliberations to evolve a platform of action which was accepted by all the participants. The Conference appointed a convening group consisting of Satish Loomba (AITUC), Mahesh Desai (HMS), and myself (CITU) to discuss the situation from time to time and charged us with the specific responsibilities of calling the meeting of all participating organisations soon for the purpose of implementing the joint platform evolved at the Conference.

The day after the Govt. sponsored conference was over, the participants of May 18-19 Conference met again, expressed dissatisfaction with the attitude of the Govt. and reaffirmed and reiterated the decisions of the May Conference.

This gave us hope that a broad united campaign and action would result. But, despite my repeated efforts, the convening group would not meet except once and the AITUC completely sabotaged the implementation of the decisions and scuttled the convenors' group.

Why AITUC Sabotaged United Action ?

Why did this happen? Let us hear straight from the horse's own mouth. Dange, presenting the Report of the Secretariat of the AITUC to the last session at Calcutta states :

“This is not accidental, not due to any negligence.

"The events after the split in the Congress led to a realignment of political forces in the country. This was further sharpened and considerable polarisation took place during the mid-term poll (January to Feb. 1971). In this context, the type of united platform set up by May 18, 19 conference of trade unions become more and more unrealistic. As a result of the political developments as well as the extremely sectarian line pursued by the CITU, its open abuse and slander of other trade union centres...and the continuation of fratricidal attack on other unions, the efforts to establish a continuing general platform with the CITU lost its validity."

He further says that "the CITU seeks to force the line of the CPM on mass organisations and thus makes it impossible for any joint functioning."

All of these statements except the first are utter lies. In fact, it was our unions and cadre that were facing murderous attacks by the Congress goondas aided by the police and the CRP. Nor can he cite a single instance of our slandering his organisation. We were only insisting upon the implementation of the decisions of the Conference and we criticised them for not agreeing to this. We certainly criticized their class collaborationist activities.

The charge that we were seeking to impose our political line on others is a fantastic one. Did we do any such thing when the Joint Platform was evolved? If so, why did he accept it?

His talk of sectarianism only means that we are not willing to accept the Indira Congress Govt. as a progressive Govt. and refuse to collaborate with it.

The real reason is stated earlier when he talks of the "Political realignment", i.e. his party's alignment with the Indira Congress. But this alignment, as he himself states took place long before the May 1971 conference in 1969 and, as later stated by him, "this was further sharpened and considerable polarisation took place during the mid-term, poll (January-Feb. 1971.)"

Then why did he call the conference four months later and agree to the joint platform and the decisions of the Conference?

It is obvious that this was done for bringing pressure on the Govt. to make the INTUC accept his terms in the sharing of patronage by Govt. This will be further clear when the Report complains on Page 117 and 118 at the very meeting where the National Council of Trade Unions was formed the INTUC claimed and was given monopoly of representation at the I.L.O.

AITUC's Double-Dealing

This will also be clear from his statement "The Government conference of 20-21 May led to the formation of a working group of AITUC, HMS and INTUC, primarily to discuss issues relating to industrial relations." (29th Session of AITUC Report of the Secretariat page 112).

No such decision was taken at the Conference. On the other hand, the day after the Government sponsored conference on 22nd May, as Dange himself admits, the participants of the May 18, 19 Conference (The INTUC was not a participant but was only an observer) met to review the Government sponsored conference. They unanimously rejected Government's proposal and reiterated the decisions taken three days before on May 19.

Is it not obvious that Dange was striking a deal with the Government in secret? Why did he not disclose that the AITUC, HMS and INTUC had formed a working group?

The double dealing and hypocrisy of the AITUC leaders are there in black and white in their own words.

What is the character of the 'progressive Congress' with which AITUC leaders have aligned themselves? Again let the AITUC speak. Talking about the increasing of prices and the various reasons given by the Govt. the Report of the Secretariat of the AITUC submitted by S. A. Dange to the 29th Session on 30th January last says :

“The first argument is that Prices are bound to rise in a developing economy as more money is sunk in heavy industry and less in consumer goods including agriculture.

* * *

“...It (this argument) tries to shield the monopolists from the wrath of the people who are prepared to suffer for the sake of national development, but not for the sake of a handful of the rich.”

Who shields the monopolists? It is the Govt. according to the AITUC leaders themselves for it is the Government that gives this argument.

“The second argument given is that because of development inflation becomes inevitable. But the money supply has gone on far in excess of the needs of the economy. The big finance houses, the bankers and the Government- all are in collusion to bring this about...

“So inflation is a deliberate policy of the super-profit hunters and *the Govt. of India is a conscious party to it.*” (emphasis added.)

* * * *

“Over 55 per cent of capital formation is taking place to support consumption and half of it to support luxury consumption. *Who is responsible for this if not the Govt., the big monopoly houses and their fraudulent dealings?*” (emphasis added.)

The Report quotes approvingly from the Report of the Central Advisory Council of Industries meeting of 18th November 1972 the following :

<i>Year</i>	<i>Licences issued (Rs. crores)</i>	<i>Capital by non-Govt. companies (crores Rs.)</i>	<i>Assistance disbursed by All Financial Institutions (Rs. crores)</i>
1968-69	83.8	96.4	85
1969-70	73.2	92.7	111
1970-71	127.1	86.7	133
1971-72	252.2	77.7	162

"It will be seen that there are indications of a step-up of private investments in private sector...However, it will also be seen that while there has been a substantial increase in the amount of financial assistance disbursed by the term lending institutions, having doubled in the last four years, the capital raised by non-Govt. companies has been stagnant." (Actually there is a 20 per cent reduction).

Commenting on this the AITUC leaders say in the report :
"Despite this sabotage, the Govt. of India is feeding these monopolists with liberal finance." (P.40)

Earlier, in the Report the leaders say that the monopolists demand from the Govt. that it should "allow monopoly capital to enter in any field it can or expand in the fields it already occupies unconditionally", "freeze wages and ban strikes", and "enforce this by new Industrial Relations Laws and ordinances, recognise only such unions as observe this line, i. e. restore and rehabilitate unions which have lost heavily in this period."

We have already seen that all these demands have been accepted, in the industrial policy resolution, in the Approach Document and the proposed Industrial Relations Bill.

Thus Dange himself is forced to admit that this Indira Govt. serves the interests of monopolists, is in league with them, consciously carries out the policy of inflationary financing to help them, and liberally feeds these monopolists with finances. He admits that it seeks to ban the most elementary form of class struggle namely strikes.

Ironically, the AITUC leader have inscribed on Page 137 of the Report a quotation from Marx and Engels circular letter to A. Bebel, W. Liebaecht and others probably as the motto of their organisation. Therein Marx and Engels declare

"It is therefore impossible to co-operate with those who wish to expunge this class struggle from the movement."

Here is a Govt. which not merely wished but actually by Law seeks to expunge class struggle. And yet they co-operate with that Govt.

And they call us sectarians if we say we cannot collaborate with such a Govt. !

But, according to Dange, why are these things happening ? Because, "High placed leaders and even a person like Indira Gandhi are led into believing that only a moratorium on strikes and wages is the only solution to the rise in prices."

Why did she accept the arguments of the monopolists against whom she thundered and called them as enemies of the people and why did she reject the arguments of her ally, S. A. Dange and the Right CP leaders ? There is no answer to this.

Having firmly decided on the line of class-collaboration, they have to satisfy their ranks. And hence this prattle that "while one minister nationalises coking coal, another stops wage increase, and a third one talks to the COME CON while the fourth goes to the World Bank." As if all these take place without the knowledge of that all powerful Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi and she cannot stop her ministers from doing what they like !

It is because of this policy of class-collaboration they sabotaged the May 18, 19, 1972 platform and entered into secret confabulations with the INTUC, and finally produced the "National Council of Trade Unions." The price they paid was that they sacrificed the working class interests, gave up secret ballot and agreed to verification.

Later, it is true that the Agreement faced difficulties because the INTUC insisted that wherever the BIR Act prevailed, the present position should not be disturbed.

But the AITUC leaders cannot escape from the responsibility of playing the game of the Govt. of attempting to isolate the CITU and other militant trade union centres and organisations. Had they stuck to the decisions of the May Conference and implemented them, the Govt. of India would not have dared to come out with the Proposed Industrial Relations Bill.

Formation of UCTU

Faced with this sabotage of the unity of the May 1971 conference, we took steps, in consultation with other trade union centres to convene a conference of all the organisations that participated in 1971 conference on 1st and 2nd October, 1972 at Delhi. Except the AITUC and HMS, all the other central trade union organisations, viz. the HMP, UTUC, UTUC (Lenin Sarani) and many Federations including the Confederation of Central Government employees who had participated in the May 1971 conference responded. The Conference unanimously decided to form the United Council of Trade Unions and elected Comrade George Fernandes as the convenor. It decided to set up a Secretariat and also a Council with representation to all the participating organisations.

Bonus For All

Unlike the other conference of 1971, this conference gave the call for conferences at State levels for "Bonus for all." This call echoed a response from all those employees and workers who have been excluded from the minimum bonus. An all-India convention of State and Central Government employees and municipal workers was held with wide participation in Delhi, December 1972.

A State-wide convention was held in Assam. There have been other local conventions also.

Even the leaderships of the NFIR and AIRF as well as Defence Federation had to take up the issue, although they have sought to confine the demands to industrial workers, thus seeking to disrupt the unity of the workers and employees.

Two meetings of the UCTU Secretariat were held, one in Bangalore and another in Delhi. The Bangalore meeting could not be attended by all the members due to disruption of railway trains service in the Andhra agitation.

Activise The UCTU Further

The documents of the conference have already been published and hence I am not dilating more on this. I wish

to emphasise that the further activation of the UCTU, joint activities and mobilisations as per its directions from time to time, will be able to make a great impact upon the entire working class, of workers belonging to the other trade union centres which have not joined the UCTU and will be a great instrument in forging all-in-unity of the working class.

Comrades, despite the attempt of the Govt. to isolate us, despite the service rendered to the Govt. by the class collaborationist leaders, our line of unity and struggle has gained further success in this period.

The heroic struggles of all sections of workers and employees to which I had referred to in the earlier part of this Report is proof of the success of this line.

Lesson Of Struggles

These struggles are full of rich experience and have great lessons to be learnt for the further advance of the working class movement.

In the first place, many of these struggles were possible because our comrades took the correct and burning issues before the workers and approached the workers of other unions. This has enabled the building of unity from below, which often resulted in united actions by all trade unions, including those of the INTUC. Examples of such united struggles are innumerable in every State.

Wherever we were able to build wide network of democratic committees of workers in these united struggles, sabotage during the course of struggle could be prevented. We often find that the leaders of other trade unions, even when they come for united front struggles, do not agree to have wider committees of workers. In most instances our comrades do not make the proposal at all, or when they do, when they find resistance from the leaders of other unions, they meekly accept the position and are satisfied with the formation of a Joint Committee with representatives of the various unions. No, comrades. Their resistance to have wider committees

must be overcome. We were able to do it in the general strike of Coimbatore textile workers and that helped the settlement of the strike on favourable terms.

Even if we do not succeed in making them agree to such wider committees, what prevents us from going to the mass of workers with our proposals? If we do that, I have no doubt, the workers themselves will come together and form committees on their own and none can prevent them.

Secondly, during the course of negotiations, every development must be reported fully to the mass of workers. This must be done tactfully without attributing motives to others, but just giving the facts. Otherwise, we will be giving an opportunity to those who want to disrupt the united front to do so. The great struggle of the Simpson workers of Madras is full of rich experience in this regard. The vigilance of the mass of workers prevented attempted sell out by AITUC and HMS leaders.

Thirdly, when such joint struggles are undertaken and negotiations take place, we often find that the other unions agree to terms which are not acceptable to us. In many cases, under such circumstances, our comrades reluctantly agree to the terms and sign them with the others under the mistaken understanding that otherwise we would be 'isolated'. This is harmful. We should refuse to sign such agreements and place the facts before the workers. Our own strength may not be sufficient to carry on the struggle and we may have to withdraw the strike on the basis of the mood of the mass of workers. But our non signing such agreements will help us in the long run. In certain cases, it may lead to the mass of workers rejecting the Agreement and continuing the struggle. This is what happened to the Tea Plantation workers' strike in Tamilnadu, where the leaders of the INTUC, AITUC and the DMK unions signed an agreement conceding a pittance of increase in wages and we refused to sign it. Later when the agreement was placed by us before the workers, the entire workers of Valparai rejected it and the strike was continued.

for 32 days which forced the Govt. and the employers to scrap the agreement and conclude a new agreement giving substantial increase in wages over what was given in the previous agreement.

Building of unity from below and united struggles require extremely supple tactics. Often as a result of propaganda and agitation unleashed by us, the leaders of the reformist unions are forced to give a call for strike, but they refuse to have Joint Committees with us. In such cases, we should synchronise our strike call with that given by the others, so that in practice it becomes a joint strike. This gives us the best opportunity to forge links with all the workers. The strike of jute and engineering workers of West Bengal of the textile workers of Kanpur and Rajasthan are full of rich experiences in this regard.

One of the biggest weaknesses is that our unions conducting these struggles do not review the struggles and help in making their experiences the common property of all.

Ferocity Of Attacks And Tenacity Of Workers

An important feature of the struggles during this period is the fact that they have been protracted and long drawn. This is due to the fact that while on the one hand, employers and Govt. are determined to pass on the burdens of the crisis on the workers and employees, on the otherhand, it shows that the workers are equally determined to resist the attacks and make the utmost sacrifices. This arises from the desperate situation in which they are placed.

Solidarity Actions

Under these circumstances, solidarity actions assume supreme importance. The Simpson Workers' struggle could not have been won but for the State-wide solidarity actions, and ultimately it was the call of the State-wide general strike of all workers that compelled the Govt. to come down when

they saw that the workers all over the State were going to respond to the call.

Solidarity actions have certainly taken place in this period ; but they are not enough. Our task is to educate the workers that the attack on any section of the workers is an attack on all and if they allow the striking workers to be defeated, this will embolden the Govt. and employers to mount such attacks on every section one by one. Hence this strategy of the employers and the Govt. must be defeated by the combined struggle of all the workers.

Another important feature in this period is the breaking out of struggles spontaneously where no central trade union organisation exists and also the fact the middle class employees have been and are fighting grim battles. It is no doubt true that these struggles have been inspired by the working class struggles. We cannot be content or satisfied with the fact that the working class struggles have given the inspiration. It is our responsibility to mobilise the working class in support of these struggles by means of meetings, demonstrations, deputations of workers to the striking workers and employees and where they are facing repression even taking out the workers in strikes against the repression. This alone will bring about the unity of working class and the middle class employees. It is true that our leaders go to their meetings and extend their support to them. But that is not enough. The support must be translated into tangible physical support of the workers in our unions.

Intensify Campaign Against Semi-Fascist Terror

Comrades, our unions in all States have expressed their solidarity with the working class and democratic sections of West Bengal facing semi-fascist terror. Some funds have been collected and sent. But this is a drop in the ocean. Let us not forget that the semi-fascist terror continues. Free functioning of our unions in many areas is impossible. Let us not forget that thousands of our comrades are languishing behind prison bars.

It is the responsibility of our unions in all the States to carry on a sustained campaign demanding the release of all those detained without trial, withdrawal of all the false cases, handing back the occupied unions and end to the gangster attacks. If we make the workers realise that what is happening today in West Bengal will repeat in every State whenever the class struggle sharpens, the workers will realise the importance and necessity of bringing this semi-fascist terror to a halt. Then the campaign will be sustained and gather momentum all over the country and will compel the Govt. to retrace their steps.

***Widen Democratic Functioning**

A very serious weakness is that despite initiating these struggles, despite winning the confidence of the workers, by standing in the forefront and by dint of our hard work, our comrades do not pay attention to the organisation. A sustained campaign for membership is not undertaken. If this is done, particularly after a successful struggle, it will pay rich dividends. For the campaign to be successful it is absolutely necessary that the widest democracy is practised holding regular meetings of the Executive bodies of the unions as per the requirements of the unions constitution, Rules and regulations is not enough. It is only formal democracy. A widespread network of workers' Committees at the shop, departmental and factory levels, their regular meetings, activising them to draw in more and more mass of the workers in all aspects of the trade union functioning—discussing issues, criticism of the leadership with a view to correcting mistakes, joining in the organisational work such as enrolment of membership, mobilising workers for campaigns, meetings, rallies, etc. is absolutely necessary. Only such a widest democratic functioning will heighten the class consciousness of the mass of workers, without which the coming battles cannot be fought successfully.

Government Plans Can Be Defeated

The coming period, as I have already noted, is one of more determined offensive by the employers and the Government. But this offensive can be defeated, provided we act with determination and relying on the strength of the working class and the people. The great struggles waged by all sections of the working people in the recent period that I have noted earlier in the Report is a sure indication that the Government's neat plans of mounting greater offeneives on the working people are not going to have a smooth-sailing. Greater battles are ahead. Neihier is the Govt. going to succeed in its attempts to isolate the CITU and other militant trade union organisations, if we pursue our line of unity and struggle, above all unity from below. Already we know their attempt to isolate us has received a rude setback. The National council of Trade Unions of the INTUC, AITUC, and HMS is already a divided house. Although the AITUC and HMS initially agreed to a formula based primarily on verification of membership for the recognition of the unions, the compulsions of the situation and probably the prospect of meeting the opposition from the ranks have made them resile from the position. With the rising mass discontent, with the wage struggles breaking out, it is not easy even for the class collaborationist leaders to go whole-hog with the Govt. The result is that the National Council of Trade Unions has become a defunct body. It could give no call to the workers. The only resolution that it has passed is that they are resolved to strengthen the public sector !

In bringing about this situation, our line of unity and struggle, the persistence with which our cadre everywhere pursued that line and the struggles that have taken place throughout the country, have played the greatest role. We are proud of this role.

The AITUC Leadership

Comrades, you must have followed the proceedings of the AITUC session held in Calcutta. All of you will be angry

to note that the session did not utter a word of protest against the monstrous repression against our organisations, the past killings, terror and occupation of our offices. No. On the contrary, they had called the W. Bengal Chief Minister, the organiser of this terror to give them his blessings.

The alliance of the Right C.P. with the ruling party, its class collaborationists outlook, drags the leaders in this treachery. Their general line on the trade union front therefore is one of excluding us, fighting us. You see how they do it in Kerala, where the Right C.P. heads the ministry and launches unheard of repression against the workers and the CITU.

In spite of this, however, both the AITUC and HMS leaders have often to take a positive stand on certain questions of immediate importance.

AITUC And HMS Change Stand

Today, both the AITUC and the HMS have forth rightly come out for recognition by ballot and association of minority unions in negotiations—the very proposal that we have been ceaselessly making. They have unequivocally condemned the proposed Industrial Relations Bill, wage freeze and compulsory arbitration.

Besides these issues, solidarity with Vietnam, the American danger, the fight against foreign and Indian monopolies, the struggle against high prices, famine and taxation can easily form points of joint action.

S.A. Dange is reported to have stated, according to newspaper reports, in his reply to the debate on the Secretariat's report at the 29th session of the AITUC in Feb. 1973 "why should the dispute whether Indira Gandhi is a progressive or a reactionary stand in the way of the AITUC and CITU joining to fight on common issues facing the working class on which there is no disagreement between us?"

We agree, we have always maintained that we can and should unite against the offensive of the ruling class. That is

why we unhesitatingly responded to the AITUC's invitation to the 18-19 May 1971 conference. That is why we unceasingly work for bringing about joint struggles on the burning issues.

In the same report of the Secretariat, the AITUC leaders have said, when dealing with the question of non-functioning of the convenors' group set up by the 1971 Conference that they cannot work jointly with the CITU. However, they have devoted a whole chapter on the question of trade union unity. After all their analysis, the chapter concludes thus :

“In the opinion of the AITUC, these (tactics of T. U. Unity) should be :

- 1) All-in-unity at local and industrial levels in struggles with all unions which have influence with the masses concerned ;
- 2) All-in-unity on particular issues at all levels including the national level.
- 3) A line of unification of the non-sectarian, anti-communal progressive trade unions on a platform of international and national class tactics.

By what they have stated (in 3) above, they evidently mean that they want to pursue a line for complete unification of the INTUC, HMS and AITUC. Let them do it, it is their affair.

Implement Declarations

However, we are glad that the compulsions of the situation have made them declare their willingness “for unity with all unions at the local and industrial level in struggles” and “for all-in-unity on issues at all levels including the national level”. We want that these should not be pious declarations for public consumption but they must be implemented in practice. They should not fare the same fate as the decisions of the May 1971 conference.

I am sure, comrades, that you will unanimously agree with me when I say that we are prepared to come together with the AITUC and HMS to fight the anti-labour policies pursued

by the Government of India which is the greatest menace facing the working class today. Will the AITUC respond and give proof of its sincerity of the declaration made in the Report quoted above? If they do, ways and means can be worked out to call a conference in consultation with other trade union centres and chalk out a plan of joint campaign, mobilisation and struggle.

We will be happy if the INTUC also joins such a campaign, for it has opposed wage freeze, ban on strikes in the recent seminars on Industrial Relations in the public sector, opposed compulsory arbitration and opted for voluntary arbitration, and a section of it is veering round to the position of accepting secret ballot for recognition.

Need To Fight Entire Line Of Government

Comrades, our fight for unity and struggle is not only for carrying on struggles on immediate issues of attack on the working class, though without this we cannot go forward. The analysis of the economic situation and the Plan Approach Document shows that these anti-working class policies are but a part of their entire economic policies and stem from the needs of their line of building capitalism in collaboration with imperialist monopolists and co-operation with the landlords. Their anti-people, anti-democratic policies spelled out in the Approach Document, which they are already implementing, are the way for them out of the crisis they have landed themselves in by the pursuit of this line.

We must realise that unless these entire policies, and this entire line are defeated and an alternative line of ours is pursued, there can be no improvement in the conditions of the working class and the toiling people.

Our major task therefore is to fight to defeat these policies and for pursuit of alternative policies.

Raise Trade Union Consciousness To Class Consciousness

For this it is necessary to first educate the working class on Govt.'s policies and make them conscious of the peril to themselves and the country if these policies are not defeated. Every issue of struggle must be related to the basic policies and line of the Government. This must be done during struggles and continuously, as that alone will transform the elementary trade union consciousness of the workers into real, living, vibrating class consciousness. This will enable us to move the entire working class for the great fight against these policies and line of capitalist development.

But the working class although it has the foremost role to play in this struggle because of its position in modern society, cannot fulfil this task alone. It has therefore to mobilise all sections of our country whose interests are bound up with the defeat of these policies.

Unite With Peasantry And Agricultural Labour

Firstly, it must champion the cause of the agricultural labourers and peasants against landlord exploitation. The working class can help a great deal in the organisation of the agricultural labourers and give them courage to fight the landlords. Last year, the textile and engineering workers of Coimbatore played a great role in organising the agricultural labourers in the villages round about and within a short time struggles for higher wages broke out in village after village and higher wages were won. This only shows what the working class can do in this regard and thereby build the unity of the workers and agricultural labourers and toiling peasants.

Organise And Unite With Unemployed

Secondly, the problem of unemployment is very acute. The tactics of the Government and the employers is to pit the unemployed against the employed workers. The existance of

a huge army of unemployed is the biggest weapon in the hands of the ruling classes to depress the wages and living standards of the workers. We can remain passive spectators to this phenomenon of huge unemployment only at our peril. We should therefore organise the unemployed and demand jobs or unemployment relief for them. This movement can be sustained only if the workers come out in the streets in support of the unemployed.

Fight Against Inflation And Taxation

The rising prices affect every section of the people. The working class cannot be satisfied with struggling for dearness allowance and getting some D.A. We know that the cost of living index is fraudulently prepared and the D. A. in no way compensates the real price increases, even if the D. A. is cent per cent neutralisation. It is therefore necessary to mobilise the entire people against this price rise, against the policies of deficit financing and indirect taxation which are the primary causes of the steep rise in prices. This can only be done if we are able to get the organised working class on the streets. That alone will give encouragement to all sections of the people and a fighting movement can be built up.

Fight Chauvinism And Diversionary Tactics

The Ruling classes, in order to stem the tide of the rising struggle and unable to solve the problems of unemployment, seek diversionary methods. The resort to chauvinistic slogans and propaganda on the basis of language, State and even region. It is well-known that the Shiva Sena was encouraged by high placed Congress leaders and ministers. In Assam, Assamese-Bengali riots are encouraged by the Government. In Andhra, the Government itself is responsible for fanning the flames of fratricidal warfare between Telangana and Andhra people, although both speak the same language. Attacks are launched on the harijans and adivasis and muslim minorities on the basis of caste and religious animosities. This

and practices are poles apart. She professed 'Garibi Hatao', she practices 'Garibi Badao' (Increase poverty). She professed to fight the monopolists. Her practice is to fatten the monopolists. She professed self-reliance. Her practice is more dependence.

Life's experiences will therefore bring more and more people in the streets in mighty struggles. If we fulfil the above tasks, we will give a proper direction to these fighting masses and their struggles.

Once the people become conscious of the direction along which they have to move and unite, they will take their destiny in their hands.

And in this great task, the working class has the greatest role to play. As Marx stated, "There is only one path open to us. For almost forty years we have stressed the class struggles between the bourgeoisie and proletariat as the great lever of social revolution."

With our firm faith in class struggle, which has been reinforced by the experience since the CITU was founded we shall firmly adhere to this line whatever be the difficulties, trails and tribulations, we may have to pass through. Whatever be the repression and terror we may have to face from the ruling classes, we shall not swerve from this Path.

Forward to united struggles at all levels !

Forward to unity of the Indian working class !

Forward to unity of the working class with peasant, agricultural labourers and all toiling masses !

C. I. T. U. Zindabad !

Inquilab Zindabad !