



# THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITU

## Forward to the Election Struggle

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THE elections to the Lok Sabha has been announced for 22nd November. The people of India and the working class of the country are called upon to decide who should rule the country on their behalf for the next five years. On their decision depends the future of our country, its unity, its democratic advance and justice to the toiling millions of our country.

The CITU calls upon all its office bearers and members of the General Council, its State and District Committees, its affiliated unions and the mass of workers behind them to plunge into this election battle and to ensure victory for the forces of democracy and national unity and ensure defeat of those who sow misery among the people and create divisions among them.

At the centre of the election struggle stands the discredited rule of the Congress (I) party which seeks fresh mandate from the people. The reply of the entire working class, the entire people must be a definite 'No'.

By organising 30th August Bandh for the resignation of the Rajiv Government the working class has already delivered its judgement on the Congress (I). It has to be implemented on 22nd November by mobilising millions of votes in all States, in all cities, in support of the candidates of left and secular opposition parties. A convincing and decisive and emphatic majority must be secured by these forces so that the people can have a Government of their choice, so that they are in a position to guide and determine the course of policy in the post-election period.

While concentrating on the defeat of the Congress (I), the working class and the people cannot forget that there are other dangerous forces in the field dividing the country, undermining its unity and integrity and helping the destabilising efforts of India's enemies from abroad. The imperialists are working to divide and partition the country so that it can be enslaved again. The Khalistani secessionist agitators in Punjab, the pro-Pakistani agitators in Kashmir are daily encouraged from abroad.

Internally the BJP, RSS and the VHP continue to divide the people, inflame people's passions in the

Babri Masjid-Ramjanmabhoomi issue resulting in communal riots. The BJP openly talks about Hindu Raj and attacks the rights of Muslim minority. All these divisive and secessionist forces, Hindu and Muslim communal organisations undermine the unity of our country and disorganise the democratic struggle to defeat the Cong (I).

The election battle for advancing the cause of democracy, national unity and the interests of the toiling masses of all communities, the battle for defeating the (Cong (I) demands that the reactionary forces of communalism must be isolated and their game must be exposed during the election campaign. Only opportunists, people not serious about defending the cause of democracy and national unity will think of joining hands with this reactionary crowd.

Com. BTR's article on 7th November, 1989 on centre pages

The election battle of the Indian people has two objectives. It must end in the rout of the Congress (I) and the Rajiv Gandhi Government; it must ensure the isolation of the communal forces, defeat of their efforts to secure electoral approval and ensure emergence of an India firmly united to meet all the challenges of the coming period.

The five years of Rajiv Gandhi's rule provide a wide charge sheet of failures, criminal neglect, sacrifice of a national interest, against the Congress (I) rule. There have been constant attacks on the democratic rights of the people, a growing tendency towards authoritarianism, its most outrageous manifestation is to be found in the rigging of elections of Tripura and the launching of semi-fascist terror in that state against the CPI (M) and its mass following. The growing attacks on the rights of states, running of Parliament as an authoritarian instrument of the Parliamentary majority and growing concentration of power in the hands of the Centre to buttress an authoritarian regime — these have been manifest in the last five years.

So far as the masses are concerned, hunger, starvation, unemployment, closed factories and mills,

these have been the blessings of the Rajiv Government, the blessings of the capitalist path pursued by the Congress (I) since independence.

Three crores of unemployed in urban areas, 10 crores in rural areas, two lakh concerns closed or sick with no provision for unemployment relief, no right to work, this is the gift of the bourgeois-landlord government. Lakhs of industrial workers are on the streets. The cotton textile mills, handloom and powerloom workers and jute workers are getting ruined. The handloom and powerloom workers have never witnessed such a distressing period. The ruination of traditional industries like coir and others continues with accelerated speed, again throwing thousands out of work. And so far the vast mass of workers of unorganised industries are concerned, except provision of miserable minimum wage which is never enforced, there is nothing to protect them.

And over and above all this, the ESMA, MISA and the NSA continue to be used against striking workers accompanied by police repression and goonda attack.

The Rajiv Government and the Congress (I) accept no responsibility to check this anarchy and chaos in industry. The Government refuses to take over and run sick industries. The World Bank demands that Government money should not be spent on reviving such concerns. Rajiv Gandhi Government is therefore denotifying taken over concerns and adding to the chaos. Further Rajiv Government's policy of modernisation and computerisation of industries is again throwing thousands of workers and employees out of jobs. There can be no relief from this anarchy unless the Rajiv Government is thrown out and the policies are reversed.

For the mass of peasantry, for the landless, Rajiv has nothing to offer, the Congress(I) and Rajiv no longer talk about distribution of land. Agricultural workers are exploited like bonded labour by landlords who are allowed to organise armed bands in Bihar to attack them during wage struggles. The mass of poor peasants is saddled with enormous burdens of rural debt. There has been no relief for them in the last five years under the Congress(I) rule. The price of foodgrains increased for the common man but the peasant does not get a remunerative price. The continuous price rise of necessities of life have led to tremendous deprivation of people throwing millions into abject poverty and starvation despite days of hard honest labour.

At the same time the Tatas and Birlas and the new patrons of the Congress(I), the Ambanis continue to gather huge wealth exploiting and robbing the people. And with Rajiv's policy of denigrating the public sector and privatisation they are having a free run of the economy during the last five years.

The growing reliance on foreign borrowings is making the country dependent on foreign aid and

opening the economy to pressures from outside. The interference of the World Bank in internal policies has increased, threatening the independence and self-reliance of our country.

But these are not the only crimes of the ruling Congress(I) and the Rajiv Government. The last five years have witnessed growing disintegration of the unity of the country with the Government showing its bankruptcy and the Congress(I) party doing nothing to fight the divisive forces. Only the Left parties, the CPI(M) and others are waging a courageous fight for national unity in Punjab, their cadres sacrificing their lives. All over the country the CPI(M) and the left continues to wage a battle against the communal forces and the Left Front Governments led by the CPI(M) are taking decisive measures to checkmate the communal forces and protect the minorities. In contrast, the Congress(I) party and its government are playing an opportunist role making fight against divisive forces only a law and order question. It is known that the Congress(I) party has big following among the people even now in Punjab and also in other states, but it refuses to throw its mass strength in the fight against divisive forces. It is quite clear that neither the Congress(I), nor its Government can be trusted with defending the unity of the country.

Last five years have shown that the CPI(M) and the Left Front Governments led by it and left parties have waged a consistent battle for the defence of the interests of the people by innumerable strikes and peasant agitations, defending national unity. They have warned the people against U.S. imperialist designs against our country. They have upheld a non-aligned policy of our country and our friendship with socialist countries which have been now helpful in strengthening our independence. Only the CPI(M) and the Left parties lay stress on defence of policy of non-alignment, while some opposition parties also forget its importance.

It will be realised by the working class, that the CPI(M) and the Left parties have got a consistent and cohesive policy of defending interests of the people and advancing democracy and protecting the nation against divisive forces.

The CITU therefore calls upon the entire working class to fully support the candidates of the left parties and secure for the people total victory in the election in West Bengal and Kerala. The CITU once more calls upon the entire working class and people to ensure that the combination of the left and secular opposition forces secures an overwhelming victory in the election struggle so that the people can have a government of their choice and move forward decisively to solve the urgent problems facing the country.

# CITU Calls for Dethroning Rajiv Government

**T**HE Secretariat of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions which met on 18th October evening under the presidentship of Com. B.T. Ranadive called upon the working class and appealed to all sections of people to work whole heartedly to dethrone the Rajiv Government in the forthcoming elections to be held on November 22, 24 and 26.

Analysing the situation, the meeting took serious note of the fact that the economic policy pursued by the Rajiv Government led to quick acceleration in the number of closed and sick units, galloping unemployment and spiralling prices. The process of destabilisation of the public sector and invitation to multinationals have hampered the growth of a self-reliant economy and endangered the non-aligned foreign policy. The path of privatisation has led to garnering of huge profits by the monopolists and thrown the workers exposed to their ruthless exploitation. The rural poor are worst hit by the new economic policy. The Jawahar Rojgar Yojana is only an election gimmick and a fraud on the rural poor and is bound to meet the same fate as all other so-called employment generation schemes announced in the past. The atrocities on the women, scheduled castes and all other minorities went on increasing during the period. Its talk about communal harmony is a sham on the people. Getting growingly isolated from the people, the Government itself went on compromising with the imperialist backed secessionist and communal forces to maintain its foothold at the cost of national unity and integrity of the country. To crown all, the Rajiv Government's corruption at top level on the Bofors issue has now been laid bare without any doubt.

This Government is not fit to represent the people any longer. The Secretariat appealed to all sections of workers to take the campaign to the grass root levels so that the reactionary Congress Government is ousted from power and at the same time the communal and divisive forces are isolated and they elect a Government of people's choice represented by the left, democratic and secular forces which can give succour to the people and safeguard the unity and integrity of the country.

**State Bank Strike:** The Secretariat condemned the Government for refusing to approve the wage agreement arrived at by State Bank Employees' Federation with the management, which led to two one day strikes by the State Bank employees, who have further decided to go on indefinite strike from October 26. The meeting demanded of the Government to honour the agreement immediately as otherwise the proposed indefinite strike will lead to paralysation all Government transactions hitting hard the salaried employees and the poor rural clientele. While extending support to the struggle of the State Bank employees, the meeting however noted with serious concern over the agreement on computerisation which will cause massive redundancy in the job potential. It

called upon all bank employees to fight against the computerisation drive by the bank management unitedly.

**Air Hostesses:** The meeting welcomed the decision of the Government to raise the retirement age of the air hostesses from 35 to 58 as well lift the embargo on marriage till three years of their recruitment. The Government had to make this announcement due to consistent struggles by the air hostesses against such gross and primitive discriminations. The embargo on recruitment of married women however still remains. The Secretariat demanded removal of all discriminations against the air hostesses.

**Struggle of TELCO Workers, Pune:** The meeting condemned the Tasas and Maharashtra Congress Government for creating a turmoil in TELCO, Pune by resorting to mass arrests of the union leaders and workers in pursuance of their rabid anti-labour policy & frantic effort to divide the workers and float a management's pocket union. Defying the TELCO Kamgar Sangathana, which enjoys support of the overwhelming majority of the workers, they arrived at a retrograde agreement with their puppet union and unleashed repression on the workers. The Congress Government of the State shamelessly supported the management forcing the leaders to go underground and jailed. The meeting congratulates the Trade Union Council for waging united struggle against the management which further plans to shift the unit from Pune. The Secretariat extended full support to the struggle and called upon the State Committee and all unions to launch struggles to force the management to come down.

**Conference of Anganwadi Women, Jaipur:** The Secretariat condemned the Deputy Director and other officers of ICDS for their attempt to obstruct the Anganwadi women from attending the conference at Jaipur on October 14. The officers went in a jeep to different Anganwadi centers and threatened the workers and helpers attending the conference, with dismissal. The meeting congratulated Anganwadi women for attending the conference in large number despite the threat.

The meeting was attended by Com. Samar Mukherjee, General Secretary; Com. E. Balanandan, Treasurer; Coms. M K Pandhe, Vimal Ranadive, Ranjit Basu and P K Ganguly, Secretaries.

**Meeting of October 1:** The Secretariat expressed serious concern over the growing communal riots taking place in different parts of the country. Apart from Bihar, the recent riots at Kota (Rajasthan), Badaun (U.P.), in Gujarat and in Mhow, Ratlam and Khargone (M.P.) and the continuing communal violence in Jammu and Kashmir point to the dangerous situation the communal and divisive

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# Govt of India Flayed for Non-Ratification of ILO Conventions

**I**N a meeting with the Indian Trade Unions at Delhi on October 5 Mr. Michael Hansanne, newly elected Director General of ILO expressed dissatisfaction at the non-ratifications of important International Standards by a number of member countries. The meeting was convened by the Delhi office of ILO on the occasion of Mr. Hansanne's maiden visit after resuming the highest executive assignment in ILO. The meeting was attended by CITU, INTUC, AITUC, HMS, BMS, UTUC, NFTU and NLO representatives.

Trade union representatives, excepting INTUC, flayed in their speeches the non-ratifications of a number of ILO conventions concerning basic trade union right and social securities by the Government of India, specially the non-ratifications of Convention numbers 87, 98, 122 and 131. The CITU representatives in their speeches made out that the Government of India is guided by authoritarian dictum in the management of industrial relations and approach towards basic human rights. Non-ratification of convention 122 which guaranteed right to work came for bitter criticism. Trade union representatives felt that the ILO has effective role to play against closure, and lock outs, for social security, against child labour, for working women and unorganised labour and against attack on trade union rights.

In the summing up speech Mr Hansanne said that International Standards and recommendations are the functional basis of ILO and the member countries should ratify those in true spirit. Economic considerations should not stand in the way in not ratifying the international standards. He also accepted the workers' suggestions regarding need of concentrating work for unorganised and women workers and assured ILO's total involvement.

Com. Jibon Roy and Com. Ranjit Basu, Secretaries of CITU attended the meeting on behalf of CITU.

## Electricity Workers to Step up Struggles

**T**HE National Campaign Committee of Electricity Employees' Unions met at New Delhi on 1.10.89. Com. E. Balanandan (MP), President of Electricity Employees Federation of India presided over the meeting. Com. A.B. Bardhan, President of All India Federation of Electricity Employees Unions, reported on the implementation of the decisions taken at the New Delhi Convention of Electricity Employees.

The Committee congratulated the workers for the

massive response to the nationwide strike call of 30th August. This was inspite of the brutal repression unleashed by certain state governments and the vacillation of certain unions.

The reply of the Central Government on the demands of the employees, the committee felt, was quite unsatisfactory. The committee decided to give a reply to the government and also to have discussions with the Minister of Labour and Power.

To focus attention on the demands of the electricity employees and in order to decide on the future course of action, the committee decided to hold an all India convention of electricity workers at New Delhi on the 14th of February 1990. Before that, a huge rally is also to be held on 13th of February, 1990 at Delhi in which thousands of electricity employees from all over the country will participate.

Among the other decisions taken by the committee, is the holding of a seminar on 'Protection of Environment and Development' in New Delhi during the last week of January 1990.

The meeting also expressed its strong condemnation of the victimisation resorted to by the Punjab Electricity Board against the workers who had participated in the strike. It also condemned the steps being taken by the Punjab Electricity Board to amend the Conduct Regulations of the Board restricting the right of workers to organise agitations.

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forces are taking the country to in a determined manner to break its unity and integrity. The riots are the results of rabid communalism being spread by the RSS, BJP, Vishwa Hindu Parishad, Shiv Sena, etc on the issue of Ramjanam Bhoomi-Babri Masjid and against the long due recognition of Urdu as the second official language in U.P. and Bihar. The recently concluded National Council of BJP has laid bare its communal character by putting its official seal on the issues. The Secretariat expressed full support to the statement of the left parties in this regard.

The dangerous communal path being pursued by these organisations is making the country vulnerable to the imperialist conspiracies to destabilise it. It will further endanger the trade union unity and frustrate united struggle of the working class and the struggle of the left, democratic and secular forces to defeat the reactionary Rajiv Government in the forthcoming elections.

The Secretariat calls upon all its State Committees and unions and appeals to all other trade unions and democratic, secular and patriotic forces to intervene in the situation, fight these divisive and communal forces and safeguard the unity of the working class and integrity of the country. It further appeals to all these forces and the opposition and secular parties to wage united struggle to completely isolate the communal parties which only can ensure defeat of the Rajiv Government in the elections.

## Resolutions

*[We are publishing hereunder the resolutions passed in the Working Committee. The other resolutions given to the Secretariat will be published after adoption by the Secretariat — Ed.]*

### **Com. Shankar Dayal Tewari**

**T**HE Working Committee of CITU expresses its deep sorrow and grief at the sudden demise of Comrade Shankar Dayal Tewari, member of the Central Committee of the CPI (M). He died of a massive heart attack on January 18.

Having been attracted to Marxism and Leninism while leading the student movement during the thirties he joined the Communist Party in the year 1940. Since then throughout his entire life till the date of death he dedicated himself in developing the Communist movement in Uttar Pradesh. He wrote a number of books on Marxism-Leninism and political affairs. He was a member of the Secretariat of the undivided Communist Party. After split he became the Central Committee member of the CPI (M) in 7th Congress and the Secretary of its Uttar Pradesh Committee. The Working Committee of the CITU pays respectful homage to Comrade Tewari.

### **Com. Khudiram Bhattacharya**

The Working Committee of CITU expresses its deep sorrow at the sudden passing away of Comrade Khudiram Bhattacharya, veteran peasant leader and a member of West Bengal State Committee of CPI (M). Com. Bhattacharya assumed important positions both in the Party and the Kisan Sabha. The Working Committee of CITU pays respectful homage to Com. Khudiram Bhattacharya.

### **Com. Paritosh Chatterjee**

The Working Committee of CITU pays heartfelt condolence at the demise of Com. Paritosh Chatterjee, a veteran communist and peasant leader. He was elected as the President of the West Bengal Krishak Sabha in 1985. At the time of death he was the member of the West Bengal State Committee of CPI (M) and All India Kisan Sabha.

### **Com. Ratanlal Brahman**

The Working Committee meeting of CITU deeply mourns the passing away of Com. Ratanlal Brahman, the veteran communist leader and the former Darjeeling District Committee Secretary of the CPI (M), who died in train while returning from the 13th Party Congress of the CPI (M).

Com. Ratanlal Brahman was an outstanding leader of the tea garden workers in the Darjeeling District. He led the first strike in a tea estate in 1933 and was the founder of the Tea Garden Mazdoor Union in 1945. He was one of the three member group in the Bengal Provincial Assembly in 1946 along with Com. Jyoti Basu and was first elected to the State Assembly in 1952. He was also a member of the Lok Sabha from 1971 to 1977. He successfully fought for the unity of the Nepali and Bengali workers and the people in the Darjeeling District. For his revolutionary work he had to spend more than eleven years in Jail both during the British regime and under the Congress rule.

The Working Committee pays homage to the memory of Com. Ratanlal Brahman.

### **Com. Prithvi Singh Azad**

The Working Committee of CITU pays homage to the memory of Com. Prithvi Singh Azad, a communist revolutionary and freedom fighter who died on 5th March in Hissar. He joined the Gaddar Party was imprisoned for long years. He joined the Communist Party of India in early thirties.

The Working Committee pays homage to the memory of Com. Prithvi Singh.

### **Com. N.L. Upadhyaya**

The Working Committee of CITU expresses heartfelt condolence at the demise of Com. N. L. Upadhyaya, the communist revolutionary and the freedom fighter. He was one of the founders of Communist Party in Karnataka. He was elevated to the Central Committee of CPI (M) in the year 1964. At the time of his death on 26th May 1989 he was the member of the State Secretariat of CPI (M). The Working Committee of CITU pays homage to the departed leader.

### **Com. Andrei Gromyko**

The Working Committee of CITU expresses its grief and condolence at the passing away of Com. Andrei Gromyko, a veteran Communist leader, outstanding Soviet Statesmen, and till recently President of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

Com. Gromyko served as the Foreign Minister of USSR from the period of Com. Stalin to Com. Gorbachov and defended the socialist system and promoted the cause of world peace against imperialist war.

The Working Committee pays homage to the departed leader and conveys its condolence to the

### Com. Janos Kadar

The Working Committee of CITU expresses its condolence at the passing away of Com. Janos Kadar on 6th July last after a prolonged illness. Com. Kadar played a leading role both in building the party and in the liberation of the country. After serving the party and the people of Hungary in various capacities, Com. Kadar was elevated to the position of General Secretary of Hungarian Socialist Party and later as the President of Central Committee. He played a leading role in quelling the counter revolutionary upheaval in 1956. The Working Committee pays homage to the demised leader.

### Com. Hu Yao Bang

The Working Committee of CITU expresses its deep grief at the demise of Com. Hu Yao Bang, a great revolutionary and the Polit Bureau Member of Communist Party of China. Having joined the revolutionary movement at the very early age, Com. Hu Yao Bang participated in the Autumn Harvest uprising of 1927 at the age of 12. Since then, he participated in the epic Long March and played a heroic role in Chinese Revolution. In the Peoples Republic of China, Com. Hu had held series of high posts both in the state and in the Party, including the General Secretary of CPC.

### Homage to Martyrs

The Working Committee of CITU expresses profound grief at the ghastly killing of Comrade Safdar Hashmi a leading peoples' theatre artist of the country and the member of CPI(M) by the Cong(I) hoodlums on 1st January last. The Working Committee recalls the courage and sacrifice of Comrade Safdar Hashmi who placed his art at the service of the working class and the people and identified himself with the cause of downtrodden people. The Working Committee along with the entire progressive literary world condemn this outrage.

The Working Committee salutes the memory of Com. Dilip Singh a steeled communist who was gunned down by the Khalistani terrorists alongwith his wife, his daughter, son, daughter-in-law and two grand daughters in the midnight of 19-20 May.

The Working Committee pays tribute and homage to Com. Mohinder Singh of Araiyan village of Jalandhar Dist. who became a martyr on 20th July night while fighting the Khalistani terrorists, Com. Mangal Singh who was shot dead in his village Wadala Kalan of Amritsar District on May 28 and Dr. Ravinder Singh Ravi, an eminent Punjabi Poet and Reader in Punjab University at Patiala.

The Working Committee pays tribute to Com. Balai Debnath, Md. Aktar Hussain Mia, Chandra Kanta Debbarma, Dipali Bardhan, Amulya Munda,

Krishna Bandhu Jamatia, Joyanta Roy, Balakuni Jamatia, Nandalal Debnath, Shanta Dey, Anjali Sarkar, Sudhanshu Das and those comrades who were brutally murdered by the Cong(I) and TUJS hooligans in Tripura.

The Working Committee pays its revolutionary homage to all those brave martyrs who sacrificed their lives and displayed exemplary valour for the protection of national unity, defence of working class unity and democratic movement.

### On Birth Centenary of Com. Muzaffar Ahmed

The meeting of the Working Committee of CITU at Kalyani during 4th-6th September '89 pays its warmest tribute to the memory of Com. Muzaffar Ahmed, pioneer of communist movement in India, in his birth centenary year.

Com. Muzaffar Ahmed alongwith other pioneers, having been inspired by the Great October Revolution of 1917 moved forward towards communism. He played a leading role in organising the communist revolutionaries into cohesive movement. Alongwith organising the trade unions and the revolutionary political party of the working class he fought constantly to radicalise the Congress policies in the struggle for independence. He put forward alternative platforms of struggle based on working class and peasant alliance. It was through the Communist Party founded by Com. Muzaffar Ahmed and others, that the Indian people heard about the most advanced form of democracy, about a society free from exploitation and led by the most revolutionary section of the people, the working class. He fought for his ideas with determined courage facing unprecedented odds and repression which a communist had to face in those early period of growth. He had to go through an imprisonment for 16 years.

Com. Muzaffar Ahmed was subjected to two historical trials: Kanpur Bolshevik Conspiracy case and Meerut Communist Conspiracy Case which had been contrived by the British to isolate and suppress the communist movement in India in its very early stage. In Kanpur trial he was imprisoned for 4 years. In Meerut Conspiracy case he and his colleagues unfurled the banner of proletarian revolution from the Dock which attracted international support to the communist movement in India. Com. Muzaffar Ahmed was sentenced to life imprisonment which was the highest awarded in the trial.

Being an uncompromising fighter against imperialism and Indian reaction he fought tirelessly all his life to steer clear the communist movement from right and left sectarian deviations. He was as modest and humane in his approach to his comrades as he was firm in dealing with the class enemy. He played a great role in building up the party organisation in Bengal and in India. His memory shall ever be enshrined in the hearts of the Indian working class.

The Working Committee of CITU while paying homage to his revered memory, pledges to carry forward to the victorious end the struggle to realise his vision of a socialist India.

### **In Defence of World Peace**

The Working Committee meeting of CITU held at Kalyani on 4-6 September, 1989 calls upon the entire working class and all peace loving people to continue their campaign in defence of world peace with great vigour.

The signing of INF treaty was welcomed by all peace loving people the world over, even though it envisaged the elimination of only a small portion of short and medium range nuclear missiles.

Since then the USSR made several new proposals for further reduction of nuclear armaments and in fact reduced sizeable section of their conventional weapons. On the other hand US imperialism is stepping up their efforts to strengthen their nuclear arsenal. Billions of dollars have been sanctioned recently by the US Senate for pushing forward the Star War programme. It is trying to circumvent the understanding of the INF treaty by bringing in missiles of larger nuclear potential in Europe. Britain, France etc. are also toeing the US line of expanding their nuclear weapon.

Apart from their drive for the arms race and gain nuclear superiority over the USSR, the US imperialists are violating the international accords with impunity as in case of Afghanistan. The US imperialists also have resorted to take provocative steps in Panama, Nicaragua and other central American countries. They are openly supporting the racist South African Government and the Zionist Israel against the national liberation movements.

The forces defending world peace must be on constant alert in exposing and defeating the US machinations in pursuit of their aim for global domination. In this context the Working Committee calls upon the State Committees and the unions to redouble their efforts to mobilise all peace loving forces in the country against the imperialist manoeuvres in defence of world peace and for social progress.

### **In Support of Peoples Republic of China**

The Working Committee of the CITU warmly congratulates the leadership of the Peoples Republic of China and the Communist Party of China for successfully quelling the counter revolutionary rebellion in China. The meeting mourns the loss of lives of soldiers of the PLA and innocent citizens in the turmoil. The counter revolutionary elements instigated and aided by imperialist agencies, the USA imperialism in particular, sought to overthrow socialism and the Communist Party of China and revert to capitalism in the country. The Working Committee expresses its appreciation of the steps being taken

by the CPC to rectify the distortions in implementing the four cardinal principles and slackening in ideological education, which lead to spread ideas of bourgeois liberalism and provided opportunity for the internal reactionaries and the imperialist agencies to pose a threat to socialism in China under the garb of the pro-democracy movement.

The Working Committee cautions the working class against the propaganda campaign unleashed by the imperialist media and the Indian reactionaries to slander the Govt of PRC and the leadership of the CPC as a part of attack against the Socialist system and calls upon the unions to fight this campaign of vilification and explain the true nature of the events in China to the working class.

The Working Committee expresses satisfaction that this campaign of slander has not affected the growing process of normalisation of relations between India and China and calls for further consolidation of the friendly relation between the two countries.

### **On Sino-Soviet-Summit**

The Working Committee meeting of CITU held at Kalyani from September 4-6, 1989 warmly greets the Sino-Soviet Summit held at Beijing in May, which set the process of normalisation of relations between the two great socialist countries and the Communist Parties.

The Working Committee hopes that the restoration of friendship and cooperation between the two countries will soon build up and consolidate the unity of the socialist camp against imperialism. It will strengthen the cause of world peace against war mongering imperialism headed by the USA and inspire the national liberation movements in the third world countries for freedom, democracy and socialism. The Non-Aligned Movement will be greatly benefitted by the unity of the USSR and the Peoples Republic of China.

For the international working class movement the Summit gives a new confidence to reestablish and hold high the banner of proletarian internationalism and further the struggle for socialism and its safeguard in a period when it is under a renewed attack from the imperialist agencies and the internal reactionaries.

### **On the 5th World Trade Union Conference on the Problems of Working Women**

The Working Committee meeting of CITU held at Kalyani from September 4-6, 1989 greets the 5th World Trade Union Conference on the Problems of Working Women being convened by the WFTU at Sofia from September 26-28, 1989.

The meeting congratulates the WFTU for inviting women trade unionists from all continents to participate in the conference. It appreciates its objective

to develop trade union struggles in defence of the rights and interests of working women as the central issue for discussion in the conference on the basis of the ideas and proposals made at the various national and regional trade union meetings.

The WFTU and its Commission on Problems of Working Women have very correctly drawn the attention of all the trade unions and the working men and women to the fact that the social infrastructure and the conditions of working women and their needs are lagging far behind the technological developments in most of the countries. With the deepening economic crisis in the capitalist world, women are the first victims of the rising unemployment. Their specific needs in relation to provision of child care, reduced working hours, adequate facilities for general and technical education, and above all, equal opportunities to contribute to the national economy are not met. The concept of equality and equal opportunity is not being recognised, resulting in all forms of discrimination against women.

The WFTU has rightly called upon the trade unions to inculcate this principle within the unions giving equal opportunity to the women workers to participate in all aspects of trade union activities.

The Working Committee extends full support to the Conference and hopes that it will generate new strength to the trade union struggle championing the cause of the working women.

### On the Worsening Economic Situation

The Working Committee of the CITU expresses grave concern at the deteriorating economic situation in the country, following the capitalist path of development by the Congress. The steep rise of over 9 per cent in the cost of living index during the last one year despite the record increase in agricultural production makes nonsense of the government's claims of arresting inflation. The administrative price increases and the subsequent increased duties and railway freight have added a further burden of Rs. 2563 crores on the common people. The ever growing deficit budgeting, which has averaged to over Rs. 6000 crores in the last three years has accelerated the crisis pushing up the inflation rate to dangerous proportions.

This steep rise in prices is coupled with the growing crisis in industry which has led to over 160 thousand industrial units becoming sick or closing down, throwing lakhs of workers on the streets. The rampant drive for modernisation has led to redundancies in employment. The number of registered job seekers has reached 35 millions. The ban on recruitment imposed by the Government has further worsened the situation.

The rural poor have to bear the worst brunt of the Government's economic policy. The non-implementation of land reforms and refusal to pay re-

munerative prices to the peasants and minimum wage to the agricultural workers have made their conditions miserable.

The new economic policy of the Rajiv Govt. going in for modernisation, destabilisation of the public sector, privatisation, invitation to the multinationals and liberalisation are strengthening the hold of foreign capital on our economy.

Foreign debt has been officially estimated at Rs. 68,851 crores while prominent economists have placed it at about 100,000 crores. The annual debt serving payment now amounts to about 40 per cent of our export earnings and about 26 per cent of our foreign exchange income. Foreign exchange reserves are shrinking while dependence on foreign loans and foreign commercial borrowing is growing. The economic policy has hampered the growth of a self-reliant economy and the country is facing the danger of falling into a debt trap.

The imperialists are continuing to exert pressure for total surrender. The USA's threat to penalise India under Super 301 Act and the demand to liberalise intellectual property rights in line with requirements of the multinationals are the latest moves in this game of blackmail and pressure tactics. The new economic policy of the Rajiv Government in one hand has exposed the common people to the ruthless exploitation by monopoly foreign capital and on the other hand posed a danger to our non-aligned foreign policy and independence of the country.

The Working Committee of the CITU calls upon the working class and the trade union movement to take the lead in the struggle in defence of people's livelihood and the economic independence of the country and mobilise all democratic and patriotic forces to fight this anti-people and anti-national economic policies of the Rajiv Govt.

### On Struggle Against Unemployment

The Working Committee of CITU meeting at Kalyani during 4th-6th September 1989 expresses grave concern at the accelerated growth of unemployment which has become alarmingly acute, swelling the number of unemployed upto one tenth of the Indian population. While the urban registered unemployment during the 5 year rule of Rajiv Government has increased from 22 million to 35 millions, the rural unemployment is estimated to be around 70 millions.

In consequence of the Government's development of the economy on the capitalist line, unemployment has been growing with each Five Year Plan. While there is no positive employment generation programme, the Government's drive for modernisation, computerisation and ban on recruitment, coupled with the growing closures have further aggravated the situation. Ruination of the tradi-

*(Contd. on page 18)*

# On Unorganised Workers

## Orissa Prepares for Strike Action

THE successful convention of unorganised workers organised by Orissa State CITU at Saheed Bhawan, Cuttack on 18th September, gave the call for one day industrial strike action to be decided later. The convention raised 15 point demands, which included minimum wage Rs 1050/- per month on 800 point of the 1960 consumer price index, DA @ Rs 1.65 per point rise, extension of the facilities of P.F, E.S.I to all the unorganised workers, equal pay for equal work to women, abolition of contract, casual, C.L.R., Badli system, Central legislation or agricultural workers, extension of plantation Act to cover all forest workers, modification of Inter State Migrant Workers Act, etc. The convention was attended by 610 delegates from all over the state representing various sectors like Mines, Steel, Port, Electricity, Coal, Heavy Water, Transport, Forest, Oil, Aluminium, Agricultural labour, Plantation, Small and Medium industries, Cooperatives, Rickshaw pullers, Fisherman, Salt workers and Construction workers.

Com. Lambodar Nayak, President, CITU Orissa State Committee presided over the convention. In his inaugural speech Com. PK Ganguly, Secretary CITU dealt at length on the plight of the unorganised workers, their miserable working conditions and expressed the need of a central legislation for a guaranteed minimum wage and service security. Citing the illustration of a week long heroic struggle of the unorganised workers of Delhi and its suburbs and in other states, he gave the call that the unorganised workers have to struggle for realisation of their basic demands. In this context, he mentioned that a national convention of unorganised workers was going to be held in New Delhi on 23rd September, 1989 where a programme of action for unorganised workers was likely to be chalked out.

Comrade Ajey Rout, General Secretary, CITU Orissa State Committee said that unorganised workers numbering about one crore were there in the state and they used to get work ranging between 2 months to 6 months in a year. The daily minimum wage for the unorganised workers was fixed at Rs 11/- by the State Government which was insufficient for two square meals a day for a family. Taking the advantage of the anti-working class attitude of the State Congress (I) Government, the employers were exploiting the workers maximum avoiding the statutory laws and debarring the workers from minimum amenities. In such a context he gave the call to popularise the demands of the unorganised workers and prepare for a bitter struggle, Comrade Pradeep Das, Secretary CITU State Committee placed the resolution of the convention. Biren Roy (HMS), Basant Sahoo (BMS) and Bijoy Sahoo (UTUC-LS) also spoke on the occasion. Amongst others 38 speakers including Com. Bansidhar Das, President AIAMU, Sachikanta Pani, Vice President

Orissa Kishan Sabha, the leaders of the employment movement Com. Dasmanta Das, Nirakar Jena Radharaman Sarangi, Monmohan Nayak, Amiya Das, Anata Rout, Biman Maiti, Nabakishore Mohanty, Danda Pani Mohanty, Jagat Jivan Dash, and others discussed the issue and urged the workers to be prepared for united struggle. The convention called for preparation of one day strike action.

## Courting Arrest in Assam

The Assam State Committee decided to observe 6 September 1989 as a day for the unorganised workers by holding civil disobedience movement by CITU unions demanding monthly minimum wage of Rs 1050/- holding of price rise; abolition of Master Roll and Contract system; Strict implementation of ESI, PF and Plantation Labour Act; Right to work as fundamental right; reopening of closed and locked out units and above all resignation of anti-people and corrupt Rajiv Gandhi Govt.

So far minimum wage was concerned even today five lakhs of Plantation workers received a daily minimum wage ranging from Rs 11/- to Rs 13/- only. Plywood employers were refusing to pay daily minimum wage of Rs 24/- as fixed by the State Govt. In many industries and even in Govt departments the number of contract labourers and Master Roll workers were increasing. Hundreds of employers had not deposited crores of rupees deducted from the workers in the name of ESI and PF. No steps had been taken by the Govt to reopen the closed industries. The demands made good impact on all other trade union organisations including the INTUC led Assam Chah Mazdoor Sangh. The AGP Govt announced on July 27 a daily minimum wage of Rs 25/- for all workers w.e.f. August 1, 1989 excluding engineering, plywood and plantation. However it was not implemented. The Assam Tea Tribes Students Association gave a bandh call in tea gardens demanding minimum wages to the tea labourers. The Jatiyatabadi Yuba Chatra Parishad also demanded higher wage for plantation workers and abolition of contract system. The AGP led Shram Parishad also demanded a daily minimum wage of Rs 19/- for tea garden workers.

Meanwhile came the Bharat Bandh call. So the CITU had to defer its programme for a week. On 13th September last all the CITU affiliated unions responded to the call magnificently. Workers of many tea gardens, plywood and other industrial units abstained from work and courted arrest in hundreds. The programme evoked much enthusiasm among all sections of industrial workers and opened up good possibilities for further struggles. The State Committee decided to meet on October 1 next to review the 13th September programme and to chalk out future course of action depending on the decision taken by the Delhi convention of 23rd September.

# CITU Co-ordination Committee of Public Sector Unions Calls for Stepping up Struggle against Privatisation

**T**HE Co-ordination Committee of Public Sector Unions (CITU), in its meeting held at Calcutta on September 7 expressed deep concern over the growing privatisation of the public sector resorted to by the Government. Besides the members, leading comrades from major public sector units were invited to attend the meeting. Com. Suryanaryan Rao, Vice President of CITU presided over the meeting.

In the discussions on the report placed by Com. M K Pandhe, Convenor of the Co-ordination Committee, PSU leaders laid supreme importance to joint campaign and action against privatisation. While narrating their experience the speakers representing different industries spoke about the growing sickness of public sector industries, contributing to reduction in workforce. The Government was throwing open the areas reserved for public sector to the multinationals. The drive for modernisation and computerisation in public sector industries in the name of introducing competitiveness between public and private sectors was further contributing to large scale reduction in workforce. Over and above this, in the name of productivity drive the managements were introducing various devices to liquidate huge number of labour force.

Com. Pandhe in his report said that while the Government was clamouring that the wage cost per employee had increased to an average of about 100 per cent during 1981-82 and 1987-88, it was silent about the fact that the value added per employee had shoot up by about 250 per cent during the same period. The report mentioned that in the year 1981-82 all the public sector undertakings together made a profit after tax to an amount of Rs 445.94 crores which had gone up to Rs 2183.35 crores in the year 1987-88. During the VI plan period the PSU units have generated internal resource worth Rs 13,767.71 crores while during the first 3 years itself of 7th plan it reached the figure of Rs 18,103.58 crores. These achievements could be registered even though about 24 per cent of the public sector undertakings are made to operate with the capacity utilisation between 50-75 per cent and about 21 per cent of the industries below 50 per cent. Despite these achievements the Government of India was going ahead denigrating the public sector.

The Co-ordination Committee called upon the CITU unions to carry forward a continuous campaign against the Government's policy on public sector and wage united struggle for the safeguard of the public sector and self-reliance.

Besides, Com. Pandhe, Com. R Umanath, Com.

P K Ganguly, Com. M M Lawrance, Com. Ranjit Basu and Com. Jibon Roy were present in the meeting from the CITU Secretariat.

## Public Sector Unions to Fight for Full Neutralisation

**A** meeting of the Committee of Public Sector Trade Unions held in New Delhi on 22nd October, 1989 expressed its strong resentment at the dilatory tactics adopted by the Government of India in settling the long standing issue of dearness allowance for the two million public sector workers. The Government of India had not yet accepted in principle the demand for full neutralisation at all levels for the public sector workers.

The CPSTU was of the view that the new rate of DA should be made applicable from 651 points of Consumer Price Index with 1960 as the base year. The demand of the CPSTU was that the minimum rate of DA should be Rs. 2.50 per point and higher rate of DA should be provided to the workers either on the percentage or the slab system. Once the system is accepted then the details can be worked out. The CPSTU cannot accept a single rate of DA in the public sector undertakings. Further there should be no change in the present practice of quarterly average of price index for payment of DA.

The Committee reiterated its demand that the Government of India should come forward with a proposal that would ensure full neutralisation for all the workers in public sector, failing which the CPSTU will be forced to launch a countrywide agitation.

The CPSTU also condemned the Government of India for its failure to remove the ceilings in bonus formula which was depriving large number of workers from their right of bonus. It urged upon the Government of India to announce the removal of these draconian ceilings which lost all meaning in view of steep rise in price level.

The CPSTU also demanded that the minimum income for the purpose of calculation of income tax should be substantially raised in the forthcoming budget.

The delay in finalising the pension scheme in consultation with trade unions was causing acute discontent among the workers in most of the public sector undertakings in which provision of pension clause was included. The CPSTU urged upon the Government to take expeditious steps in the matter.

The CPSTU decided meet after the elections and decide future course of action on the above issue.

# Steel Workers Demand Ouster of Rajiv Govt

**H**INDUSTAN Steel Employees' Union of Durgapur held its 28th Annual Conference from 23rd to 25th September '89. 1839 delegates from DSP and ASP along with 110 fraternal delegates attended the conference. Com. Dilip Majumdar hoisted red flag on 24th morning. Com. Manoranjan Roy placed wreathes on martyrs column.

While inaugurating the conference, Com. Manoranjan Roy, W. Bengal CITU General Secretary recalled the glorious heritage of Hindustan Steel Employees Union of Durgapur to develop working class movement in West Bengal. He said that the Central Govt policy had ruined the survival and economic viability of textile, jute, fertilizer, engineering, wagon industries etc. The problem was not for West Bengal only. It was for entire India. The industries were sick or closed due to anti-national policies of big monopolists and the Govt of India. As a result, livelihood of working class as well as of peasantry were in serious danger. Unless we can remove this Rajiv Government, we cannot come out of this crisis. He said that the entire trade union movement has to lake up the challenge and remove the Rajiv Government from power.

Com. Shanti Ghatak, Minister of Labour of W. Bengal greeted the conference on the second day. He highlighted the efforts of the left front Government to save the workers from retrenchment and open up as many factories as possible within its limited powers.

Total 78 delegates participated in discussion and raised many social and trade union problems. Com. Mrinal Banerjee read out the message of greetings by Com. B.T. Ranadive, in which he called upon steel workers to hold high the basic tenets of scientific socialism. (Com. BTR's message has been printed hereunder).

Com. Jibon Roy pointed out that world capitalism was changing its policies. The recent incidents in China, Poland etc prove that imperialism has embarked upon a global conspiracy to incite counter-revolution from inside. Absence of persistent ideological campaign against the evils and dangers of world capitalist system among the working class has made this possible.

CITU Secretary, Com. MK Pandhe explained the problems of steel industry as well as of public sector. Govt of India was squeezing steel industry as per dictate of World Bank, which demanded its privatisation. Even a vital element for industrial development like electricity was also under attack.

Com. Jyoti Basu, Chief Minister in his concluding speech expressed his deep concern on industrial situation in India. Massive import and modernisation caused mass scale reduction of manpower. The democratic and trade union rights which the left Government protected, were under growing attack by the Rajiv Government. He squarely blamed the Central Government for the growing unemployment, closures and price rise. He made a scathing criticism for its making compromises with the divisive forces endangering the unity and integrity of the country

and called for its ouster.

The conference electen a 42 member committee with Com. Dilip Majumdar, as President, and Com. Subichar Dey as Working President.

## Message from Com. BTR.

Dear Comrade,

I warmly greet the conference of the union and wish success to its deliberations. The union and the steel workers with a rich tradition of militant struggle and sacrifice have played an important role in the political struggle of the people against the Congress(I) rule and installing the Left Front Ministry headed by the CPI(M). It has played an important part in fighting the Congress(I) conspiracies against the ministry and is now embarking upon another election fight to oust the Rajiv Government.

This is an important task. But I wish to draw your attention to a basic question which you as advanced guard of modern working class in India can ignore at your own peril. I am referring to defence of socialism, the defence of Marxist-Leninist scientific socialism now being attacked all over the world. You will realise that the daily struggles, the parliamentary elections, the Rajiv Hatao campaign have not much meaning if we forget the basic objective of socialism and fail to defend it. Lenin correctly described the daily struggle, parliamentary struggle as a small change of daily politics. The neglect of popularising basic concepts of scientific socialism, has led to confusion today when it is being attacked from all sides. The confusion has arisen from the fact that repudiation of socialism seems to emanate from socialist countries themselves. Confusion arises because those who are magnifying the past mistakes are deliberately ignoring the monumental achievements of socialism. We have no reason to be on the defensive. In what conditions the world would have found itself if the Soviet Union had not defeated Nazi power almost single handed? What gave the Soviet people this mighty strength? But for socialism a backward country could not have been transformed into a strong industrial and military power. And who can teach us about democracy? It was the first socialist state founded by Lenin that embodied the right to work and education in the constitution of the working class state. It is the socialist achievements of the last 70 years that have transformed the world, establishing socialist camp in one-third of the world. If some people in some countries repudiate these achievements, we should uphold them with revolutionary pride. They are the heritage of the world working class and we must guard them and carry forward the struggle for socialism. If some are weary of carrying the flag of socialism and proletarian internationalism, should we waver in our duty?

Fraternally yours,  
B.T. RANADIVE



# 7th November 1989

B.T. Ranadive

ON 7th November all sections of the world working class will recall the victory of the October Revolution and the transformatory role it played in changing the world in the last seven decades. Also will be recalled the great historic role that the first socialist state played in the fight against the Nazi aggression. Since the beginning, the first socialist state was the only state in history which waged a continuous struggle for peace among nations and tried to save humanity from the scourge of war and its attended deaths, misery for millions.

Today also the Soviet Union is pursuing the struggle for peace making every endeavour to save the world from the horrors of a nuclear war. It misses no opportunity to make concrete practical proposals, announced its readiness to implement them and calls upon US and others to respond in a common endeavour to save world peace. The entire world, the people of all lands applaud these efforts. The people of Europe threatened with the possibility of a nuclear war on their soil are all the more grateful to the Soviet Union and look upon her as their strongest friend to save them from the horrors of a nuclear war. Comrade Gorbachev's proposals whether in relation to reduction of nuclear weapons or conventional arms are not the proposals of an individual. The Summit talks with President Bush of the USA are not talks between two individuals nor just talks between leaders of two big powerful nations. They represent talks between representatives of two different social systems, one which is committed to peace, for whose social existence peace is a necessity and another which has still now thrived on war and finds profits on huge military expenditure necessary to keep its economy going.

It is no surprise therefore that the USA's response to Soviet proposals has been negative. The process of nuclear disarmament which was expected to pick up after the signing of the agreement for reduction of short and medium range missiles has been stopped. The USA has now agreed to discuss reduction in the number of strategic missiles only on condition that it is free to go ahead with its Star War Project. In short, while discussing reduction of present day weapons the USA will plan to forge new more deadly weapons. The earlier optimism that the agreement on European missiles will be quickly followed by further steps to reduce weapons was based on wishful thinking. However, this does not detract from the importance of the efforts of the Soviet Union to put a halt to the nuclear arms race.

7th November this year sees the Soviet Union still engaged in bringing to order its wayward economy. Notwithstanding reduction in defence expenditure, deficit budget cannot be avoided and shortages of goods continue. Efforts are being made to see that

the economy picks up and develops its full potential. India's working class and people wish success to the CPSU's efforts to bring the economy back to the pace expected of a socialist economy.

Experience of all socialist countries, of Marxism-Leninism shows that there can be no proper and effective functioning of socialist system, if the socialist consciousness of the worker regarding his responsibility for social production does not remain at the required level. No progress is possible without restoration of the proper level of socialist consciousness.

Experience of all socialist countries also shows that reforms, and remedial measures have no chance of success unless they are consistent with the basic principles of socialism and the socialist framework of society. These principles are Marxism-Leninism, leadership of the Marxist-Leninist party, socialism and socialised means of production and distribution and the state led by the working class.

Inside the Soviet Union also developments causing concern are taking place. For last few months the ethnic crisis continues. The unrest in the Baltic states has reached the points of demanding secession from the Soviet Union. This reactionary and counter-revolutionary demand was incited and encouraged by the intemperate anti-Marxist condemnation of the Soviet-German Pact, campaign for denouncing everything that Stalin did. In this campaign it was asserted that the three Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania were incorporated into the Soviet against the wishes of the people of the States. The logical conclusion being that they have right to withdraw from the Soviet Union. Now wide sections of people from these States have been demanding secession saying that they were forcibly incorporated in the Soviet Union. They also demand secession as a right under the Soviet Constitution because the Soviet Constitution guarantees to all nationalities the right of self-determination.

Taking note of these events the CPSU leadership has come out with a statement that the incorporation of the Baltic states into the Soviet Union was done with the willingness of the people and there was no use of force. It was also declared that secession will not be tolerated. The CPSU has taken a correct stand saying that secession will be a disaster for the people of the Baltic states.

The document on the nationalities policy of the CPSU in present day conditions adopted by the CPSU Central Committee on September 20, 1989 gives confidence that the ethnic and nationality problems which have risen now will be properly solved on the basis of correct Marxist-Leninist understanding of the situation and in the changed circumstances.

ces of the present day. The document bases itself on the great Leninist legacy of the earlier period when immediately after the October Revolution the nationalities problem were growingly solved and an example was presented to the world of equality and freedom for all nationalities under socialism. As the document observes: "In spite of all contradictions in subsequent developments the economic, social and spiritual progress of the peoples was steady. Immense production forces were formed in all regions of the country. The republics produced their own working class and scientific, technological and artistic communities. On the basis of cooperation and mechanisation the countryside changed in profile. Educational standards rose steeply among all Soviet peoples. As a result of the industrial and agricultural development the North, Siberia and the Far East, and the establishment of new industrial, scientific and cultural centres the map of the country's nationalities has changed. There is no territory today where people of various nationalities do not live and work side by side. The demographic situation is now different and is characterised by rapid growth in urban population.

"The impetus given by the proletarian revolution to the nationalities policy has reverberated throughout our entire history. However, deformations of social development that began soon after Lenin's death had a baneful effect also on relations between nationalities."

The working class of India appreciates this return of objective criticism of the past based on its achievements and intended to correct the deviations from the Leninist norms.

The document correctly observed: "It is utterly wrong to allege that the people of the USSR have no right to self-determination and to reduce self-determination merely to secession thereby impoverishing the universal principle of the solution of the nationality problem. The entire Soviet and world experience points to the need to regard self-determination not only as a one time act connected with the exercise of the right to secession. It is a complex and many faceted process of asserting national dignity, strengthening political and economic independence & developing the language and culture."

While welcoming these developments the working class cannot ignore the great dangers and perils that seem to be surrounding the Soviet Union and the Socialist camp. It seems that there is very little awareness of it in the international communist movement. The entire last year or so was marked by vicious orchestrated campaign of the imperialists against socialism exploiting the intemperate, unhistorical criticism made by some Communist Parties of some past mistakes which totally ignored the mighty achievements of the earlier period, the imperialists throughout the world propagated about the failure of socialism and the superiority of the capitalist system. It was an attempt to break the influence of socialism and socialist countries on the people struggling in capitalist countries. Firstly they fully exploited the situation created by ideological confusion in some socialist countries. The fully supported the counter-revolutionary

struggle in China which drew sustenance from bourgeois liberal tendencies in the country and weakening of Marxism-Leninism. It was with great difficulty that the Communist Party of China battling almost single-handed and remaining firm on the bedrock of Marxism-Leninism could defeat the offensive. But the same imperialist forces have succeeded in organising peaceful counter-revolutions in the door-steps of the Soviet Union in Poland and Hungary. For their subversion they again relied on the same source, the detachment from Marxism-Leninism and deviations in these two countries. The Communist Parties of the two countries have collapsed. In Poland the PUP is now in an enforced coalition government with Solidarity supported and financed by the CIA. And the new Prime Minister has openly announced that he stood for market economy and capitalism. In Hungary the most treacherous development has taken place with the majority of the Communist Party deciding to dissolve the Party, that is openly repudiating Communism and forming themselves into a social democratic party in the name of market economy and capitalism. This is the biggest victory secured by the imperialist forces against socialism, while the world was regaled with tales about moderation of contradictions.

Will the international movement draw lessons from the collapse of two socialist states? The collapse was being prepared over a few years by growing ideological doubts and manifested in deviations from the teachings of Lenin. But the international movement kept quiet asserting the national sovereignty of each party to follow its own line.

Only 20 years back Government of the Soviet Union could rescue the Czechoslovakian working class from counter-revolution organised within the country. Today it is only a spectator. This is the stage of international unity and solidarity today. It is high time that the international movement gives thought to the changed situation, makes a supreme effort to rally all the forces of socialism to defeat the imperialist attempts to push back the clock of history. The working class of India ardently hopes that the CPSU will take its rightful historical place in this struggle and once again rekindle the invincible spirit of proletarian internationalism.

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flying job despite her attaining the age of 45 years. The Air hostess were preparing for a day long dharna before the residence of Union Minister.

On 17th October the Ministry of Civil Aviation issued a press release declaring that the age of retirement of air hostesses was raised to 58 with immediate effect. This was a major achievement of the movement of the air hostesses. However, the stipulation that married woman would not be recruited as air hostess still remains. The managements of Air India and Indian Air lines continue discrimination against air hostesses in the matter of promotion and several other benefits.

Meanwhile Miss Michiko Mochizuki and Miss Masami Ohtaki, two Japanese air hostesses donated Rs 1000 to CITU.

# Clarion Call to World Working Women by 5th Conference at Sofia

Vimal Ranadive

THE Fifth World Trade Union Conference on Working Women was held at Sofia from September 26-28. Called by the WFTU, the Conference was attended by 172 delegates from 79 countries representing 105 national trade union organisations and 13 international organisations, including the ILO, UNO, WIDF, FAO, UNESCO and UNICEF. The delegates represented the socialist countries, the advanced capitalist countries and the developing countries. The six member Indian delegation comprised from the CITU, AITUC, UTUC(LS) and the HMS, including Vimal Ranadive, the Secretary of the All India Co-ordination Committee of Working Women CITU).

The Conference revealed that in most countries, particularly in the advanced capitalist and the developing capitalist countries the status and conditions of working women have undergone little change. They remained underpaid and over exploited. The delegates from UK, US, Japan and Australia underlined the worsening conditions of working women in their countries while the authorities were making false claims of equal status to them with their male counterparts. Conditions in Latin American, Asia and South Africa, where the people were fighting against the imperialist backed oppressive ruling cliques, roused tremendous interest of the delegates.

**WFTU Greetings:** Beginning on the 26th morning, under the guidance of a six-country presidium, greeted by the Bulgarian Trade Union Federation, the Conference welcomed General Secretary Zakaria of WFTU. Explaining the charter of demands and the document to be discussed by the conference, he expressed the hope that a common programme for a common struggle would emerge. He emphasised that no single problem could be solved in any country without the active participation of trade unions and hoped that consistent efforts would be made to see that women workers take their proper place in the trade union movement.

After the greetings from the UNESCO, UNICEF, ILO, UNO and WIDF, and after Pratibha Mukherjee referred to the Nairobi Women's Conference held in 1985 where the problems of working women were also discussed, the conference took up discussion on the draft charter of demands.

The Congo delegate pointed out that the membership of women in trade unions was much less than their actual participation in the struggles. In South Africa, by contrast, as the SACTU delegate pointed out, more than 60 per cent of women workers were members of their unions, and many were in the executive bodies. Factories were being closed, and thousands of women were deported every year leading to a crisis in the labour market. She called for support to the struggles of the people in South Africa, Namibia and Palestine.

Ms Jackson, a delegate from USA presented her

report on the present political situation under the Bush Govt. while explaining the miserable conditions of working women. Due to introduction of new technology in USA, women were out and they were fighting a long drawn struggle. All the welfare measures were drastically cut because of the war preparation. The working women had no maternity leave. The domestic violence, beating of women and molestation had become a daily affair. She said, in the recent strike in coal industry, hundreds of workers were arrested.

The delegate from Cyprus suggested the formation of an International Women's Committee under WFTU on a permanent basis. The delegates from CGT, France also explained the bad conditions of women in France and their struggles. The delegate from Australia correctly pointed out that issues of working women must become the issues of the union, when capitalist system exploits women and men equally in every respect. The delegates from Cuba, Vietnam, China, GDR and other socialist countries brought out the vast difference in the conditions of working women under socialism. There was employment to everybody as fundamental right, maternity benefit and creche provision for working women.

The delegates from AITUC, UTCU(LS), HMS spoke on the working conditions of women in urban and rural India. Vimal Ranadive explained the role of CITU and AICCCWW during last 10 years to safeguard the interests of working women and bring them in the trade unions.

**Common Platform of Demands:** The 5th Conference of the World Working Women thus became a common platform to highlight the working conditions which were common to all in developing and developed capitalist countries. It also showed, however advanced the capitalist country may be, the working conditions pointed to worst exploitation, were inhuman.

**Right to Work—Fundamental Right:** The conference adopted three main documents namely, a charter of demands of the working women, which included among other things "Right to Work, guaranteed employment, the abolition of discrimination in wages and wages for part time, domestic and women in informal sector, a call for banning the night work and hazardous work for women. It called upon the trade unions to pay more attention to the problems of working women.

**Major Responsibility of Trade Unions:** The Conference adopted an appeal to UNO and ILO for safeguarding the interests of working women and be more vigilant with regard to ILO Conventions where they are not implemented. The conference also adopted a communique for the countries all over the world which said, "the struggle for a democratic alternative and for adequate social dimension in

*(Contd. on page 16)*

# Air Hostesses Achieve Victory

THE countrywide movement launched by over 2000 air hostesses employed in Air India and Indian Air lines resulted in enhancing their retirement age from 35 years to 58 years. The humiliating clause relating to marriage has also been deleted.

The Cabin Crew Association controlled by the Shiv Sena which opposed the demand of the air hostesses has issued a statement praising the Prime Minister for his consideration. This statement was issued only to divert the attention of the working class from the sustained efforts made by the Air India Hostesses Association and Air Corporation Employees Union. The Shiv Sena hoodlums in Bombay in connivance with Air India management forcibly occupied the office of the Air India Hostesses Association and threatened them for signing petition to parliament.

Over 730 Air hostesses submitted a petition to Parliament last year demanding end to the discrimination against air hostesses. The petition was submitted in the Lok Sabha by Bibha Ghosh Goswami. In Rajya Sabha, Kanak Mukherjee, Dipen Ghosh, Sukomal Sen and Sarojini Mahishi raised the

matter and even the Deputy Chairman had to announce that the entire house was against sex discrimination.

About 100 members of Parliament belonging to all political parties signed a memorandum to the Prime Minister demanding an end to the discrimination. A deputation along with Ruheen Khambatta, Secretary Air India Hostesses Association met the Prime Minister.

Meanwhile the Petition Committee of Parliament submitted a Report opposing sex discrimination.

The callous Air India management terminated services of 5 London based air hostesses by forcing them to accept compensation. However, the Japanese air hostesses resolutely opposed the Air India policy and challenged the action of Air India management. The Japan Federation of Civil Aviation Workers Unions (MINKO POREN) supported the struggle of the air hostesses and in cooperation with CITU did everything to fight out the case. Miss Michiko won the case in the Tokyo Court, which directed the Air India management that she should continue to do

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## New Series of Consumer Price Index Numbers for Industrial Workers

(Base 1982 = 100)

Centre	July 1989	Aug. 1989	Linking factor for old Base	Hubli-Dharwar	180	179	—	Calcutta	177	178	4.74
				Mercara	166	165	—	Darjeeling	161	163	4.55
				Alwaye	167	166	5.19	Durgapur	172	173	—
				Mundakayam	172	172	4.67	Haldia	178	180	—
				Quilon	181	185	—	Howrah	179	181	4.12
				Trivandrum	184	183	—	Jalpaiguri	167	171	4.16
ALL-INDIA	172	174	4.93	Bhalghat	178	181	5.24	Raniganj	161	163	4.40
Gudur	165	168	4.33	Bhilari	161	162	3.49	Chandigarh	165	168	—
Guntur	164	168	5.60	Bhopal	175	177	5.46	Delhi	180	182	4.97
Hyderabad	166	167	5.23	Indore	177	179	5.18	Pondicherry	176	177	—
Visakhapatnam	181	182	—	Jabalpur	189	191	6.41				
Warrangal	163	167	—	Bombay	176	181	5.12				
Doom-Dooma-				Nagpur	176	180	4.99				
Tinsukia	163	165	4.05	Nasik	180	183	—				
Gauhati	183	184	—	Poona	175	179	—				
Labac-Silchar	162	166	3.96	Sholapur	178	182	5.03				
Mariani-Jorhat	171	172	3.95	Barbil	163	167	5.00				
Rangapara-Tezpur	167	169	4.29	Rourkela	156	159	3.59				
Jamshedpur	166	166	4.68	Amritsar	165	168	5.19				
Jharua	164	166	4.63	Ludhiana	161	166	—				
Kodarma	161	163	5.43	Ajmer	171	176	5.01				
Monghyr-Jamalpur	168	172	5.29	Jaipur	172	175	5.17				
Noamundi	167	168	4.58	Coimbatore	168	168	5.35				
Ranchi-Hatia	174	174	—	Coonoor	179	182	4.80				
Ahmedabad	169	172	4.78	Madras	170	173	5.05				
Baroda	174	177	—	Madurai	173	173	5.27				
Bhavnagar	172	176	4.99	Salem	166	169	—				
Rajkot	171	175	—	Tiruchirappally	179	182	—				
Surat	182	186	—	Agra	167	170	—				
Faridabad	163	167	—	Ghaziabad	172	175	—				
Yamunanagar	163	165	5.53	Kanpur	177	178	4.69				
Srinagar	167	167	5.47	Saharanpur	165	169	5.06				
Bangalore	165	166	5.66	Varanasi	181	185	5.12				
Belgaum	177	178	—	Asansol	168	171	4.77				

  

Additional Series of Labour Bureau			
Centre	Base	July 1989	Aug. 1989
Kothagudem	190	191	3.25
Himachal Pradesh	163	168	3.75
Bhilwara	171	172	3.20
Chindwara	183	187	2.59
Tripura	184	187	4.37
Goa	183	185	3.40

  

Other Series of Labour Bureau			
Centre	Base	July 1989	Aug. 1989
Digboi	1960	863	876
Ammathi	1960	854	852
Chikmagalur	1960	847	854
Kolar-Gold-Field	1960	854	852
Alleppey	1960	918	913
Gwalior	1960	881	886
Sambalpur	1960	933	938
Berhampur	1949	1098	1128
Cuttack	1949	1026	1060

Note: Figures on old base can be obtained by multiplying the Index Number on New Base by the linking factor given and rounding off the result to nearest whole number.  
—Dash denotes new centres under 1982 series.

# Tamilnadu State CITU's Proposals on Labour in Draft Project Paper on Eighth Plan

(We are publishing hereunder a letter written by Com. R. Umanath, Vice-President of CITU and General Secretary of its Tamilnadu State Committee written to the Tamilnadu State Planning Commission on the draft Project Paper on the Eighth Plan on Labour and Labour Welfare — Ed.)

4th October 1989

To

The Member Secretary,  
Working Group on Labour and  
Labour Welfare,  
State Planning Commission  
MADRAS-600 005

Sir,

I am in receipt of the draft "Project Paper" for the Eighth Five Year Plan on Labour and Labour Welfare. As I was in Nagercoil attending to the arrangements regarding State CITU Conference, I could not attend the meeting on 19.9.89. Hence I am sending herewith my observations on the draft Project Paper.

1. While stress on attention to workers in unorganised sector has been rightly placed, it is not correct to totally ignore the workers in organised sector excepting for non-implementation of existing laws applicable to them. Existing factory legislation was evolved, suited to earlier generation machinery, layout and other needs. Since then new modernised industries with sophisticated machines and means of production have come into existence, new legislation suited to these needs are required. Apart from these, legislation to absorb contract workers in service, on abolition of contract system, must be undertaken during the 8th plan period. Some other legislations have also been suggested earlier. It is not as though there is no need for further legislation. It is one thing to stress the need for implementation of existing legislation which should not be a substitute for the need for new legislations.

2. Production and Productivity: It is conceded by all that production is of paramount importance. We the workers want to give the best to our people and to our nation in forms of production and productivity. Certain difference to this have to be removed. Firstly, this aim can not be achieved as long as the workers are treated by the employers as merely subordinated to be ordered about without question. Excepting for wages, bonus etc, most of the strikes are against dismissals, suspensions and similar vindictive actions on flimsy grounds. Secondly, more production and productivity as it is today is leading to loss of jobs, creating a serious sense of insecurity, which is a major in-built deterrent. Thirdly, in many cases, settlements are signed with favoured and pliant unions, which leads to serious disruption of production. So this treatment

of workers must be given up. Job security must be ensured. Job opportunity must be protected from being reduced. Workers must be associated with the management of the industry as equal partners, and with equal rights with that of the representatives of the managements at all stages and levels. This right to participation on the above lines must be given a statutory basis, which must be applicable to both the public and private sectors. Statutory provision must be made to determine the bargaining agent by secret ballot and to submit all agreements to a referendum of the workers. These measures will contribute to improvement of production and productivity. But unfortunately, the approach paper has missed this crucial aspect, and poses the problem of production and productivity in isolation of these real contributory factors. If the Commission feels that some of these are policy matters, I submit that necessary policy projections must find a place in the Eighth Plan document.

3. On effective implementation of Labour Laws: It is admitted that inspecting machinery must be strengthened by providing necessary men and machinery. But to look upon the problem of effective implementation as one of strengthening inspection machinery alone, is missing the essential. Most violations and negligence, are deliberate, with a view to maximise exploitation. The fact that, notwithstanding the existing provision for punishment, violations continue in a big way, shows that punishment must be made more stringent. And yet it is surprising that the approach paper has totally ignored this important aspect, even though I had pointed this out in the earlier round of discussions.

Apart from the major points that I have made during the last meeting which I attended, the above are some of my observations on the approach paper, which I hope you will take into consideration and accommodate.

Yours faithfully,

R Umanath  
General Secretary

(Contd. from page 14)

development policy can be achieved only through effective forms of action by the working people. This is a great challenge for the working women and men and for the trade unions. In this connection, trade unions have a major responsibility to highlight the danger to world peace and to bring their women members increasingly into the movement for the elimination of nuclear, chemical and other weapons of mass destruction."

The conference paid tributes to the heroic women fighting against the fascist and racist regimes. All the delegates rose and shouted slogans in support of their struggle while clapping and singing, "We shall Overcome."

## AIRF: 63rd Annual Convention

THE 63rd Annual Convention of All India Railwaymen's Federation was concluded in Calcutta on 18th October, 1989. The proceedings started in the morning of 16th Oct. '89 with the Flag hoisting ceremony and garlanding of martyrs column at the Yuba-Bharati Krirangan, the venue of the delegate session, the open inaugural session having been held at the "Netaji Indoor Stadium" in the evening. The delegate session started in the morning of 17th Oct. with the discussion on the General Secretary's Report and was concluded in the afternoon of 18th October, 1989 with the election of the Office Bearers for the next term after adoption of resolution on line of action.

The Reception Committee was formed earlier with Subhas Chakraborty, West Bengal Minister in charge of Sports and Youth Services and Department of Tourism, as the Chairman. Hundreds of volunteers worked day and night under the direct supervision of the Chairman for making appropriate arrangements for the Convention. A number of CITU workers joined hands with the railway workers in the effort to make the session a memorable one. Banners, posters, wall writings on the convention and the demands of railwaymen were to be seen all over the city. Traffic islands enroute from the main railway stations to the venue of the delegate session i. e. the Yuba Bharati Krirangan were decorated with chains of flags and coloured light. West Bengal Govt. had opened several pavilions, the most notable being that on Charlie Chaplin. Another attraction was the services of rich cultural programme including a first class football match. Everyone felt the existence of the invisible hand of the Left Front Govt. of West Bengal behind all these and the participants expressed profound appreciation of the State Government.

The inaugural session was a largely attended one, inspite of torrential rains which flooded many areas of the city. Two large processions, one from Howrah and another from Sealdah converged on the venue of the open session. The session was inaugurated by Prof. Madhu Dandavate and addressed by West Bengal Labour Minister Santi Ghatak, ITF representative M.S. Hoda, two fraternal delegates from COSATU, South Africa, HMS leader Mrs. Kamala Sinha, UTUC leader, Jatin Chakraborty besides Umraomal Purohit and J.P. Chowbey, both leaders of AIRF. On behalf of CITU, Kanai Banerjee, Secretary greeted the Convention.

Every local speaker denounced the policies of the Central Government and emphasised the importance of ousting the Cong(I) Govt. at the Centre led by Rajiv Gandhi. The AIRF leaders also informed the audience that the Govt. of India had finally turned down the demands for wage parity with the employees of public undertakings and the setting up of Wage Review Committee.

In the delegate session there was outburst of anger against the Stand of the Central Government with respect to their demands. Some delegates even criticised the leadership for postponing the earlier decision for taking strike ballot and getting engaged in protracted negotiation into which the authorities had dragged them in order to defuse the tension among the Railwaymen. Most of the delegates expressed their urge for broad unity of railwaymen and their organisations. The AIRF Action Committee and Working Committee had however decided in the meantime to submit for consideration of the Convention a proposal for Strike Ballot in November and indefinite strike from some early date. But as the session was in progress, the news came about the decision to hold Parliamentary Elections in late November '89. In view of this development the Convention authorised the Working Committee to review the situation after the election and take decision on appropriate action. When the session closed one could feel the keen desire of the delegates to see the Rajiv Govt. defeated in the coming elections.

### A.I.R.E.C. Workers' Convention/E. Zone

In accordance with the decision of the Central Working Committee of the All India Railway Employees Confederation (AIREC) the Zonal Units organised conferences of the AIREC activists on 30th September, 1989. The Workers' Conference for Eastern Zone was held in Calcutta at the Yuba Kendra Auditorium which was presided over by the President of the Zonal Secretary, Amal Bose. The conference was addressed by C.L. Upadhyaya, Dy. General Secy. of AIREC, Dilip Banerjee, Chitta Bose and the Chief Guest, Subhas Chakraborty, West Bengal Minister for Sports. The Conference was attended by 800 workers.

Before the Conference a campaign week was observed during which workers conferences were held at different Divisions.

Workers Conference was also organised by the N Rly. Unit in Delhi, The Conference was inaugurated by the Zonal Secretary, Jamaluddin. The conference was presided over by Joginder Singh, Zonal President. It was addressed among others by S.K. Dhar Secretary General, AILRSA. About 100 workers attended the conference.

### L.R.S.A. Conference/N.E. Rly

The Annual General Meeting of the N.E. Railway Unit of AILRSA was held at Gonda on Sept. 25-26, 1989 under the presidentship of Janardan Sharma. The conference was inaugurated by the Secretary General, S.K. Dhar who was the main speaker at the open session. In the delegate session 25 delegates took part in the discussion on the report placed by the Zonal Secretary, A.A. Khan, which was adopted thereafter. The conference elected the new executive for the next term.

(Contd. from page 8)

tional industries has further added to the growth of unemployment.

The poverty alleviation schemes which had been introduced since 1980, not to speak of solving the problem of unemployment to the least, have not given any succour to the vast army of the unemployed workforce. The Jawahar Rojgar Yojana which has been brought keeping the forthcoming elections in view, is bound to meet the same fate. The Government has no scheme to give relief to the urban unemployed.

The Working Committee demands of the Government of India to incorporate the right to work as a fundamental right in the Constitution and payment of unemployment allowance to all unemployed persons.

The meeting congratulates the State Committees which have initiated some action programmes on the question. The meeting congratulates the Steel Workers' Federation of India for successfully observing an anti-unemployment week and for taking the initiative to organise a national convention against unemployment involving the various other industrial federations. However, such token programmes are not adequate in view of the growing magnitude of the problem. The meeting calls upon all the State Committees, the unions and the national federations to take up the question of unemployment in a continuous manner as the issue for countrywide actions with broadest mobilisation of both unemployed and employed workforce with the demand for right to work and unemployment allowance to the unemployed.

#### On the Crisis in Jute Industry

The Working Committee meeting of the CITU expresses serious concern at the deteriorating situation in the jute industry due to growing closures and progressive reduction in the number of workers. The situation has accentuated due to the policy of the Government to allow import of synthetic fibre as the packaging material. The increasing replacement of jute fibre by synthetic fibre has made the condition of 40 lakh jute growers vulnerable. The attempt to introduce Poly bags has further endangered the situation.

The Working Committee holds the few jute magnets and the Government solely responsible for the deepening crisis in the industry. These jute magnets who earned fantastic profits for the last several decades, diverted the funds to other industries. Though rationalisation and modernisation increased their profitability, the number of workers have been reduced drastically. Compared to 3.5 lakh workers on the eve of independence, the employment is merely 1.2 lakhs at present. They even violated the 1984 agreement to maintain the complement at 2.5 lakhs.

Although due to pressure of united struggle the Government had earlier taken over some closed mills and created the Jute Corporation of India, but now the Rajiv Government has declared a policy of no take over, throwing the workers at the mercy of the few jute magnets. Encouraged by this policy the mill owners have resorted to closures in a phased manner, throwing thousands of workers out of employment. Helped by the Government's refusal to intervene, a section of the mill owners have imposed humiliating conditions on the workers for reopening the mills, like reduction of wages, PF, ESI benefits, etc.

Under these circumstance, the Working Committee is of the firm opinion that no temporary or symbolic measure can be of any solution to the crisis. Nationalisation with workers' participation in the management is the only solution to save the industry. It calls upon all jute unions and workers to carry forward their united struggle in pursuance of the following demands:

Nationalisation of the entire jute industry from raw jute to foreign trade; Immediate reopening of closed and locked out jute mills; Total ban on synthetic bags, varicose (poly) bags and granules; Stringent punishment to the employers who have defrauded the workers of PF and ESI contributions; Maintain total complement of workers at 2.5 lakhs as per the 1984 tripartite agreement; Restoration of all existing benefits and wages that have been taken away,

#### On the 1982 Series of Consumer Price Index

The Working Committee of the CITU held at Kalyani from September 4-6 1989 denounces the Government of India for discontinuing the 1960 series and introducing the 1982 Series of Consumer Price Index in an arbitrary manner, despite continued opposition by the trade unions. The trade unions repeatedly demanded implementation of the unanimous recommendations of the Rath Committee on the 1960 series and rectification of the fault by 8 points as pointed out by the Rath Committee. The trade unions also pointed out the faulty family budget studies conducted for compiling the 1982, as also the defective conversion factor resulting in depression of the weightage diagramme. The National Campaign Committee submitted a memorandum to the Government drawing the attention of the Government to all the defects both in the 1960 and 1982 series point by point. But the Government of India totally rejected all the points and imposed the 1982 series on the workers with all the defects, based on the 1960 series without its rectification either. The Government even violated the ILO directions on compilation of Index in co-operation with the trade unions. This has resulted in perpetuation of the fraudulance in the Index and loss of crores of rupees in the DA of the workers every month. This can be visualised from the new Index which has remained almost static since its introduction, while the prices of all

commodities have gone up enormously during the period.

The meeting therefore demands withdrawal of the 1982 series and continuation of the 1960 series after its necessary rectification. A new series should be introduced with full association of the trade unions which will restore the workers' confidence in price index.

The Working Committee congratulates the Maharashtra State Committee for organising a successful strike against the fraudulent 1982 series and calls upon all the State Committees and unions and appeals to all other trade unions to build up militant united struggle in pursuance of the demand.

### On Tripura

The Working Committee meeting of the CITU expresses serious concern at the continued terror in Tripura. The repression by the Congress-TUJS regime perpetrated against the CPI (M), CITU and other democratic forces has now been taken cognizance of by the ILO on the complaint made by the CITU. Despite the Government of India's negation of the charges, the ILO has categorically stated that an atmosphere free from violence and conducive to the development of a genuinely free and independent trade union movement is absent in Tripura.

The semi-fascist terror against the masses, total suppression of trade union rights, killings and physical tortures and rape however are going in Tripura unabated. The Congress-TUJS Government has recently introduced the notorious Assam Rifles in the tribal areas for combing operation which will add further harassment and indignities to the tribal population.

The Working Committee warmly greets the working class and the people of Tripura for waging a continuous and valiant fight against the terror regime for restoration of the democratic and trade union rights of the people and the workers at the cost of their lives and pays homage to the martyrs.

The meeting calls upon all State Committees and unions to step up campaign and awaken all sections of the working class against the terror regime in the state and extend all support to the fighting people.

### On Raising Fund for Tripura

This Working Committee meeting of CITU held at Kalyani from 4-6 September '89 calls upon the State Committees and all its affiliated unions to raise funds for the fighting comrades of Tripura who are subjected to brutal repression and are targets of the reign of semi-fascist attacks by the Cong (I) — TUJS combine. They have been valiantly fighting to safeguard the democratic rights and unity of the people against these barbaric atrocities.

The Working Committee further resolves to divert the entire amount, excepting the South Africa Fund and the Punjab Fund, collected by the Centre under the head special fund, towards the Tripura fund.

### In Support of Left Front Governments

The Working Committee of meeting of CITU at Kalyani warmly greets the Left Front Governments of West Bengal and Kerala for consistently defending the common people's interests despite all discriminations and hostile attitude perpetrated by the Central Govt and limitations under the Constitution. The two Governments are serving as beacon lights in the country in defence of democracy, in fighting the communal forces and to safeguard the national unity. Despite limited powers and resources, they have defended the legitimate and urgent demands of working class, peasantry and all other working people unlike the Congress (I) ruled states, refused to implement the anti-people and anti-democratic laws which the Central Government wants to impose on the people, or to bow down before the vested interests.

The Working Committee of CITU strongly condemns the Central Govt for its hostility and discriminations against these two Governments. The Central Government refuses to concede the due share of allocable funds to these two Governments for the development projects. The Central allocation of public sector investment for the year 1988-89 provides only 1.39 per cent for Kerala against the genuine claim of 3.7 per cent on the basis of population. The Centre withholds the clearance of Haldia Petro Chemical Complex of West Bengal since almost a decade and refuses to sanction money for the Bakreshwar Thermal Power Station. The latest instance of vindictiveness towards these States is the Centre's refusal to release the allocated quota of food grains to meet the requirements of statutory rationing.

Not content with such discriminatory policies, the Central Government continuously launches slander campaign against the two left Governments. In Kerala, the Cong (I) in association with RSS, BJP, Muslim League and other communal and casteist forces is spearheading continuous vilification campaign against the LDF Government.

It is through popular support and continuous mass mobilisations that these two Governments are able to brave the war of attrition and economic blockade by the Central Government.

The Working Committee of CITU records its appreciation of the relentless struggle of the working class and democratic people of these two states in defence of these Governments. Peoples' funding for the construction of the Bakrashwar Power Plant in West Bengal is a powerful expression of their support to the left front Government.

The Working Committee calls upon all its unions

and appeals to the working class and the democratic forces of the entire country to extend their support to the Left Front Governments of West Bengal and Kerala for the defence of the democratic rights of the people against the authoritarian attacks by the Central Government and to safeguard the unity and integrity of the country.

### On Expulsion of Yogeswar Gope

This Working Committee meeting of CITU held

at Kalyani from 4-6 September '89 endorses the decision taken by the Bihar State Committee of CITU in expelling Yogeswar Gope from the State Presidentship and membership of CITU for his anti-strike, anti-working class stand during the historic State Government employees struggle in September 1988.

The Working Committee expels Yogeshwar Gope from the CITU Working Committee and from the membership of CITU.

## BEFI Calls for United Struggle by Bank Employees

**A**SHIS SEN M.P., General Secretary, Bank Employees Federation of India has issued the following statement:

The 5th bipartite wage settlement in banking industry signed by AIBEA and NCBE has failed to satisfy the employees. Bank Employees Federation of India (BEFI) therefore demanded that fresh negotiation is imperative for restructuring the pay scales, dearness allowance formula, introduction of pension as a third retirement benefit, conveyance allowance, proper increase in special allowances, removal of ban on recruitment etc., besides restoration of graduates' increments and trade union rights which have been curtailed. Although talking about sanctity of 5th bipartite settlement, AIBEA has realised the situation and ultimately decided for same demands as formulated by BEFI for a fresh settlement. BEFI has, therefore, called upon all bank employees to build a united struggle for realising these demands and approached AIBEA and NCBE for this common movement and fresh negotiations in which BEFI and all other central organisations in banking industry besides AIBEA and NCBE must be participants. The all India bank strike on 11th August last has provided the basis for such united action.

Subsequent to the industry-level settlement, the State Bank employees have struck a better wage deal. But the Government and the IBA are obstructing its implementation. While organising solidarity demonstrations in support of SBI employees' recent strikes for the better wage hike implementation, BEFI has made it clear that it opposes the demaging computer extension accepted by their staff federation. It is unfortunate that in tune with Govt and IBA line AIBEA is standing on a wrong founded prestige and opposing the better wage deal in State Bank. The improved wages in State Bank over the 5th bipartite settlement has proved that the industry level wage revision in all banks was possible to be made much better but for the ill-conceived understandings of AIBEA and NCBE and their collaboration with IBA on grounds of less profitability of banks.

Reserve Bank wage settlement under BEFI leadership has brought 16.5 to 18 per cent increases with a correct 90 per cent merger of DA and revised DA formula ensuring 100 per cent neutralisation of

higher cost of living upto a pay of Rs 2,500 and 75 per cent upto a pay of Rs 4,000 is in sharp contrast to 5th bipartite settlement agreed by AIBEA and NCBE providing less than 14.5 per cent, DA neutralisation of 100 per cent upto a pay of Rs 1,650 and 75 per cent upto a pay of Rs 2,835 and 50 per cent thereafter.

Following the 5th bipartite with AIBEA and NCBE the bankers have decided to increase banking hours by half an hour to be effective soon in Metropolitan cities and extended to other areas. This means more workload without compensation. In addition, they have come out with calculated attacks on employees joining BEFI by charge sheets, transfers, suspensions etc. Despite this BEFI membership is steadily growing. The growth in Punjab, Haryana, Chandigari, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir alone is nearly 10,000. Several more thousands have switched over from AIBEA, NCBE & INBEF to BEFI in Orissa, Assam, Tamilnadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.

Present situation warrants a determined collective action by all bank employees. BEFI office bearers met at Delhi on 29.9.89 and decided to initiate the movement by holding demonstration and rallies on 16.10.89 and mass dharnas in all state capitals and important cities and towns on 24.10.89 in preparation for a strike on these demand. AIBEA & NCBE have been approached by BEFI for a co-ordinated united struggle.

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# Vietnamese Trade Union is Fully Sixty Years of Age

[We are publishing hereunder an article contributed by the Vietnamese General Confederation of Labour on the occasion of the 60th Founding Anniversary of the Bac Ky Red Trade Union, the predecessor of the present General Confederation of Labour. — Editor]

## Historical Background

THE first Vietnamese trade unions came into existence in the twenties of this century. The birth and growth of the Vietnamese trade unions over the past sixty years or more are closely associated with the history of revolutionary struggle of the Vietnamese working class and people under the leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam for national liberation and for the emancipation of the Working Class and labouring people.

The Vietnamese working class was born along with the policy of colonial exploitation by the French colonialists and then, it was grown up under the brutal and ruthless exploitation and oppression of the French colonialists and the indigenous feudalists, their lackeys.

Freedom of assembly, freedom of association and other democratic liberties were strictly forbidden. Any act of opposition was suppressed in cold blood.

NGUYEN AI QUOC, the Great Leader of the Vietnamese revolution in 1925, showed the right way for Vietnamese revolutionaries that was: "There is no other way for salving the country and liberating the nation than that of proletarian revolution." He also pointed out that workers and peasants should be the motive force of the revolution, because they are the most heavily oppressed and the most numerous, so their revolutionary strength is the strongest, and they have nothing but their bare bands, thus in case of defeat they will lose only their wretched lives and in case of victory will win the whole world, therefore they are the most courageous." He asked revolutionaries to go to factories to carrying out agitation work among the workers and enlisting them in trade unions.

Thanks to such influence and impact, the struggle of the working class gained greater and greater momentum and the combination of economic struggle with political struggle was strengthened day after day. Typical of such development was the strike staged by 1,000 workers of Ba Son Ship Repair Yard in Saigon in August 1925 and supported by a large number of Saigon-Cholon workers to demand a 20 per cent wage increase and the reinstatement of the laid-off workers. In 1929, the first trade unions were set up in a number of major industrial enterprises such as the Aviat Car Repair Workshop in Hanoi, the Nam Dinh Textile Mill and in some other major factories in Hai Phong and Vinh-Ben Thuy. Early in 1929, the Red Trade Union Federation

was founded in Hanoi and a number of provinces and towns.

These developments led to the holding on July 28, 1929 of the first Congress of the Bac Ky Red Trade Union at which the Bac Ky Red Trade Union Federation was founded, the predecessor of the present Vietnam General Confederation of Labour. That was a historic event of great significance, marking the maturity of the Vietnamese working class and ushering in a new period of development of the Vietnamese trade union movement. The 28th of July 1929 was therefore regarded as the date of the founding of the Vietnamese trade union organization.

Following the birth of the Bac Ky Red Trade Union Federation, workers' struggles broke out without respite at many enterprises and the important thing was that those struggles had been waged with the close coordination and united action among various localities and between the movement of struggle of the workers and the movement of the peasants against taxes and industrial actions of small traders and students.

International Labour Day was observed for the first time in Vietnam on May 1st, 1930. On that occasion, under the leadership of the Red Trade Union Federation and Red Peasants' Association, the worker-peasant strata by tens of thousands rose up in struggle to demand higher wages, the 8-hours working day and the reduction of taxes.

From the very beginning and for nearly one year of existence of the Nghe Tinh Soviets, the working class always stood shoulder to shoulder with the peasants in the struggle against savage acts of repression by the enemy and for the building of worker-peasant revolutionary power.

In the second revolutionary high tide in Vietnam from 1936 to 1939, capitalizing on the favourable conditions brought about by the success of the Popular Front in France, the Red Trade Union Federation of Vietnam made the most of the legal and semi-legal possibilities to rally force, organise the workers and engage them in struggle in various forms from low to high, set up friendly societies, and demand freedom of trade union and economic and democratic rights. Early in 1937, various friendly societies were set up in many parts of the country.

In the same period, Marxism-Leninism was propagated publicly and this helped to motivate and educate politically, millions of people, first of all the worker-peasant masses. Another outstanding event in the movement of revolutionary struggle in that period was the demonstration of force held in

Hanoi by 30,000 workers, peasants and other labouring people on the occasion of May Day 1938.

But the Second World War broke out, then, the reactionary French government carried out policies aimed at checking the revolution in France and in its colonies. Under such circumstances, the trade unions went underground and the Anti-imperialist Workers' Association was set up to become later on the Workers' Association for National Salvation which took an active part in the "Indochinese Anti-Imperialist National United Front" and afterwards, the Vietnam Independence League or Viet Minh for short, led by the Indochinese Communist Party to defeat the French and the Japanese and get rid of the slave yoke.

In the period from 1940 to 1945, the Workers' Association for National Salvation played a worthy role in agitation and organizational work among the workers and other labouring people in cities and towns, in industrial areas, in mines and plantations to wage struggles in various forms claiming for the rights and interests in everyday life and sabotaging the key economic bases of the enemy to organizing the secret capture of weapons from the enemy, building weaponries, setting up workers' self-defence units and establishing guerilla bases, and finally joined the rest of the people in the general insurrection to seize power from the bands of the Japanese fascists in August 1955 and found the first revolutionary State in South East Asia.

Apart from the educational and organizational work among the workers for direct fighting and arms production, in the free zones the Vietnamese trade unions shouldered another heavy task which was to build work shops for the production of consumer goods, develop handicrafts, and help the peasants improve farming tools and increase production so as to ensure self-supply and self-sufficiency in the protracted resistance war.

In areas temporarily occupied by the enemy, the trade union cadres approached the workers, guiding them in waging persistent and courageous struggles for daily interests, sabotaging the economic activities of the enemy, frustrating the enemy attempt to feed the war by the war, agitating for anti-war moves among the enemy troops, and transporting medicine, food and goods to the resistance bases.

The Dien Bien Phu victory in May 1954, the outcome of the all-out resistance war fought by the entire people with the worthy contributions of the Vietnamese working class and trade union organizations, led to the signing in July 1954 of the Geneva Agreements which put an end to the dirty war of aggression of the French colonialists.

In the Period from 1954 to 1975, under the brutal US-puppet rule, the trade unions in the southern part of the country had to go underground, stimulating and organizing the activities of the workers and other labouring people in the struggle for better

living conditions, democratic rights and for national salvation.

In the general offensive and uprising in 1975, the workers and other labouring people in the urban areas simultaneously rose up, seized factories, public offices, bus stations and harbours, prevented the enemy from destroying and moving away machinery and other property, and joined the armed forces in wiping out the enemy, liberating cities and towns and building the revolutionary power.

During the years of the anti-US war of resistance, trade unions in the North educated and organized workers and employees to take the lead in socialist transformation and construction, defend and make the North a revolutionary base of the whole country, and give effective and timely aid to satisfy all the needs of the struggle for the liberation of South Vietnam.

By their rich, diversified, staunch and courageous activities, workers, other labouring people and trade union organizations in both zones of Vietnam made a remarkable contribution to the glorious victory in spring 1975, totally liberating the South, completing the national people's democratic revolution in the whole of country, and leading the homeland to the era of independence and unification in which the entire country advances towards socialism. And from June 6 to 8 1976 the National Trade Union Unification Conference was held in Ho Chi Minh City.

#### The Vietnam Trade Unions at Present

The present constitution of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, which was passed at the 7th Legislature of the 4th National Assembly on December 18, 1980 institutionalized the Vietnamese working class's leadership over the entire people through the medium of the Communist Party of Vietnam, and the position and role of the Trade Unions in the political system of the nation. Article 10 of the Constitution stipulates: "The Vietnam Federation of Trade Unions is the largest mass organization of the Vietnamese working class, a school of communism, of economic management, and management of the State. Within its power, the Trade Unions take part in State affairs and supervise the work of State bodies; and participate in the management of factories. They educate workers and employees, organize socialist emulation movements and, together with the State bodies, care for the lives of workers and employees and protect their interests". Articles 36 and 106 grant the Trade Unions the right to submit draft law to the National Assembly, and the President of the Vietnam Federation of Trade Unions the right to attend the meetings of the Council of Ministers.

Since the regulations of social insurance of State workers and employees were put into effect (1961), the State has entrusted the Trade Unions with the direct control over the Social Insurance Fund and the Institute for Scientific and Technological Research on Labour Safety.

The set of stipulations issued in accordance with Decision 217-HDBT dated 14 November 1987 by the Council of Ministers of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam on the renewal of planning and the application of socialist cost-accounting and business transaction in State-run factories has broadened the autonomy in production and business of factories, brought into play workers' and employees' right to collective mastery. It enunciates the competence and responsibility of the Vietnam Federation of Trade Unions in "determining the methods of distributing the factories income, which includes wages and interests", in "defining the rational amount of income for each occupation and trade, and defining the regulating rate of the rational amount of income on the basis of a good implementation of the State's inspecting and supervising work with regard to quotas of wage funds and amounts of income of workers in factories", and in "studying and perfecting the workers' and employees' right to collective mastery in factories."

The outstanding feature of our country's reality is the renewal in all aspects of the social life. This renewal process consists of:

\*The reorganization of production, the liberation of the productive force, the exploitation of all production potentialities, the development of the commodity production, and first and foremost the implementation of the three economic programmes, namely food and foodstuffs, consumer goods and goods for export, and this with a view to gradually stabilizing and improving the life of the workers and the people, and building the necessary premises for the development of socialist industrialization in the period ahead.

\*The reformation of the economic mechanism, the abolition of the bureaucratic, centralized method of economic management and the shifting over to the socialist business accounting, the enlargement of the right to self-mastery in production and business for the enterprises, and the application of scientific and technical progress to production.

\*The stimulation of various economic sector to develop their production, and business, the encouragement of foreign investments, the stepping-up of economic and production cooperation with socialist and other countries in the world.

\*The broadening of democracy and openness in public activity according to the spirit that "everything should stem from the people", so as to carry out well the campaign aimed at ridding the Party organizations and State organs of members who are considered undesirable, enhancing the combat strength of the Party and securing an affective management of the State apparatus and making social relations healthy, pushing ahead the struggle against bureaucratic and negative manifestation in State organs and in society.

In order to make contribution to the renovation of the country, it is clearly defined that the general task of the trade unions at present is to educate and mobilize the workers and employees to bring into play the sense of collective mastery of the work-

collectives at the grassroots level, to take the lead in the renovation of the management mechanism, to successfully carry out the three economic programmes with a view to stabilizing the socio-economic situation, to care for the life and protect the legitimate interests of workers and employees, to contribute to the successful implementation of the campaign for purification and raise the combat strength and the managerial efficiency of the Party organizations and the State Organs, to make health social relations.

The Vietnamese trade unions are called upon to carry out international activities so as to win the sympathy and support of the world workers and trade union movement for the cause of socialist construction and the defence of Vietnam's Fatherland, they should at the same time contribute an active part to the strengthening of the solidarity and unity of action of trade union organisations of different countries and international trade union centres in the struggle for peace, national independence, democracy and social progress, which has become one of their major tasks.

Presently, the Vietnamese trade unions actually boast a membership of 3.8 million, equal to 89.5 per cent of the total of workers and employees uniting into 20,647 primary trade unions of 17 branch trade unions and a contingent of more than 10,000 full-time and over 870,000 non-professional trade union officials.

The perfection of the organisation, the renewal of the content and method of activity and the putting of new life and vigour into the contingent of trade union officials require that.

\* The Vietnamese trade unions should concentrate their efforts on the building of strong and firm primary trade unions, turn them into organisations having enough capacity and force to carry out their activities, having the ability to mobilise the workers and employees at the grassroots to develop their right to collective mastery, to successfully implement the political task and production and business plans of the enterprise, at the same time the primary trade unions should represent workers and employees to participate in the management of the enterprise, to exercise their control and supervision over the implementation of the State policies by the enterprise.

\* Step by step boast trade union membership among labourers in small and handicraft industries, in private enterprises, the enterprises invested and run by foreign capitalists.

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# CITU Delegation visits Bulgaria

E. Padmanabhan

A delegation from CITU composed of Com. E. Padmanabhan and Com. S. Antasri Chatterjee, Working Committee members, went to Bulgaria on a five day visit from 14th to 18th October 1989 at the invitation of the Central Council of the Bulgarian Trade Unions.

The delegation exchanged views on the activities and developments in the respective countries. Ms Zdravka Peeva chairperson of the international department of the Central Council of Bulgarian Trade Unions, their expert on Asia and Europe, Com. Atanas Todorov received the delegation at their headquarters. The details of the reforms undergoing in Bulgaria which is known as "self management", the role of the trade unions and the working class in it was explained in detail. The structural change in decision making ensuring decentralisation has covered the organisation from bottom to the top. Bulgaria's attachment to Russia starts from centuries back. They have been their liberators from Turkish yoke and also from fascists. The centralised method of governmental and organisational functioning, they consider were a must in the initial years of building socialism for establishing socialist economic foundation etc. But, it went on for decades without a proper assessment of the changing conditions. The reforms are aimed at further strengthening socialism and they categorically stated that Bulgaria will uphold Marxism and also wanted us to appreciate the reforms in this perspective.

The delegation made it clear that the CITU has taken stock of the developments and reforms and has an open mind towards these changes. We are following the events taking place all over the socialist countries. Nevertheless our movement is anxious over the disturbing nature of certain happenings in Poland and Hungary on the one side and China on the other. The imperialists are jubilant over these events and Ms Margret Thatcher even described this year, 1989 as the year of "failure of socialism". As things stand at present one cannot draw up any conclusion, she said. However, Bulgaria is making a critical analysis, whether they attach more than the required stress on their reforms. The impact of their careful reforms have reached in some cases in a manner not anticipated and they are sorting them out to find appropriate solution. In short what they consider expedient is the involvement of the whole people in nation building and political process. This is the essence of the structural changes.

Our delegation explained the Indian situation, the role of the CITU in forging unity of the trade

unions, the left forces and other democratic minded sections among the working class, peasantry and other social strata in the fight for better living conditions, national issues in defence of the unity and territorial integrity of the country against the attack of secessionist fundamentalist forces aided by imperialism to destabilise the country, against imperialist domination through multinational penetration and the IMF, World Bank assistance etc and the success of the movement as evidenced by the nationwide strike of March 1988, 30th August 1989.

The delegation visited an industrial complex consisting 9 units which employ over 11 thousand workers and a collective farm which cover 800 hectares of farm land. The farm workers are members of the trade unions. They get remuneration equal to skilled workers in industry.

Research Institute in the name of George Dimitrov is an important institution enjoying the status of a university, is another important activity of the CCBTU. The CCBTU desires to expand its ties with CITU through various industrywise organisations of workers.

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*(Continued from page 23)*

The Vietnamese working class and people are still meeting with tremendous difficulties on their road ahead and it is not an easy thing to overcome those difficulties, because to do so, much time and force are needed, but they have enough determination and confidence to tide them over.

Their strength is derived from the spirit of "Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom", from the aspiration to live in a prosperous country, and to have a decent life and from the lessons drawn from the errors committed in socio-economic construction and development during the past 10 years which constitute also the asset for them to go ahead in the first stage of the transitional period, namely: to stabilise the socio-economic situation in all aspects and to continue building the necessary premisses for the promotion of socialist industrialisation in the subsequent stage.

The VIth National Congress of Vietnamese Trade Union (October 1988) decided to change the name: Vietnam Federation of Trade Unions into the General Confederation of Labour.